

Presentation Abstracts

Theme 1: Innovation in models of care

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Abstract title: *A new Grade 3 Allied Health Assistant role in diabetes and chronic disease management*

As part of the 2013-2014 Department of Health Workforce Innovation Grants, South West Healthcare piloted a new Grade 3 Allied Health Assistant (AHA) role in Diabetes/Chronic Disease Management. Chronic disease, including diabetes, is one of the greatest challenges facing the Australian health system. There is evidence of higher prevalence of chronic and complex conditions in rural and regional communities, with reduced access to services in community settings. Warrnambool and Corangamite Shires have experienced an increased prevalence of diabetes respectively.

Utilising the Allied Health Assistant Supervision and Delegation Framework, the project piloted the use of an AHA workforce within diabetes whilst also scoping potential use within chronic disease management.

The primary scope of practice of the AHA was to complete Diabetes Annual Cycle of Care (DACC) Reviews as delegated by the Diabetes Educator (DE) for people with Type 2 Diabetes and Impaired Glucose Testing. The Allied Health Credentialing, Competency and Capability Framework was utilised to ensure the safe introduction of the AHA roles and ensured competency across a variety of tasks delegated from DE, Podiatry, Nutrition/Dietetics and Physiotherapy.

It was hypothesised that this would subsequently create capacity for the existing DE workforce to operate at their maximum scope of practice with more complex patients.

The AHA role was demonstrated to positively impact patient care in the domains of self-management and adherence to the DACC. It also significantly impacted patient's perceptions around a team approach and coordination of their care. The project has ably demonstrated the application of an AHA to the diabetes workforce as well as other chronic disease workgroups.

Biography

Heidi Manson has worked as the Manager of Occupational Therapy at South West Health Care. Recently she was employed as a project manager to plan and implement the project above using Department of Health and Human Services Workforce Innovation Grant funding.