

Emergency department physiotherapy practitioner collaborative

Background

Emergency physiotherapy practitioner (EPP) roles have been identified as an effective strategy to improve access for patients presenting to emergency departments (ED) with musculoskeletal conditions.

Robina Hospital successfully implemented the Health Workforce Australia (HWA) sponsored Advanced Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy Clinical Education Framework and established a primary contact EPP role. Primary contact physiotherapy services have also been implemented in other Queensland Hospital and Health Services. Services acknowledged the importance of developing formal role descriptions, competency and training guidelines and governance and evaluation frameworks in order to support the statewide implementation of this model of care.

This collaborative project aimed to support existing EPPs at multiple sites within Queensland Health to optimise their scope of practice (including extending scope of practice within appropriate contexts) and fulfil primary contact physiotherapy roles using the workplace competency framework as developed by the HWA.

Activities and Deliverables

As the lead site, Robina Hospital supported participating sites to implement the HWA framework within the context of local environments. Activities included:

- assisting sites to negotiate with local ED consultants and other stakeholders to ensure expanded scope practices could be undertaken and utilised for the benefit of the community
- assisting sites to recruit local medical mentors
- providing mentorship and support, including site visits and competency assessments
- organising and facilitating a two-day training seminar for 22 practitioners
- organising and facilitating monthly 'Physiotherapy in the ED' videoconferences.

Over the course of 12 months, the collaborative has supported current EPPs in Queensland to participate in and complete competency-based training as developed by the HWA. As a result, this has enabled the development of a network of trained clinicians to:

- mentor future 'Primary contact physiotherapists in the ED' through the implementation of appropriate competency-based training programs
- apply for local credentialing to undertake extended scope of practice roles within appropriate contexts
- participate in collaborative research projects, including the Physiotherapy Defined Scope of Practice (Prescribing) Trial.

Contact

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