

Interdisciplinary Allied Health Advanced Practice Pilot in General Medicine; phase one

Dina Watterson¹, Indi Swan¹, Desiree Terrill², Lisa Somerville¹, Lydnell Keating¹, Kathleen Phillip²

¹ Allied Health Alfred Health, PO Box 315 Prahran Victoria 3181; d.watterson@alfred.org.au

² Department of Health and Human Services, Level 21, 50 Lonsdale Street Melbourne Victoria 3000

Background

The existing allied health workforce model across acute medicine at our metropolitan tertiary teaching facility results in multiple clinicians providing assessment and intervention in overlapping domains of care. Duplication in hospital services adversely impacts clinician productivity, access to services, patient experience, and the transition from hospital to the community. A collaborative project with the Department of Health and Human Services to scope and pilot an interdisciplinary allied health advanced practitioner (AHAP) role in general medicine commenced in late 2014. The aim of the project is to reduce duplication of assessment and intervention across domains of care, enable focused intervention and improve the patient experience. Phase one is complete and has informed the scope and evaluation of the pilot.

Methods

Phase one involved scoping and developing the AHAP role, recruitment and baseline data collection. The AHAP proposed skill sets were identified and assessed against a framework developed for the project that examines frequency, complexity of skill and risk associated with sharing the skill. Performance standards for each skill were developed.

Results

Twenty five skill sets were identified to be shared from five disciplines (Nutrition, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology and Social Work). Performance Standards were developed and clinicians trained and assessed against these standards.

Pre pilot data collection quantified the duplication of assessment and intervention for Allied Health across key care domains. Key stakeholder focus groups determined the opportunities and risks for the AHAP role.

Discussion

The AHAP pilot commenced in May 2015 and is due to conclude in December 2015. The evaluation will report clinician productivity, patient experience, function and quality of life and risk. The skills shared, assessment framework, performance standards and evaluation could be used as the basis for developing similar roles across organisations.