

Challenging the Monday to Friday workforce – evaluation of an innovative seven day occupational therapy and physiotherapy service in the acute setting.

Jude Boyd¹, Anne Pagram², Annabelle Bond³, Katherine Harding⁴, Geraldine Millard⁵, Nicholas Taylor⁶, Nichola Terrington⁷.)

1 Eastern Health, Occupational Therapy, PO Box 94, Box Hill 3128; jude.boyd@easternhealth.org.au

2 Eastern Health

4 Eastern Health

5 Eastern Health

6 Eastern Health, La Trobe University.

7 Eastern Health

Background:

Occupational therapy and physiotherapy services in the acute setting assist in optimising function, facilitating discharge and preventing readmission. Traditionally this has been provided within a Monday to Friday staffing model with a separate small roster on weekends. In response to an organisational redesign initiative, allied health joined their multi-disciplinary colleagues to provide equitable access to services, seven days of the week. Occupational therapy and physiotherapy service is now equal no matter the day of the week, and some staff are rostered to work a Tuesday to Saturday or Sunday to Thursday shift.

Objectives:

The aim of this project was to evaluate the change process and the impact of 7 day service changes to patient flow, length of stay and staff satisfaction.

Method:

A mixed methodology research design including quantitative retrospective medical record audits (300) and qualitative staff focus groups were conducted to gather information both pre and post service delivery changes.

Results:

Outcomes have demonstrated that the changes to service delivery have more evenly distributed discharges throughout the days of the week, with a notable increase in the discharges on Sunday – a doubling of discharges; and length of stay was reduced by 0.5 days per patient. The equitable distribution of occupational therapy staffing across 7 days, has reduced peak times of clinical activity on Monday's and Friday's thereby improving patient flow.

Conclusion:

Implementing a seven day service model can positively contribute to patient outcomes in the acute setting.