

## Executive Summary

The Queensland Health Community Rehabilitation Workforce Project (CRWP) was funded for five (5) years until June 2008, by the Australian Government Pathways Home Programme. The aim of the CRWP was to optimise the capability of the current and future workforce to develop, implement and evaluate community rehabilitation (CR) programmes to meet the current and emerging health needs of the Queensland community. An initial and critical aspect of the project was an *Audit of the Training and Education Needs of Staff Working in Community Rehabilitation in Queensland* conducted by Griffith University. This formative evaluation involved 190 participants and developed 10 competency domains for CR. A series of literature reviews and the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) also formed a basis for subsequent project activities.

Developing the CR assistant workforce was a major aspect of the project. This included piloting an Advanced CR Assistant (ACRA) role in six (6) sites across Queensland. The development of the ACRA role was locally driven through a service mapping and needs analysis process. Consistency across the pilot sites regarding the purpose of the role, resulted in the development of a state-wide role description. Evaluation from the perspective of the ACRA, health professionals and clients indicated that the role was valuable. Many of the pilot sites have secured ongoing funding. The project also funded the development of an online training module for health professionals around skills for supervising assistants.

The CRWP funded Sunshine Coast TAFE to develop learning materials and to deliver the Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance with directed electives in CR to 60 sponsored participants. Once they graduate in June 2009, participants will be a valuable resource for future advanced assistant roles. Development of a nationally recognised qualification specific to advanced assistant roles in CR through the Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council, was also funded by the project. Three (3) new units of competency are approaching the final endorsement stage and it has been recommended that learning materials be developed for these new units.

Learning and development activities for health professionals in the existing CR workforce were also delivered by the project with over 1,600 participants attending in-services, workshops and videoconferences provided by Training and Development Officers. Formal evaluation indicated that this interdisciplinary training was valued and valuable and that rural and remote clinicians were able to gain equitable access. Training and Development Implementation Grants

funded 25 projects to implement changes in the workplace linked with learning and development activities.

The project also funded post-graduate scholarships which were awarded to 81 applicants who studied CR related courses at a variety of universities. Scholarship recipients reported a wide variety of learning outcomes which they planned to apply to their current CR roles. In addition, three (3) major postgraduate course initiatives were funded by the CRWP at Queensland universities. A total of 13 research grants and 10 evidence based practice grants were also funded. In order to effectively monitor the outcomes of CR services in the future, the Centre for Allied Health Evidence (University of South Australia) was commissioned to develop a compendium of clinical (outcome) measures in CR.

Training of the future workforce was another priority for the CRWP. The project funded curriculum development in CR at eight (8) tertiary institutions. An interdisciplinary student placement in CR model was also developed with 134 students from various universities participating. Evaluation results indicated that students found the placement to be of value, particularly with respect to working with other disciplines, but that there was some dissatisfaction with the limited opportunity to practice discipline specific skills. A neuro-rehabilitation practicum for physiotherapy students from James Cook University was also trialled and evaluated, and the M.A.G.P.I.E process was developed as a case management model for students and clinicians.

Sustainability of project achievements was maximized through the development and wide dissemination of a resource DVD which includes workbooks, toolkits, learning materials, and research findings developed or funded through the project. The project internet site which includes many of these materials, will also be maintained in the long term. The CR Special Interest Group, and the CR Contacts Group will also continue after project closure. They will continue dissemination of project resources, peer support, networking, training delivery, facilitation of evidence based practice and advocacy of best practice in CR at a client and systems level.

Key project recommendations include:

- Broadening the scope of all aspects of the CRWP to encompass the whole continuum of care and enhance the focus on paediatrics.
- Continuing the interdisciplinary approach to workplace learning and development, clinical education and post-graduate education.
- Expanding partnerships with service providers, including within Queensland Health, other Government agencies, private practitioners and NGOs, and with the VET sector and universities both nationally and

internationally in curriculum development, research, and delivery of learning and development programs.

- Continuing a strong focus on innovative workforce solutions across the continuum of care in areas such as advanced support personnel, eHab (Tele-rehabilitation), extended scope of practice, and other alternative models of service delivery.
- Continuing a strong marketing focus which includes strong branding of CR.