
OPEN ARCH: A model of integration for the older person with complex needs

Initiative Type

Model of Care

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Deliver

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Summary

Older Persons Enablement and Rehabilitation for Complex Health Conditions (OPEN ARCH) is an Australian-first model of care for the community dwelling older person with complex needs. OPEN

ARCH provides comprehensive care through connection and collaboration at the primary-secondary interface. Established in 2017 through a partnership between the North Queensland Primary Health Network and the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service, the OPEN ARCH service has established seamless pathways between the health and aged care systems that enable the most vulnerable older persons to access the care and support they require to stay living at home for longer.

Key dates

Nov 2017

Jul 2019

Implementation sites

Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service

Partnerships

North Queensland PHN, 20 GP partners

Key Contacts

Jennifer Mann

2120

william.vanheerden.ced

Program Manager, Older Persons Integrated Health Service, Cairns HHS

Cairns Hospital and Health Service

07 42260178

jennifer.mann3@health.qld.gov.au

Aim

To address health and social needs in a preventative model that supports the older person to remain living at home for longer.

Benefits

Use available data or other evidence to outline some of the benefits or impact of the project. OPEN ARCH has established referral and service pathways with local community health services and non-government organisations to create patient focussed solutions to care.

Background

Older people with interrelated medical, functional and psychosocial issues, increased risk of functional deterioration, and unplanned institutional care are an urgent priority. Cognitive and physical impairment, chronic disease and multi-morbidity demand timely, coordinated care to prevent complications that are costly to the health system and life-threatening for the older person. For many older persons, the need to access multiple medical specialists demands navigation of a complex and often disconnected web of health services. Innovative models that align health and aged care sectors and connect acute and primary care, are essential to meet the challenges emerging from an ageing population and rise in chronic disease.

Solutions Implemented

The OPEN ARCH intervention is built on four values of quality integrated care:

- preventative health care provided closer to home
- alignment of specialist/generalist care
- care coordination and enablement
- primary care capacity building

Evaluation and Results

- 63% increase in allied health interventions that restore function and improve independence
- 54% increase in the utilisation of supports required to continue living at home
- Improved quality of life among participants
- Reduced hospital length of stay among admitted participants
- Improved timeliness of geriatric intervention and reduced duplication of assessment
- Establishment of seamless pathways between health and aged care systems

Lessons Learnt

Primary care is central to the sustainability of high-quality care solutions for the older person, and the needs of this stakeholder must be explored and addressed for model success.

References

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