Enhancing Speech Pathology Scope with Scoping

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What is FEES

Fibreoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES) is an instrumental assessment used to evaluate and manage dysphagia. (SPA 2007)

‘It involves passing an endoscope transnasally to provide direct visualisation of the surface anatomy of the critical structures of swallowing in order to evaluate the movement of these structures in response to swallowing regular food and drink’. (SPA 2007:5)
What is FEES

The basic components of FEES include:

- Anatomic-physiologic assessment
- Direct assessment of swallowing of food and fluids
- Application of therapeutic manoeuvres, dietary modification and behavioural strategies and evaluation of their effectiveness. (Langmore 2001)
Advanced Scope

- The use of FEES is considered within a speech pathologist’s scope of practice (SPA 2003), however it is an advanced area of practice, requiring specialised knowledge, skills and training. (SPA 2007)

- ‘Speech pathologists with appropriate training can be responsible for:
  - independently passing the nasendoscopy,
  - performing the examination &
  - interpreting the images obtained’. (SPA 2007:5)
What’s In & What’s Out

In Scope

- Training pathway
- Passing the scope trans nasally on suitable adults
- Performing the examination
- Trialling swallowing strategies
- Assessing the swallow function and diagnosis of dysphagia
- Awareness of structural abnormalities

Out of Scope

- Passing the scope on high risk adults (e.g. base of skull fractures)
- Diagnosis of structural abnormalities
- Diagnosis of vocal cord function/dysfunction
- Passing the scope trans nasally on paediatrics (for now)
Royal North Shore and Ryde Speech Pathology

Baseline - 2013

RNS & Ryde Speech Pathology
Head of Department

Senior Clinicians

- RNSH Neurosciences Senior
- RNSH Head & Neck/Voice Senior
- RNSH ICU Senior
- RNSH Neurosurgery Senior
- RNSH Paediatric Feeding Senior
- RNSH Burns Senior
- Ryde Team Leader
- RNSH Stroke In-reach rehab & Ryde Stroke Senior
- Ryde Rehabilitation Senior

Base Grade Clinicians

- RNSH New Graduate
- RNSH Rad Onc/MAU
- RNSH General Ward
- RNSH Weekend and Emergency Department
- RNSH Winter Locum
- RNSH Aged Care and Community
- Ryde Acute Wards
- Ryde Aged Care and Community
- Ryde Rehabilitation x2

Competent in technical and interpretation
On competency pathway
Not competent
Royal North Shore and Ryde Speech Pathology

Phase 1 - 2015

RNS & Ryde Speech Pathology
Head of Department

Senior Clinicians

Base Grade Clinicians

Competent in technical and interpretation

On competency pathway

Not competent
Royal North Shore and Ryde Speech Pathology

Phase 2 - 2016

RNS & Ryde Speech Pathology
Head of Department

Competent in technical and interpretation

On competency pathway

Not competent

RNSH Neurosciences Senior
RNSH Head & Neck/Voice Senior
RNSH ICU Senior
RNSH Neurosurgery Senior
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Ryne Aged Care and Community
Ryne Rehabilitation x2
Royal North Shore and Ryde Speech Pathology

Phase 3 - 2018

Competent in both technical and interpretation

On competency pathway

Not competent

RNS & Ryde Speech Pathology
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Senior Clinicians
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Speech Pathologists
- Competent in both technical and interpretation
- On competency pathway
- Not competent

Phase 3 - 2018

RNSH Neurosciences Senior
RNSH ICU Senior
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RNSH Burns Senior
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RNSH Rehabilitation x2
Barriers & Enablers

- ENT & other medical support
- Equipment
- Innovation and persistence of key players within the department
RNS Inpatient FEES by Clinical Area

2013-2014

2018-2019
Comparison of Inpatient FEES from 2013 to 2019
Inpatient FEES increase 2013/14 – 2018/19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total inpatient FEES</th>
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<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td>178</td>
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Conclusion

- Development of a district level FEES competency for scoping and analysis
- New and dedicated speech pathology equipment
- Support from LHD district executives

Enhanced training
Increased use of gold standard assessment at the bedside
Expanded advanced skills
References

