
Oral Health Mobile Dental Imaging Project

Initiative Type

Service Improvement

Status

Deliver

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<https://clinicaexcellence.qld.gov.au/improvement-exchange/oral-health-mobile-dental-imaging-project>

Summary

This project aligns with the Destination 2030 "Great Care, Great Experience" strategic objective. The aim is to implement a mobile dental imaging service in Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service (HHS) to provide care closer to home for residents of residential aged care facilities (RACFs), mental health units, disability care homes and for patients under general anaesthesia in operating theatres.

Key dates

Jan 2021

Dec 2021

Implementation sites

Theatre 5 Rockhampton Base Hospital, Eventide Residential Aged Care Facility, North Rockhampton Nursing Centre, Mental Health Inpatient Unit, Birribi (disability care)

Partnerships

Frail older persons collaborative (project sponsor)

Key Contacts

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Aim

The aim of this project is to implement a mobile dental imaging service into off-site oral health screening and treatment procedures.

Benefits

- dental imaging services available for residents of aged care facilities, mental health units and disability care homes across Central Queensland HHS (public and private)
- dental imaging services available for in theatre imaging
- dental imaging provided closer to home (where safe and in keeping with patient choice)
- reduce dental imaging wait times
- toolkit available to support implementation of mobile dental imaging in other HHSs
- earlier identification of dental issues requiring assessment.

Background

Data has shown that 21% of Residential Aged Care and residents with disabilities were unable to attend their Oral Health appointments between 2016 and 2021. The main reason given was that of transport barriers (up to 79%). This trend was also noticeable to the Oral Health team at Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service. With support from the Queensland Technology Futures Funding (QTFF) - sponsored by the Frail Older Person's Collaborative - Central Queensland HHS has embarked on a project to provide care closer to home.

Solutions Implemented

- Dental imaging software was downloaded on laptops that could be transported to residential age care facilities, theatre, mental health units and disability care homes.
- Dental imaging sensors and mobile dental imaging equipment was procured together with special suitcases that would facilitate transport off site.
- During off-site visits, radiographs were taken during dental exams to facilitate improved diagnosis of dental disease and more accurate treatment planning .
- Web applications were developed to collect feedback.

Evaluation and Results

- Feedback applications were developed, and the project lead collected feedback throughout the duration of the project.
- Spreadsheets were populated with data from where trends were analysed and adjustments and improvements were implemented based on feedback.
- Feedback on this project was overwhelmingly positive and it highlighted the need for a sustainable mobile dental service. 87 % of respondents said they felt comfortable and safe during visit; 91% said the mobile X-Ray added value to their examination; and 90% of respondents were satisfied with the care they had received.

Lessons Learnt

- Initial delays due to slow document turnover (i.e. attaining signatures at executive level)
 - need to streamline processes
- Poor internet connectivity drastically impacted roll-out and functionality due to issues with accessing patient management systems and imaging software
- Project was exceptionally well received at all facilities where it was rolled out and an urgent need exists for a sustainable mobile dental model of care

References

Findings from the aged care Royal Commission in addition to the following publications: 1. Queensland Health. Destination 2030. <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cq/destination-2030> 2. Syed ST, Gerber BS, Sharp LK. Traveling towards disease: transportation barriers to health care access. *Journal of community health*. 2013;38(5):976-93. 3. Collins, JN, Santamaria, and L. Clayton, Why outpatients fail to attend their scheduled appointments: a prospective comparison of differences between attenders and non-attenders *J Australian Health Review*. 2003; 26(1): 52-63. 4. McLean, S., M. Gee, and A. Booth, Targeting the Use of Reminders and Notifications for Uptake by Populations (TURNUP): a systematic review and evidence synthesis. *Health Services and Delivery Research*. Vol. 2.34. 2014, Southampton (UK): NIHR Journals Library. 5. Australian Government. Aged Care Royal Commission Final Report: Recommendations. In: Commission ACR, editor. Australia2021.