

# Changing team dynamics through the use of the Team Management System

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## Background

High performing healthcare teams recognise the need to continuously improve and actively seek ways to develop. In a climate of rapid change and workforce mobility the need to focus on team performance becomes critical. Improved teamwork in a health care setting has been shown to improve patient outcomes, reduce absenteeism and improve staff satisfaction<sup>1,2</sup>. Team Management Systems (TMS) is an effective strategy for focusing on team performance.

TMS was implemented within a large Hospital and Health Service (HHS) to facilitate:

- Consistently high performing teams
- Teams that value and harness the diversity in teams, and to
- Develop a sustainable and consistent approach to team building within a comprehensive program

## Method

TMS was rolled out to varying degrees to allied health staff within a HHS. Base grade staff and allied health assistants were provided with an introductory session and all other staff were provided with Team Management Profiles and debriefs within appropriate teams.

## Results

Allied health staff responded positively to the implementation of TMS. Qualitative and quantitative evaluation results indicate staff can immediately apply information they have learned to a variety of team activities and also to their work with others. Specific initiatives implemented include mapping and displaying team role profiles, completing reflective diaries regarding TMS profiles and communication strategies; utilising TMS resources such as online targeted communication strategies and development of individualised tip sheets for communication.

## Conclusion

In a large tertiary hospital, TMS has been shown to be effective in improving teamwork. It influences the culture and performance of teams by providing a common language to discuss the work of the team and the preferences of individual team members.

## References

1 Jones, A. and D. Jones (2011). "Improving teamwork, trust and safety: An ethnographic study of an interprofessional initiative." *Journal of Interprofessional Care* 25(3): 175-181.

2 Kalisch, B. J., H. Lee and M. Rochman (2010). "Nursing staff teamwork and job satisfaction." *Journal of nursing management* 18(8): 938-947.