

Improving the Management of Patients with Severe Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD) in Victorian Hospitals

Education and Training for Managing Dementia and BPSD

#8 in a series of 10 project summaries

Context

The rate of dementia rises quickly with age. Given Australia's ageing population, the number of older people diagnosed with dementia is a significant and growing issue for health and aged care services. In response to concerns regarding the capacity of Victorian health services to provide best care for older people with dementia who present to the emergency department (ED) and/or are admitted to hospital, the Victorian Department of Health (DH) commissioned the National Ageing Research Institute (NARI) to undertake a comprehensive review of the extent, impact and current management of this patient population. Of particular interest were patients who demonstrate behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD), a range of neuropsychiatric disturbances common among people with dementia, which are often initiated and/or exacerbated by the hospital environment.

Project Activities

This component of the larger project aimed to explore the education and training of staff regarding dementia and BPSD in Victorian hospitals

1. Benchmarking Survey



Staff reported current models of care and management strategies for inpatients with dementia, including those with BPSD, across Victorian health services:

- 104 responses analysed
- 18 different clinical roles represented
- 13 different health services represented

2. Staff Interviews



Semi-structured phone interviews with staff from Victorian hospitals to identify issues and opportunities relating to current service provision and education and training:

- 16 staff interviewed
- 6 different clinical roles represented
- 6 different health services represented

Key Findings

Staff Education and Training



Availability of education and training for staff regarding dementia and BPSD is highly variable across hospitals and hospital settings. It is:

- Most likely in subacute settings (where it is also regularly available to all members of the inter-disciplinary team)
- Least likely in acute settings (where it is also often limited to medical and nursing staff)

Technically training and education around dementia and BPSD should be mandatory however, when there is training, staff are usually on duty in the ward

Provision of education and training for staff

most commonly occurs during staff orientation and is delivered by a range of disciplines such as: Clinical Nurse Educators, Ward-based Clinical Nurse Specialists, Organisational Specialist Dementia Nurses, Geriatricians and Allied Health



We regularly use health service assistants to manage patients with complex behaviours - they are the least experienced staff looking after the most complex patients with little or no training



Delivery of education and training for staff

is not mandatory in most hospitals - instead many staff self-source education through external online programs run by Dementia Australia as well as the University of Tasmania's dementia-specific MOOC

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Major Collaborations:



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