Business Profile

Health Contact Centre

March 2014
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1. Background

The Health Contact Centre (HCC) is one of the Health Support Queensland (HSQ’s) services that provide clinical support, either directly to the community or in support of Hospital and Health Services (HHS) and the Department of Health.

The HCC provides confidential health assessment and information services to Queenslanders 24 hours a day, seven days a week using phone and online delivery models.

The HCC was established in 2006 as part of the Queensland Government’s commitment to addressing the growing demand in health services in Queensland. Since its inception, HCC has expanded to provide the following services that can be accessed by the public via the phone numbers 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) or 13 QUIT (13 7848) or via Queensland Health and Queensland government websites:

- General health information and details of service providers
- Triage nursing advice
- Child health and parenting advice
- Chronic disease self-management
- Quitline counseling and support

The HCC also responds to health alerts to form a single point of communication during times of adverse events, such as floods, disease outbreaks and food recalls. The HCC has the ability to rapidly respond in such emergencies, to provide information to the public.

The HCC operates in partnership with Smart Services Queensland (SSQ), the whole of Queensland government contact centre, to provide screening and health information services. This is done through Customer Service Advisors (CSAs) who are also able to respond to a variety of queries about other wellbeing and government services. Within the partnership model, SSQ provides the facilities and technology including telephony, scripting tools, rostering system and reporting tools. The HCC, in addition to providing frontline services to the public, also has functions of clinical and corporate governance, content and contract management, links to other relevant Queensland Public Health Services, and furthers the planning and business development of telephone based health services for Queensland.

On any given day the HCC has approximately 1,300 interactions with Queenslanders via in and out bound calls providing primary and preventative health care.

The state-wide service is delivered from a central contact centre, based at Upper Mount Gravatt, Brisbane. The HCC is collocated with SSQ and has technology and accommodation business continuity arrangements with SSQ’s Creek Street, Brisbane operations.

2. HCC services

All services of the HCC consist of three core elements – people, processes and technology. The services are integrated with each other and, in varying degrees, to the
broader health system both internal and external to Queensland Health. The services are designed to leverage core elements from each other thus providing small to medium size economies of scale. The phone based services of the HCC are a combination of inbound and outbound delivery models. The online, or self-service, based services can also be supported via phone for consumers and are utilised to respond to consumers who seek a phone based service.

SSQ CSAs provide the first point of contact for Queenslanders calling either 13 QGOV (13 7468), 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) or 13 QUIT (13 7842). On answer the CSA will conduct a brief "screening" of the caller to ascertain whether they (or someone with the caller) is suffering symptoms, is in distress, is calling regarding child health and parenting advice, is enrolled in a chronic disease self-management program or is wanting support to quit smoking. If the screening process identifies these as the reason for the call then the consumer is transferred to the relevant service queue at the HCC.

For all other call reasons, including Health Alerts in times of crisis or events such as outbreaks of communicable disease in the community, the SSQ CSA will seek to resolve the call using pre-determined scripted information, QFinder (directory of health and community services) or the Health Information Directory (HID) (repository of health and well-being factsheets) as appropriate.

The Health Contact Centre has mature processes for the delivery of services. The following diagram illustrates at a high level the services provided and the flow of interaction with consumers. Appendix1 includes a series of process maps providing a high level view of each service showing the call flow, workforce utilised to respond to callers and technology used to ensure evidenced based clinical practice and electronic medical records.
2.1 Customer phone services

2.1.1 General health information and screening
Predominately the 13 HEALTH number is accessed for general health and wellbeing information. Enquiries can vary from “I’m new to this area and what to know of a dentist”, to “my child has come home from school with a form about vaccinations that he is to have tomorrow, I want to know about the human papillomavirus”, to “I just saw the Chief Health Officer on TV saying there is an outbreak of dengue fever what can do so I don’t get it?”. For such enquiries SSQ aim to resolve the matter by using predetermined scripts, QFinder and/or the HID. If a consumer indicates they have symptoms or are wanting to speak with a clinician they are transferred to a nurse.

2.1.2 Teletriage service
The triage service is delivered by Registered Nurses. It is a safe and effective way of providing health-related advice via the telephone. Nurses use a clinical decision support system based on clinically proven protocols to determine the appropriate recommendation of care. Teletriage may include symptom assessment, home treatment advice, referral, information, disease management and crisis intervention. (Page 1 of Appendix 1 shows the resolution of the call through the triage process using the CDSS, the HID and QFinder as appropriate.)

2.1.3 Child Health service
The Child Health service provides parenting support and advice, including early intervention, health promotion and education to parents/carers and service providers of children between 0-5 years of age. The child health service also make outbound calls as a result of triage assessments that determine the child is well but early intervention or education would be beneficial. (Appendix 1 shows the use of CDSS to resolve Child Health calls.)

2.1.4 Quitline
The Quitline service (accessed via the number 13 QUIT - 13 7848) provides non-judgemental evidence-based smoking cessation interventions and ongoing support to members of the Queensland public. The Quitline team also makes pro-active outbound calls for a number of programs. In addition to the general quit smoking program Quitline also delivers the Quit Smoking for Life, Quit Now and Proactive Quit Support (offered to all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander callers) programs. A number of these programs involve the provision of nicotine replacement therapy. (Page 3 of Appendix 1 shows the process of resolving the call including the use of the Quitline CRM and fulfilment (distribution of materials and products) as required). Quitline leads the nation in smoking cessation programs and rates for indigenous populations.

2.1.5 Chronic Disease Management service
Delivered through The COACH Program®, the Chronic Disease Management service is an evidence-based self-management program for individuals with chronic disease. The program provides telephone coaching sessions that focus on achieving specific risk factor targets, with the aim of improving quality of life and reducing avoidable
hospitals admissions. The COACH Program is an outbound service and clients are predominately referred by Queensland Health hospitals as part of rehabilitation post discharge.

2.2 Customer self-service (online services)

QFinder and the Health Information Directory (HID) are tools that are used extensively by SSQ CSAs and by the HCC to effectively resolve calls through the provision of health service provider information and/or health and wellbeing information. These tools are also published on the internet via the Department of Health website and are used by the public to self-serve rather than phoning.

In 2013 QFinder was searched 134,997 times. The following graph shows the top 20 searches by Service Provider Type. It should be noted that SSQ also use QFinder to respond to calls about disability care issues and people who are homeless.

In 2013 the Health Information Directory was searched 1,195,285 times. 79% of visitors were new and 21% were returning visitors to the HID. The top 20 health topics searched within the HID are shown in the following table.
3. **Customer profiles**

The HCC collaborates with various external agencies and work units within Queensland Health to deliver its services.

Key stakeholders within the Department of Health are:

- Preventative Health Directorate
- Division of the Chief Health Officer
- Centre for Trauma, Loss and Disaster Recovery
- Hospital and Health Services
- Statewide Clinical Networks
- Health Services Information Agency
- Nursing and Midwifery Office, Queensland

Key external stakeholders are:

- Smart Services Queensland
- Department of Health and Ageing
- Medicare Locals – 11 across Queensland
- Various Queensland based health associations, such as the Heart Foundation
HCC customers include:

- Hospital and Health Services
- QFinder users
- Health Information Directory users

The Queensland public account for the majority of HCC customers. Specifically, this includes:

- Participants of the COACH program, the chronic disease self-management program that assists Queenslanders with coronary heart disease and type 2 diabetes to reduce the risk of future hospital admissions;
- Recipients of Quitline service, which provides assistance for people who want to quit smoking. Available 24 hours, 7 days a week, Quitline offers support, encouragement and resources to help with quitting;
- Recipients of the Child Health Line service, a specialised service with a focus on supporting and empowering parents and carers of children 0-5 years; and
- Recipients of the teletriage service, which provides Queenslanders with easy access to health advice, information, referral and triage services.

4. HCC staff

The Director, HCC reports to the General Manager, HSQ and is responsible for providing effective leadership and management of all HCC operations. The management team, reporting to the Director, consists of the Director of Nursing, Senior Medical Officer, Allied Health Coordinator and the Business Administration Manager.

The HCC organisational structure (Appendix 2) is accurate as at March 2014.

The following data is accurate as at March 2014:

- Approximately 60% of staff work part time
- Approximately 34% of staff work full time
- Less than 10% of staff are employed on a casual basis.
Appendix 1  Process maps

13HEALTH Call – to HCC

Queenslander | Smart Service Queensland | Health Contact Centre | Transfer Destination | System

Queenslander calls 13HEALTH (13452554)

Customer Service Advisor answers the call

If the caller suffering symptoms?

YES: Caller transferred to triage queue

Caller triaged by Registered nurse

Does the caller require an Ambulance?

YES: Caller warm transferred to QAS

Conduct Flood MH questions

Triage outcome suitable for AHGP service

Triage outcome to seek face to face medical consultation

Does the caller have a regular medical practitioner

NO: Call record transmitted to AHGP

Search in QFinder to locate appropriate service

To QFinder

Search in Health Information Directory to locate appropriate information

Queenslander uses the internet to locate a health service provider in Queensland

Queenslander uses the internet to locate a health information in Queensland

Is the call regarding child health and wellness?

YES: Caller transferred to Child Health queue

Child health advice provided to caller

NO: SSQ Info

Call transferred to other service or number provided

Caller requires Health Information

Caller requires Poisons Line or other external service

Caller has further query regarding child health and wellness

Final Decision Support System - PS4sm

Final Decision Support System - PS4sm
13HEALTH Call – within SSQ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Queensland</th>
<th>Smart Service Queensland</th>
<th>Health Contact Centre</th>
<th>Transfer Destination</th>
<th>System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SSQ Info</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Call is regarding Health Alert</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Call is regarding Health Information</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Call is regarding Patient Transport Subsidy Scheme</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Call is regarding a Health Service Provider</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

To HID

To Qfinder
Appendix 2

Health Contact Centre organisational chart

Health Contact Centre Organisational Chart
Approved March 2014