

Presentation Abstracts

Theme 1: Innovation in models of care

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Abstract title: *Implementing the key worker role in the rural sub-acute setting*

Introduction: The role of the 'Key Worker' (KW) in the subacute setting at Wimmera Health Care Group (WHCG) commenced in conjunction with the opening of WHCG's 20 bed sub-acute facility in December 2014. Reports from patients and family members, along with evaluation of our communication process across the sub-acute continuum, identified a need for improvement in communication between the sub-acute team and the patient/families.

Objective:

- The aim of the KW role was to foster communication amongst the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) working in the sub-acute setting. This included co-ordination of the patient's rehabilitation program, providing a 'key person' to communicate between the patient, family and MDT, undertaking additional administrative requirements, enabling patient-centred care and facilitating smooth client discharge planning.

Method: A subacute working party, consisting of junior and senior allied health (AH) staff and the subacute nurse unit manager (NUM) benchmarked with other sub-acute settings, reviewed the literature and finally trialled the role across a 12 month period.

Practical Implications: Clinicians working in the KW role found their workload increased with the commencement of the KW role. Extra time was required to follow-up administrative tasks such as care plans, and to liaise with patients/families and the MDT on a regular basis. Overall, feedback from patients/families and clinicians regarding the increase in communication was positive.

Conclusion: The KW role has been positive in improving communication between patients, families and the sub-acute team. The recent creation of a new role of 'Subacute Patient Flow Coordinator,' means the KW role is likely to change in the near future.

References:

1. Barwon Health, March 2014, Key Contact Person (KCP) In-patient Rehabilitation McKellar Centre, BAH0003835 v4.0 retrieved 17 November 2014 Barwon Health, May 2014.
2. Acute Stroke Key Contact Person Role and Responsibilities, BAH0003940 v3.0 retrieved 17 November 2014 South West Healthcare, June 2014,

3. Key Contact Person – Inpatient Rehabilitation, SWH0002268 v1.0 retrieved 17 November 2014 Western District Health Service, July 2012.
4. Sub-Acute, GEM and Rehabilitation Admissions – Key Contact Person, WDHS0001483 v1.0 retrieved 17 November 2014

Biography

Courtney is a grade 2 speech pathologist at the Wimmera Health Care Group, Horsham. Courtney has predominately worked as an adult therapist across the acute, sub-acute and community continuum at Wimmera Health Care Group for almost 6 years. Courtney's clinical interests include providing high quality sub-acute service to rural patients.

David is a grade 2 social worker at Wimmera Health Care Group. David started at Wimmera Health Care Group as a grade 1 social worker and in his role works across hospital wards including the subacute unit. David has been involved in the planning, commencement and review of the key worker role and will be involved in future amendments to the position. Prior to starting at Wimmera Health Care Group David worked in the out of home care sector with vulnerable and at risk young children.