

Victorian Healthcare Association Limited

The Consumer's Role in Health Service Quality

Presentation By
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Health complaint commissioners in Australia and New Zealand

- **What we do**
 - The HSC receives and resolves complaints about health service providers with a view to improving the quality of health services for everybody.
- **Legislation**
 - *Health Services (Conciliation and Review) Act 1987*
 - *Health Records Act 2001*
- **How we do it**
 - Assessment, mediation and conciliation
 - Impartial and confidential

Consumer Complaints

- All complaints contain communication issues:
 - Why? Sick, worried, vulnerable
 - Technical language, jargon

“What went wrong and why? I don’t want what happened to me to happen to someone else.”

Silences

- Don't mention the d.... word
 - My uncle
- Nurses responses:

"I lost both my parents last year and I'm a better nurse for it."

The Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights

- Treating people with respect
"I just wish they had listened to me."
- A rude word can really hurt
"What do you think I am.... your maid?"
- Conciliation

The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities

Freedom

Respect

Equality

Dignity

Quality of Care Reports

- Even though CHS's only doing it for two years, they are doing it very well
- Consumer involvement
- Good old bad days of lip service
- CAC – genuine involvement versus *"We all love John"*
- "Doing it with us not for us"
- Patient-centred care

Informed Consent Research Project

- “When Informed Consent Goes Poorly: A Descriptive Study of Health Care Complaints and Medical Negligence Claims”
- ARC Linkage Project grant
- Led by Professor David Studdert, School of Population Health, University of Melbourne
- Partners:
 - Health Services Commissioner
 - Avant Mutual Group Limited
 - Department of Health (Victoria)

Informed Consent Research Project

- Informed consent has become a particular concern of the HSC over the past decade, particularly with regard to complaints about unexpected outcomes of procedures.
- Many complainants state they do not remember being warned of the possibility of any risks or complications or, if they were warned, the risks were dismissed or minimised by the service provider.
- Consequently, when complications occur, the patient is considerably distressed as they had never considered such things might happen. The HSC regards it as a very important area in which to do research and identify strategies for improving patient care.
- This will be one of the largest individual research projects the HSC has ever undertaken. This is a very important undertaking for organisations throughout Australia engaged in consumer protection issues in health care.
- Demonstration of successful research in these settings will send a powerful message about what it is possible to learn from complaints.

Australian Institute for Patient and Family Centred Care

Contacts

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Purpose

- Advancing the understanding and practice of patient and family centred care.
- To improve the healthcare experience and outcomes for patients, families and healthcare professionals.
- Provide on-site training, technical assistance and education packages to all healthcare professionals and students. Undertake research and evaluation. Develop policy statements. Advise healthcare program planners and decision makers.
- In hospitals and community based health services. In medical, nursing, administration and allied health training sites.

Australian Institute for Patient and Family Centred Care

- The Australian Institute for Patient and Family Centred Care (the Institute) exists to improve the manner in which healthcare is delivered and how it is experienced by patients, families and health professionals.
- We encourage change, through collaboration and partnerships which enable patients and their families to have an active voice in their healthcare decisions.
- The work of the Institute highlights the improvements in quality, safety and standards of care associated with patient and family centred care.

Australian Institute for Patient and Family Centred Care

Rationale

The patient and family centred approach to healthcare has been shown to increase safety and cost effectiveness and improve patient, family and staff satisfaction.¹ The Institute addresses many of the growing concerns regarding Australia's healthcare needs, including:

- Meeting the needs of a burgeoning ageing population
- Caring for the increasing number of people living with chronic/preventable illness
- Providing better quality care for less cost
- Patient safety in hospital and community healthcare settings
- Retention of healthcare professionals

Australian Institute for Patient and Family Centred Care

Tools and Modules

The Institute's programs and activities focus on five main areas:

- strengthening patient and family/professional collaboration
- changing care in hospitals
- improving healthcare facility and service design
- transforming medical education
- advising on health policy

Australian Institute for Patient and Family Centred Care

Positive Outcomes

The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne

Day Surgery for oncology patients-designed in partnership with patients and families:

- increased efficiency by 400%
- reduced stress and anxiety for families
- improved pain management
- increased patient safety
- increased patient satisfaction
- increased staff satisfaction

Australian Institute for Patient and Family Centred Care

The Medical College of Georgia Neuroscience Center of Excellence (U.S.) implemented Patient and Family Centered Care when it opened in 2003⁴.

Three years of quality improvement data revealed the following:

- Patient satisfaction scores rose from the 10th to the 95th percentile
- Length of stay decreased by 50%
- Medical error rate fell by 62%
- Discharges (volume) increased 15.5%
- Nursing staff vacancy rate fell from 7.5% to zero; there is now a waiting list for staff
- A positive change in perceptions of the unit by faculty and staff

⁴ Profiles of Change - MCG Health (MCG Medical Center and MCG Children's Medical Center), Augusta, Georgia. Institute for Family-Centered Care; (www.familycenteredcare.org).

Australian Institute for Patient and Family Centred Care

Membership and Linkages

The Institute acknowledges the importance of strategic relationships which complement the work we do. To this end, we have established links with key industry bodies including the Australian Association for Quality in Healthcare, the Office of the Health Services Commissioner (Melbourne), Deakin University, Latrobe University, the Australian Council for Healthcare Standards and the World Health Organisation 'Patients for Patient Safety' forum.

Questions?



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