



Measure and Inform Cardiac Rehabilitation Services Across Australia

What is the challenge?

Attending cardiac rehabilitation (CR) following a heart attack is proven to save lives and prevent another heart attack by helping patients to manage risk factors and make lifestyle changes. Yet only around 31% of South Australians experiencing a cardiac event are currently referred to a program and most of those referred either don't attend (~65%) or don't complete (~28%) a CR program for the following reasons: lack of transport, competing work/life priorities, lack of understanding the importance of lifestyle changes and social factors. In South Australia there are limited referral systems to cardiac rehabilitation programs and limited ongoing measures that monitor the use, quality and effectiveness of the program in an accurate and timely manner.

About this research translation project

The project will be overseen by the Cardiac Rehabilitation and Secondary Prevention Workgroup that is part of the SA Academic Health Science and Translation Centre. The group has the aspirational goal that, within 5 years (by April 2021) 100% of eligible heart patients in SA are referred to recognised cardiac rehabilitation services, with at least 70% completing a program that suits the needs of the consumer and their families.

This workgroup brings together stakeholders from primary and secondary cardiovascular care, including clinicians, not-for-profits, policy-makers and researchers to provide leadership and recommendations on the translation of best practice evidence on CR to improve health outcomes.

The project will:

- Identify and gain agreement from all key stakeholders on 8-10 priority indicators for all South Australian CR health services to measure their effectiveness. These will include referral rates, completion rates and some measures regarding impact of the service on their heart health. It is anticipated that the existence of these indicators will drive service changes and system reform;
- Work with SA Health to develop a sustainable CR service measurement system, where the agreed indicators are



built into dashboard that is accessible to cardiac clinicians, cardiac rehabilitation staff, researchers and policy makers, who can review data in a timely and easy manner;

- Work with key interstate groups, who are doing similar activities, to share ideas and priorities through holding a national forum and building a national network with the vision to compare data across the country in the future.

What was the impact?

This work, involving several projects, has coordinated a state-wide cardiac rehabilitation monitoring and audit system that revolves around the establishment of evidence-based quality indicators supported by cardiac clinicians, thus providing a mechanism for reporting and service understanding including;

- i) Reporting and feedback to the CR services participating in the 2014 and 2015 state-wide audit.
- ii) Presented and published the results of the 2013, 2014 and 2015 data linkage CR outcomes project.
- iii) Identified state-base quality indicators for service effectiveness reporting.
- iv) Building the quality indicators into the SA Health acute coronary syndromes dashboard so that clinicians can view the status of their cardiac patients in real time and is ongoing in 2019.
- v) Hosted a national forum to gain consensus from clinicians, policy makers, data managers, consumers and researchers to progress a national CR quality indicator initiative and is ongoing in 2019.

Project contact details

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