



# “We’ve Got Your Back”

## Westmead Hospital

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### 1. Case for Change

**STAFF have voiced:** Cut DNA's Access Referrals & Triaging Enhance comms

**PATIENTS have voiced:** "It was a long-time waiting for an appointment...I suffered a lot"

1 IN 6 SEEN IN 12 MONTHS  
**1 IN 6**

1 IN 15 SEEN IN 12 MONTHS  
**1 IN 15**

**Today** 29% DNA @ \$397 lost/15min appointment

**2020**

### 2. Goal/Objectives

Exceptional People, Integrated Research, Education & Clinical Care, Patient Experience Matters, Spending Wisely

**Improve access to care for adult patients with back pain referred to Westmead Hospital Neurosurgical Clinics through a cost effective patient centred service by August 2018.**

**Objective 1:**  
To improve access to care by reducing the waiting time to be seen in clinic.  
a) Category 2 patients are seen within 90 days compared to 118 days by August 2018  
b) Category 3 patients are seen within 365 days compared to 463 days by August 2018.

**Objective 2:**  
To decrease the percentage of patients that do-not-attend (DNA) appointments from 29% to 19% by August 2018.

### 3. Methods

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Stakeholders/Staff Interviews: Medical (n = 8) Nursing (n = 3) Allied Health (n = 7) Aboriginal Liaison Officer (n = 1) Administrative Staff (n = 4) | Tag Along/Observation (n = 4)<br>Patient Interviews (n = 34) Consumer representatives (n = 2)<br>Patient Experience Surveys [PREMS] (n = 17)<br>Patient Reported Outcome Measures [PROMS] - RMQD & VAS (n = 8) | Literature Review (n = 23 articles)<br>Exemplar Physiotherapy Led Clinics (Telephone conversations n = 5)<br>Discussion with consumers representatives (face-to-face, teleconference)<br>Solutions workshop – blitz, power of three, brainstorming, multi-voting, persona, journey map |
|--|--|--|

### 5. Issues/Solutions/Results

| ISSUES  | SOLUTIONS   | RESULTS  |  |                     |                     |               |    |    |                |    |    |           |    |    |
|---|---|--|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|----|----|----------------|----|----|-----------|----|----|
| Lack of Access to the Clinics                 | <p><b>Physiotherapy Led Clinic</b><br/>Establishment of physiotherapy led clinics to provide early access to care</p> <p><b>Triaging Guidelines</b><br/>The creation of guidelines to ensure consistency in triaging referrals between different staff members to support appropriate timely access to care</p>   | <p><b>OBJECTIVE 1(b) ACHIEVED:</b> waiting time has been reduced by 8 months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>65% increase in productivity.</li> </ul> <p>Previous vs current available new patient monthly appointments</p>  |  |                     |                     |               |    |    |                |    |    |           |    |    |
| High Did Not Attend (DNA) Rates               | <p><b>Modification Of Appointment Text Messages</b><br/>Two text-message appointment reminders sent to patients, one stating the cost to the health care system for non-attended appointments. The other providing patients with the ability to confirm appointment attendance</p> <p><b>Allocation Of Administrative Staff</b><br/>Re-allocation of current administrative staff so that one member is given the ownership of the Neurosurgical clinic to make appointments in partnership with patients</p> | <p><b>OBJECTIVE 2 ACHIEVED:</b> DNA reduced by 13%. Financial saving of \$50,000 p.a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>99% of patients now receive a text-message reminder for their appointment.</li> </ul> <p>DNA Rate for the Neurosurgical and Physiotherapy Led Outpatient Clinic</p>   |  |                     |                     |               |    |    |                |    |    |           |    |    |
| Lack of Communication Between Spinal Services | <p><b>Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Case Conference</b><br/>An MDT meeting of spinal services at Westmead Hospital held monthly with a representative from each discipline who provides care for patients with spinal pain fostering collaboration between teams with a common goal to provide patients with early access to the service they require.</p>   | <p><b>Patient Experience Survey</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td>Involvement in Care</td> <td>Clear Communication</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pre-Solutions</td> <td>60</td> <td>68</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Post-Solutions</td> <td>87</td> <td>97</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Benchmark</td> <td>85</td> <td>85</td> </tr> </table> <p>Medical Team: "We can learn from each other"<br/>Patient: "Finally a one stop shop for my back pain"<br/>Executive Management: "A fantastic initiative and service"<br/>Allied Health: "Great initiative...all teams coming together"<br/>Pain Team: "A great opportunity to collaborate"</p> |  | Involvement in Care | Clear Communication | Pre-Solutions | 60 | 68 | Post-Solutions | 87 | 97 | Benchmark | 85 | 85 |
|   | Involvement in Care   | Clear Communication  |  |                     |                     |               |    |    |                |    |    |           |    |    |
| Pre-Solutions                                 | 60  | 68   |  |                     |                     |               |    |    |                |    |    |           |    |    |
| Post-Solutions                                | 87  | 97   |  |                     |                     |               |    |    |                |    |    |           |    |    |
| Benchmark                                     | 85  | 85   |  |                     |                     |               |    |    |                |    |    |           |    |    |

### 4. Diagnostics

80% Feel They Are Waiting TOO LONG for an APPOINTMENT

Current DNA = 29%

Current Attendance = 71%

Only 1% RECEIVE AN APPOINTMENT LETTER

24% get NO text message reminder for an appointment

"Medical Officer was dismissive...did not listen to what I was saying"

"The doctor said I would have physio, have they referred me?"

**Jan 2016 - Dec 2016 Demand VS Capacity**

916 patients are not allocated an appointment

| Number of Responses | Kindness & Respect | Involvement in Care | Clear Communication |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 17                  | 76                 | 60                  | 68                  |
| Benchmark           | 85                 | 85                  | 85                  |

**Surgical Conversion Rate**

ONLY 4% OF PATIENTS HAVE SURGERY

### 6. Conclusion/Sustaining Change

**This innovative project has delivered a self-sustainable model improving access for patients waiting on the Neurosurgical waiting list by up to 8 months and reducing non-attendance rates by approximately 50%.**

The establishment of Physiotherapy led clinics supports how existing knowledge and skills within the hospital can be utilised to establish a novel service supporting timely access for patients with low back pain. Through streamlining current practice to improve communication with patients regarding appointments, there has been a reduction in the non-attendance rates. Although this project has similarities to other outpatient initiatives that target long waiting lists, it is the first to look at ways to utilise existing knowledge and skills within the hospital to strengthen teams and demonstrates how other disciplines can add value to a service to improve patient's experience. This project is original as it is the first time in NSW that there has been co-located spinal services in addition to a spinal multidisciplinary case conference involving different specialities from Allied Health and Medical uniquely breaking down the silos in health which to date have stood as a barrier for patients accessing services in a timely manner.

This model has the potential to be scalable to local community health care centres and satellite clinics to further improve early access to care and education for patients with back pain which has been clearly recognised in literature to reduce mortality and morbidity and significantly improve quality of life.

### 7. Acknowledgments

- Debbie Sharpe – Executive Sponsor
- Dr Andrew Kam – Neurosurgeon/Project Champion
- Emma Clarke & Clementia Yap – Innovation & Redesign Team
- WMH Rheumatology, Orthopaedics, Chronic Pain Services
- WMH University Clinics; Administration & Nursing
- WMH Allied Health Services
- Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI)