

Allied Health Assistant Model: Towards Patient Based Care

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Fiona Stanley Hospital (FSH) is a new 783 bed quaternary hospital in Western Australia. Allied health incorporates eleven professions with over 370 staff. With the introduction of a contemporary, integrated allied health model within FSH, Allied Health Assistants (AHA) have been provided with the opportunity to increase their skills and responsibility in response to health service delivery changes.

The aim of this presentation is to discuss the development of the FSH AHA service model and strategies employed to introduce and manage change.

In recent years, there have been numerous changes in health care service delivery, increasing the pressure and demand placed on primary and secondary health care services both nationally and internationally. Currently the health system is being challenged to accommodate these changes in the workforce and to provide an adequate number of appropriately skilled health care workers to meet the changing needs of the health care consumers. The development of the AHA role is one method to address these challenging issues of health care delivery. AHAs are an emerging group in allied health practice with the potential to improve quality of care for patients. Historically the training needs of AHAs have been of low priority with little opportunity for career development and limited ability to transfer skills to other roles, FSH has identified these issues and implemented these changes to address this situation. Within the FSH Allied Health Leadership Team, AHAs have professional representation to provide clinical governance, professional advocacy and clinical expertise.

The proposed rollout of the FSH AHA service model will undertake a one year trial period in the rehabilitation setting of the campus to evaluate its effectiveness through a combination of staff satisfaction surveys and competency based training requirements.