

Aged care news round up

The aged care initiative project involving aged care facilities (ACFs) and GPs continues to grow. Introducing information technology to ACFs has a significant role to play in the delivery of aged care services with the potential to improve the quality and delivery of care provided to the residents of aged care facilities.

Division changes over to Network

The division officially changed its name to the Northern Rivers General Practice Network on April 1st. As the NRGPN, we will continue to support our GPs and general practice to help improve the health of our community, which includes providing primary medical care to aged care residents.

Aged care facility visits

Recently I have been reviewing GPs' use of Medical Director and have noted that those who are visiting aged care facilities on a regular basis are attending to the Comprehensive Medical Assessments (CMA = \$183 p/resident p/a) and RMMRs.

The CMA is a valuable document providing a current health assessment. It is also very useful should a resident require transfer to hospital or another aged care facility.

I have also noted that GPs visiting out of hours generally are more reluctant to use the EPC

item numbers and have issues with staff not being available, access to facilities, and MD sometimes being a problem.

This seems to be a common occurrence in our area with GPs, at the end of a long day in their practice, having to then attend to the needs of aged care residents. In contrast, those GPs who have



regular visiting days and times find the staff at the facilities available for them to assist with Medical Director during their visit as well as encouraging them to use the EPC items Medicare has in place for aged care.

New ACF specific templates

The NRGPN has placed templates in Medical Director at the request of some of the ACFs participating in the program. These include restraint authority and resident's consent to the exchange of health information templates.

We are suggesting to aged care

facilities that they obtain written permission from a newly admitted resident to allow the GP to provide additional services such as CMA, RMMR, Care Plans and Case Conferencing. We hope this will encourage GPs to attend to these extra services.

MD survey

A recent survey sent to 37 GPs about Medical Director is currently being assessed. From the results of the survey a picture will emerge of the issues/problems you are having. With the information we gather from the survey, we will be able to better address your needs for a positive outcome for the program in the future.

A survey for the aged care facilities in our area is also to be sent out shortly.

Delirium education

We are planning a CPD event for GPs and ACF representatives in July, entitled *The 3Ds of Delerium*, to be presented by Dr Hugh Fairful-Smith and sponsored by Pfizer. The event will be held at Ballina Beach Resort. More info to follow and invites to be sent out in the coming weeks.

Thanks

I have been on the road recently trying to make contact with all ACFs in our area to discuss issues and problems they may be experiencing. I thank all I have come in contact with for their valuable time and feedback.