

Community Expectations and Evidence-Based Practice



Eye & Ear Hospital
caring in every sense



Perspective of a
Specialist
Tertiary Hospital

A Tertiary, Specialist Hospital

- Our Vision: *Improved quality of life through caring for the senses*
- Changing the way we do things:
 - Models of care
 - Teaching, Training
 - Research
 - Workforce
 - Affiliations
 - Information technology
- A commitment to application of evidence to support change
- Preparing to redevelop facilities

A Simple Proposition

- Don't spend public money on things that don't work
- Target funding to measures which improve
 - The health of populations
 - The health of individuals
- Apply evidence to:
 - Policy, e.g. health promotion, public health, therapy
 - Funding of services
 - Diagnosis, courses of treatment and episodes of care
 - Models of care
 - Use of workforce skills

But...

- There are two communities in our world:
 - Consumers
 - Providers
- Many sub communities with different expectations
- We live in a democracy
- Limits to evidence

Consumer Expectations

- Expectations, needs, wants, rights
- Courteous, timely care, solutions
- What do communities of consumers want?
 - Young educated, articulate
 - Older people
 - Indigenous people
 - People of CALD origins
 - Women, men, children (parents)
 - PLWA
 - DVA
 - Private patients

Provider Expectations

- Forces for conservation
 - Preserve the status quo
 - Protect professional turf
- Forces for change
 - Innovate in the public interest
 - Innovate for personal advancement

Evidence

- Less than half of all medical care in the United States is based on firm evidence of effectiveness
 - “Trial and error medicine” or “personalised medicine” (HBR October 2007)
 - *How Doctors Think*, Groopman J, Scribe, 2007
- Levels of evidence
 - Systematic review of RCTs ↔ expert opinion without explicit critical appraisal
- Objective, measurable efficacy
- Illness and wellness are defined by the patient

Hard care and soft care

- Be clear about the objectives of clinical services
- The patient defines illness
 - Placebo can work
 - Alternative therapies can work
- Customer service is important
- Duty to inform patients about evidence

Conclusion

- Apply the principle
- Manage the difficulties in applying it
- Balance:
 - Expectations of communities and individual consumers
 - Evidence
 - Expectations of providers
- Resource the accumulation of evidence
- Invest the effort required to apply it
- Requirement for evidence will increase