
Ophthalmology Clinical Pathways Redesign Program

Initiative Type

Model of Care

Status

Plan

Added

06 March 2018

Last updated

08 January 2024

URL

<https://clinicalexcellence.qld.gov.au/improvement-exchange/ophthalmology-clinical-pathways-redesign-program>

Summary

The project is a 12 month program to implement alternate clinical ophthalmic pathways utilising skills of Optometrist, Nurse Practitioner / Clinical Nurse Consultant (CNC) and Orthoptists. These practitioners will undertake initial assessment or reviews based on evidenced pathways (glaucoma, paediatrics) to reduce delays to definitive assessment and treatment. This initiative will include

establishing sustainable criteria and a comprehensive evaluation tool.

Key dates

Jan 2018

Jun 2019

Implementation sites

Sunshine Coast Hospital & Health Services, Ambulatory Care Centre at Caloundra Hospital

Partnerships

Partnering with, SCHHS Executive & leadership team and SCHHS Ophthalmology multidisciplinary team and the Healthcare Improvement Unit (HIU)

Key Contacts

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Aim

Provide effective patient pathways where an alternate health provider can initiate first contact, assess and commence a treatment pathway, thus enhancing timely access to care and ensuring specialist ophthalmologist resources are utilised effectively.

Benefits

The potential benefits of this model includes:

- Service redesign and expansion to improve access, maximise safety and provide consistent care
- Improved patient, carer and staff satisfaction
- Patients seen by most appropriate clinician for their condition
- Patients seen sooner
- Potential to collaborate with community optometry to support ongoing ophthalmic care for an ageing population
- More effective utilisation of ophthalmic specialty resources – multidisciplinary model of care
- Reduced need for hospital visits for appointments in Ambulatory Care Centre (ACC)

Background

Ophthalmology services is facing increasing challenges driven by a growing and aging population, an increasing burden of chronic disease and an increased demand. The Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) provides services to a population of approximately 480,000 that is forecast to increase by 21 per cent by 2021. Furthermore, the SCHHS has the highest percentage of the population over 65 years of age compared to the Queensland average. Vision loss trebles for every decade of life after 40 years of age. Data confirms the demand for ophthalmology services significantly outweighs the current services provided by the SCHHS.

References

The SCHHS Optometrist Led Clinic is aligning with the RANZCO collaborative care model for the referral pathway for glaucoma management. Drury, Vicki. (2017). An integrative literature review of the effectiveness of nurse-led clinics in ophthalmology. *Insight - the Journal of the American Society of Ophthalmic Registered Nurses*. 22.

Further Reading

[The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists \(RANZCO\)](#)

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