
Reducing Neurology Specialist Outpatient Long Waits

Initiative Type

Redesign

Status

Deliver

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<https://clinicaexcellence.qld.gov.au/improvement-exchange/reducing-neurology-specialist-outpatient-long-waits>

Summary

As part of the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service (GCHHS) efforts to reduce overall Specialist Outpatient (SOPD) long wait volumes, the Neurology Outpatients Service Redesign project was initiated and, through close interactions with both Executive and Clinical Teams, implemented a range of innovative and alternative models of care. These models included Advanced Allied Health

Practitioner, Nurse Practitioner screening clinics and nurse-led phone screening clinics. The implementation of these alternate models, as well as short term strategies including After-hour consultant clinics, resulted in a significant reduction in long wait volumes as well as a subsequent service delivery sustainability.

Key dates

Jan 2016

Jan 2018

Implementation sites

Gold Coast University Hospital

Key Contacts

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Aim

Reduce the number of patients waiting outside the clinically recommended timeframe for their Neurology appointment.

Benefits

Provides a sustainable service model to ensure adequate capacity to meet both current and future demand.

Background

Neurology Specialist Outpatients (SOPD) waiting outside of their clinically recommended timeframes (long wait) peaked at 484 patients in February 2017.

Solutions Implemented

The following models of care were implemented over the course of the project;

- Nurse Practitioner treatment clinics
- First seizure CNC clinic
- Nurse-led phone clinic
- Nurse Practitioner referral screening process
- Advanced Allied Health Practitioner treatment clinic

Evaluation and Results

A total of 165 additional new patients were treated from February 2017 to July 2017 as a result of the new strategies implemented. In addition to this, outpatient review capacity was improved as a result of patients with 'normal' test results being contacted by phone. Weekly productive new appointments within the Neurology SOPD service increased from an average of 28 new appointments per week in February 2017 to an average of 44 new appointments per week in June 2017. This figure has subsequently plateaued at 34 new appointments per week as of the most recent MIS data update (5 March 2018). The reduction can be attributed to the secession of after-hours clinics and normalising of implemented strategies. The continued expansion of alternate models of care within the Neurology SOPD Service ensures the right patients are seeing the right clinicians at the right time thus resulting in improved efficiencies and overall patient satisfaction.

