

The Creation, Implementation and Evaluation of a Consumer Engagement Process for an Allied Health Directorate

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Background:

Consumer engagement in the provision of health care services is essential in providing high quality and effective patient centred care. It was recognised that an existing clinical governance framework for an allied health directorate did not sufficiently address consumer engagement. It was decided to create a process to address this within the context of the directorate's governance.

Method:

Multiple brainstorming and planning sessions occurred over a 2 year time period (2016-2017) to more fully understand consumer engagement and how it could assist in improving allied health (AH) services. Discussion centred on current practices and what initiatives would be required to more effectively address consumer engagement. SA Health policies and the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standard 2 guided the work and strategies were progressively implemented throughout 2018.

Results:

A process was developed to facilitate consumer engagement in delivering of AH services in a large and complex health network.

Results:(cont)

Evaluation of the level of satisfaction of senior AH and management staff and consumers with the process is planned for 2019 using a purpose designed satisfaction survey. The survey will comprise items requiring Likert scale responses with some open questions. Items will include awareness, implementation and effectiveness categories and results will be analysed descriptively.

Discussion:

A process has been developed to facilitate consumer engagement in the delivery of AH services. Of key importance is the unwavering commitment from senior management regarding the importance of consumer engagement and clear understanding of health policies and accreditation responsibilities. Sensitive change management approaches are required and underpinning any success is the commitment to, clear articulation and consistent application of the process through effective communication and feedback.