

Medical Wards, Bundaberg Hospital, Wide Bay HHS

Health Service Investigation and Clinical Review 2022

Background

The Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service (HHS) has responded to internal allegations regarding medication management and administration on Medical Wards, Bundaberg Hospital, including undertaking reviews into medication management and/or practice, respectively. The Wide Bay HHS has reviewed the health system practices, streamlined processes, reported appropriately to external authorities and initiated disciplinary measures where necessary. To date, there has been no confirmed evidence of patient harm or death regarding these serious allegations.

A patient advocate has raised concerns about medication management and administration at Bundaberg Hospital.

The Queensland Health Acting Director-General Shaun Drummond has commissioned a Clinical Review and Health Service Investigation under the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011* to ensure that the concerns are comprehensively investigated and any further opportunities for improvement can be identified and implemented, including on a state-wide basis.

Clinical Review Scope

The Clinical Review will review and provide expert clinical advice to the Health Service Investigators regarding the treatment provided to a sufficient sample of patients who were prescribed and/or administered S8 and S4 medications with a sedative effect in Medical Ward 3 within the Bundaberg Hospital, Wide Bay HHS for the period 2021 including:

- reviewing the patient records to identify any alleged patient harm or death resulting from the prescribing and/or administration of S8 and S4 medications with a sedative effect;
- reviewing the patient records to identify if prescribing and/or administration of S8 medications and/or S4 medicines with a sedative effect, were clinically indicated;
- reviewing the patient records and interviewing staff to identify if prescribing and/or administration of S8 medications and/or S4 medicines with a sedative effect, were allegedly used to enable an 'easier shift' for nursing staff;
- interviewing staff and reviewing information obtained from a dedicated staff feedback line and online feedback form to consider whether staff can identify specific instances of alleged patient harm or death resulting from the prescribing or administration of S8 and/or S4 medications with a sedative effect in Medical Ward 3;
- reviewing and considering whether the content of and level of compliance with existing policies and procedures relevant to medication management and administration, or individual matters, had any impact on the standard and quality of

care provided to patients prescribed and/or administered S8 and/or S4 medications with a sedative effect.

The Clinical Review report will be provided to the Health Service Investigators.

Health Service Investigation

The Health Service Investigation will investigate matters relating to the clinical governance, management, administration or delivery of public sector health services in Medical Wards 2 and 3 within the Bundaberg Hospital, Wide Bay HHS, specifically in relation to the management of S8 and S4 medicines with a sedative effect including:

- interviewing staff and reviewing information obtained from a dedicated staff feedback line and online feedback form to consider whether staff at the Bundaberg Hospital felt scared, unable or threatened about speaking up or reporting matters internally or to external authorities (e.g. Queensland Police Service (QPS), Office of the Health Ombudsman (OHO), Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), Department of Health);
- reviewing the clinical care and treatment policies and procedures relevant to medication management and administration, and considering whether, from an overarching perspective:
 - appropriate policies and procedures are in place;
 - there is, and has been, compliance with existing policies and procedures; and
 - if any non-compliance with policy or procedure is identified, whether there has been any impact on patient safety;
- reviewing the clinical governance practices and systems relevant to medication management and administration, including proactive risk management, staff compliance to relevant medication training, audit and monitoring, quality improvement, and incident management, identifying the extent to which these clinical governance practices and systems:
 - are in place;
 - operate proactively to effectively identify issues at a clinician, ward and hospital level;
 - operate reactively to effectively enable escalation and reporting of issues internally and/or to relevant authorities (e.g. QPS, OHO, AHPRA, Department of Health); and
 - result in appropriate actions being taken to address any issues.

Health Service Investigators / Clinical Reviewers

The membership of the Investigation and Review teams will include:

- Independent Geriatrician (doctor who specialises in people aged 65 years and older)
- Independent Nurse, specialising in Geriatrics
- Independent Pharmacist

- Independent Consumer (note consumer is a member of the Health Service Investigation only given the Clinical Review focuses on a review of patient medical records)

The Executive Director, Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Service and Director Ethical Standards Unit will be available to support the Investigators and Clinical Review team as required.