

Speech Pathology led prescribing: what is the process?

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BACKGROUND: There is increasing interest in non-medical prescribing due to growing health service demands, and documented benefits of allied health professionals working in advanced and extended scope of practice roles.

Specifically, in the field of Speech Pathology (SP), there is potential to prescribe medications such as oral antifungal agents for treatment of oral thrush (for example nystatin – figure 1), as well as topical anaesthetic (such as CoPhenylcaine Forte – figure 2) to improve comfort when passing the nasendoscope during assessment or when changing a voice prosthesis.

Whilst recent changes to the Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996 (HDPR) now support allied health administration and prescribing in some instances, to date the process to implement SP prescribing services has not been described, nor has the safety and benefits of SP led prescribing model been implemented or evaluated.

With support from Allied Health Professions Office of Queensland (AHPOQ) Logan Hospital and Ipswich Hospital are undertaking a prospective trial of SP led prescribing following the framework outlined in Figure 3. Evaluation will include the 'Domains of Health System Performance'⁽¹⁾.

(1) National Health Performance Committee (2002). National report on health sector performance indicators 2001. Brisbane: Queensland Health.

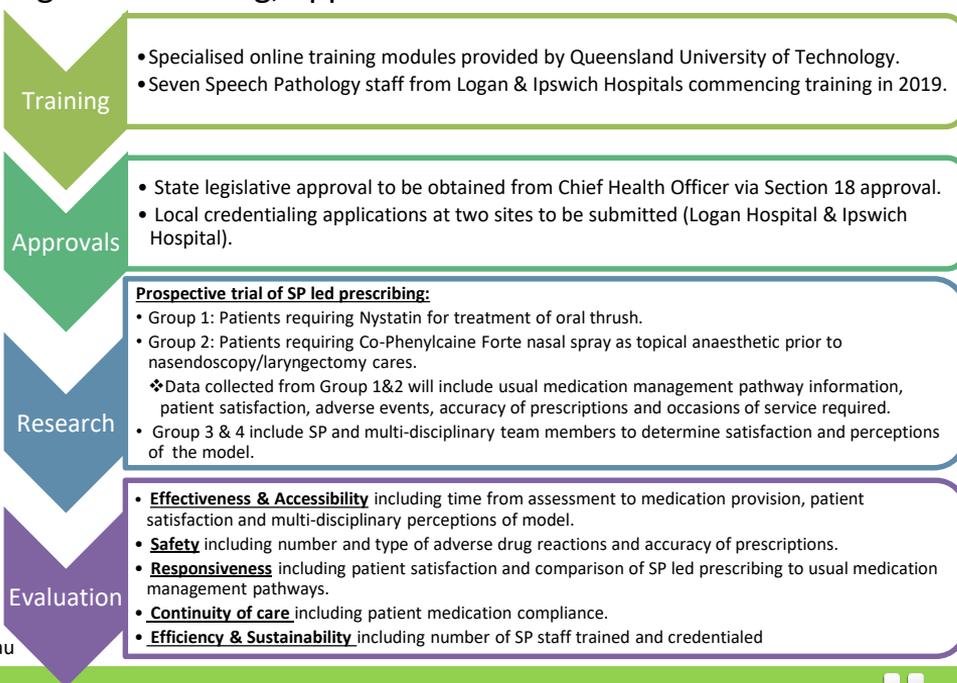


Figure 1- Nystatin



Figure 2- Co-Phenylcaine Forte

Figure 3. Training, approval and evaluation framework



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