

Presentation Abstracts

Theme 1: Innovation in models of care

Ms Sue Eaton, Ballarat Health Services *suee@bhs.org.au*

Abstract title: *Allied Health Assistants: Improving job satisfaction*

Introduction: The Ballarat Health Services Lymphoedema Program has been operating since 2004, assisting patients from across the Grampians health region to monitor and self-manage this chronic condition. The funding available for the program is limited, demand is high and Lymphoedema Therapists are difficult to recruit. Considerable time was being spent by the Senior Clinician Allied Health Professional (AHP) performing tasks which could be completed by an Allied Health Assistant (AHA).

Objective:

- To increase the job satisfaction of both the Clinician and AHA, ensuring both are maximizing their scope of practice, whilst improving the clinical capacity of the Lymphoedema Program.

Methods: An observational audit of tasks conducted by the AHP was completed, documenting the time spent on tasks that could be conducted by an AHA. A prioritized task list was developed and a training program implemented. A repeat audit was conducted and the participants interviewed six months after the AHA's commencement.

Results/Practice implications: Implementation of an AHA to the program has provided multiple benefits to the AHP, AHA and patients. These include increased job satisfaction, efficient resource allocation, and potential for further improvement of the program.

Conclusion: Although in the early stages of implementation, the introduction of an AHA to the Lymphoedema Program has been a very positive initiative with scope for further expansion of the role.

Biography

Sue is a senior physiotherapist and Lymphoedema Therapist at Ballarat Health Services (BHS). She completed her physiotherapy degree at Lincoln Institute of Health Science in 1987 and for many years specialised in neurological rehabilitation. In 2002 she completed level 1 and 2 courses in lymphoedema management. Sue has been in her role as Co-ordinator of BHS Lymphoedema Program since 2004. She implemented the current model of care, based on self-management principles, and has overseen the development and expansion of the program over the years. Sue has strong interests in patient-centered care and staff development and actively pursues these areas within her role.