Rural Collaborative Guideline Implementation
Evaluation of a hub and spoke multidisciplinary team model of care for orthogeriatric inpatients: a before and after study of adherence to clinical practice guidelines

Tracey Drabsch, Western NSW LHD
tracey.drabsch@gwahs.health.nsw.gov.au

**Background:** An innovative hub and spoke multidisciplinary team using inter-professional collaborative practice was implemented in June 2010 in a rural setting by establishing the Sub-Acute Care Team (SCT).

**Aim:** To evaluate whether adherence to orthogeriatric inpatient clinical practice guidelines increased after SCT implementation.

**Methods:** This before and after study describes a medical record audit of inpatients aged 65 years and older who sustained a lower limb fracture from a fall, were admitted to a regional facility and subsequent rural facility. The audit included 42 inpatients admitted before the SCT (April 2009-April 2010) and 35 inpatients admitted after the SCT (April 2011-April 2012). The SCT used orthogeriatric clinical practice guidelines to inform inpatient care. Adherence to the guidelines was measured by answering ten questions representative of the guidelines. Chi-square or Fisher's exact tests were used for each question to identify if the proportion of inpatients receiving guideline based care changed significantly after SCT implementation.

**Results:** After SCT implementation an increase in the adherence to guidelines was statistically significant (p<.05) for; handover, nutrition support, falls prevention, bladder management and more than 5 guideline based care questions. Additionally, more than 60% of the inpatients received care related to weight bearing status, patient/carers discussion, bladder management, osteoporosis management, handover and nutrition support.

**Conclusions:** Adherence to orthogeriatric inpatient clinical practice guidelines increased after the implementation of the SCT. The mechanisms likely to have contributed include the multidisciplinary hub and spoke model, inter-professional collaborative care and the comprehensive multidisciplinary handover.

**Implications for Practice:** This model is likely to be effective in improving care for other frail inpatient populations.

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Tracey Drabsch is a senior physiotherapist in subacute care for the Western New South Wales Local Health District. She has extensive experience in rehabilitation and an interest in the provision of evidence based care for people in rural communities. Tracey is also an Adjunct Associate Lecturer at Charles Sturt University.