



division of general practice

ENHANCED PRIMARY CARE – AN ASSET TO HOSPITALS?

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ballarat & district division of general practice inc.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

- Enhanced Primary Care - Medicare item numbers 768 / 771 / 773 – General Practitioner participation in a discharge case conference



AIM

- Encourage the up-take of the new EPC item numbers enabling GPs to attend hospital organised case conferences within Ballarat Health Services



PERCEIVED ADVANTAGES

- Improved communication between GPs, hospital staff and other care-givers
- Decreased hospital readmission rates
- Enhanced patient confidence and understanding
- Increased profile of GPs in the hospital



THE PILOT

Initial plan for introduction



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RESULTS

- 10 case conferences organised at Gandarra Palliative Care Unit
- 7 GPs involved in the pilot
 - 3 GPs invited to 1 case conference
 - 2 GPs invited to 2 case conferences
 - 1 GP invited to 3 case conferences



RESULTS

	V.good	good	Sati's	poor	V.poor
Advance notification of case conference	1	5	1		
Choice of times	2	5			
Choice of teleconference or attendance at Gandarra*	1	2	2		
Organisation of meeting**	2	4		1	
Development of management goals for patient	2	5			
Attendance of others at Case conference	1	5		1	



RESULTS

- All 7 GPs stated they found the case conference helpful in regard to future patient management
 - initially helpful then plans fell apart
 - useful if plans followed – no discharge notification
 - brought together all involved with patient care
 - covered a number of different scenarios
 - useful for other health professionals



RESULTS

- Adequate remuneration for attendance?
 - 3 = yes
 - 1 = yes and no
 - 1 = didn't know there was any
 - 2 = no



RESULTS

- All 7 GP agreed they would attend again if invited
 - potential good for patient and families
 - had been involved with patient for years
 - found this one useful so anticipate others would also be useful



RESULTS

- 3 GPs did not attend the case conference
- Remuneration was considered inadequate by 2 of the 3
 - Payment should be comparable to level C home visit and include travelling time



RESULTS

- All 3 said that they would attend another case conference if invited
- previous case conferences worthwhile
- opportunity to meet staff
- timing/notice need to be adequate
- tight schedule makes attendance difficult



RESULTS

Medical Director - Gandarra

- Discharge planning meetings including GPs were worthwhile at a clinical level and would continue them in selected cases
- GPs were very positive about being involved but the workload issue is a serious one and getting away for a meeting is difficult
- The paperwork involved was significant and time consuming



FOLLOWUP

- Social Workers' role to invite the GPs to case conferences when appropriate
- 12 months post pilot – no GP had been invited to a case conference via the Social Work Dept and no further GP involvement occurred through Gandarra



DISCUSSION

- 10 inpatients of Gandarra Palliative Care Unit were recruited over an 11 month period
- 7 out of the 10 case conferences had GPs in attendance
- the case conference was coordinated by the Medical Director of the Gandarra Unit
- the Medical Director was responsible for fulfilling the Medicare requirements



ISSUES RAISED

- ✓ GP attendance at discharge planning case conferences for eligible patients can be a valuable and useful experience



ISSUES RAISED

- Medicare rebate
- Notice of meeting is important
- Timing of the meeting
- Teleconferencing was not a popular option
- Time restraints on hospital staff



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Target one small area of the hospital for education re: GP involvement in case conferences – ideally the Social Work Dept
- Employment of a Discharge Planning Officer to organise discharge case conferences
- More encouragement / support of GP participation

