

Background

- “In Australia today, the national workforce grows at an annual rate of around 170,000 per year. By 2020 this is predicted to be just 12,500 per year; or put another way, for the whole of the decade 2020-2030 the workforce will grow by less than it currently grows each year¹.”
- “The aging of the population is expected to also affect demand by increasing the need for services and the nature of those services¹.”
- Growing workforce shortages within the Australian Health System are compounded by insufficient entry, increased workforce mobility and increasingly aggressive campaigns to attract Victorian trained practitioners by other jurisdictions facing similar shortages.
- Increasing supply in isolation will not be sufficient to manage workforce demand, nor ensure longer term service sustainability. Initiatives are required to improve staff satisfaction and the patient experience, as well as make best use of available skills.
- Better Skills Best Care was designed around the guiding principles of the National Health Workforce Strategic Framework.

1. Australian Health Minister' Conference (2004), National Health Workforce Strategic Framework, Sydney p9; p 10

Aims

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- An exploration of opportunities to better match skills to patient needs
- To reorganise work to make best use of available workforce and minimise duplication of effort
- Improve the patient journey and maintain safety and quality of care
- Allow all staff to work at their maximum skill, knowledge and training level

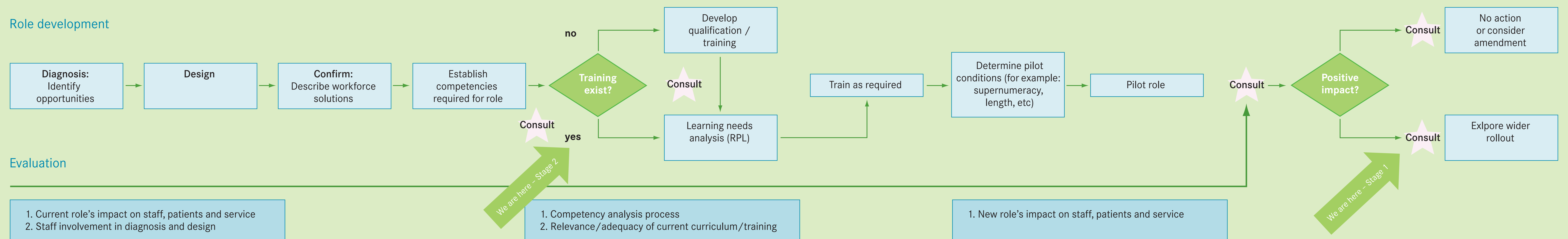
Principles

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- Place the patient at the centre of care – any proposals for change are based on patient need
- Utilise a ground-up approach in identifying opportunities
- Appropriate training consistent with nationally accredited frameworks and organisations
- Utilise a cost neutral approach to redesign

Methodology

Role development



Stage 1

Projects

- 36 role specific projects
- Local discipline-specific initiatives
- Selected through EOI process
- Pilots and evaluation complete
- ‘How To’ learning series for health services: Workshops are available in November to further empower health services interested in maximising their workforce
- Resource kit is now available for each of the roles successfully piloted
- Education and Training Grants will shortly be available to further facilitate the up-skilling of staff
- Further information available on the website

Site	Work role	Project description (detailed)
Panich Health Service	Amended Allied Health Assistant	Development and implementation of a combined stream allied health assistant role to support the provision of allied health services in community paediatric care
Caulfield Community Health Service	Podiatry support worker	Development of a support role for podiatry services focusing on basic tasks in relation to foot care in a community health setting
Lorne Community Hospital	Amended Allied Health Assistant	Development of a multi-skilled community support worker role, providing health promotion, health screening and intervention support services in the home
Bellarat Base Hospital	Physiotherapist	Development of an amended role for clinical physiotherapists involving assessment and treatment of minor injuries in emergency
Bendigo Hospital Campus	Division 1 Nurse	Exploration of a role for Division 1 nurses to enhance the quality and efficiency of care for patients in emergency
Royal Melbourne Hospital	Physiotherapist	Evaluation of an existing amended role physiotherapist working in emergency to improve the quality of care for patients with soft tissue injuries
Bendigo Hospital Campus	Amended Allied Health Assistant	Development of a combined allied health assistant role to support allied health professionals in the provision of rehabilitation services
Western Hospital	Pharmacy Technician	Development of a clinical pharmacy support role in an acute inpatient setting
Lalor Regional Hospital	Dietetic Assistant	Development of a dietetic support worker to improve dietary compliance and nutritional status in a hospital setting
Austin Hospital	Amended Allied Health Assistant (Physiotherapy support)	Development of an amended allied health assistant role providing cardio/respiratory and related physiotherapy support services in acute care
Monash Medical Centre - Clayton	Amended Allied Health Assistant	Development and implementation of amended allied health assistant role (occupational therapy and physiotherapy) to support the provision of allied health services in the acute setting
Wentworth Mercy Hospital	Amended Allied Health Assistant	Development of a combined allied health assistant role to provide intensive therapy in an inpatient setting
Bellarat Base Hospital	Amended Allied Health Assistant	Development of a combined stream allied health assistant role in acute care setting, focusing on support for physiotherapy and occupational therapy
WEHI (East Melbourne)	Orthoptist	Development of an orthoptist/diabetic eye monitoring service to improve access, screening and monitoring for diabetic patients
WEHI (East Melbourne)	Orthoptist	Development of an orthoptist-led glaucoma eye monitoring service to improve access and monitoring for stable glaucoma patients
Northon Hospital	Physiotherapist	Development of an amended physiotherapist role within orthopaedic/musculoskeletal service settings to provide primary care for suitably staged patients
Western Hospital	Physiotherapist	Evaluation of an existing amended role physiotherapist working in orthopaedic outpatients with patients most likely to receive conservative management
Austin Hospital	Physiotherapist	Evaluation of an existing amended physiotherapy role providing primary contact and management of patients with defined low back pain referred to an orthopaedic outpatient clinic
The Alfred	Pharmacist	Introduction of a clinical pharmacist into an outpatients disease management unit to provide medication review and recommended solutions for medication-related issues
Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre	Radiation Therapist	Development of an amended role for radiation therapists to include breast mark-up
Melbourne Health Gardenview House	Amended Allied Health Assistant	Evaluation of existing multi-skilled allied health assistant in acquired brain injury rehabilitation in a residential care setting

Stage 2

Projects

Projects that take a service-wide approach were established at metropolitan and rural services, targeting 3 identified priority areas:

- Anaesthetics
- Emergency
- ICU

Diagnosis phase

- Multidisciplinary workshops were held at hospital sites in July & August 2006
- Process mapping undertaken
- Health services identified issues and opportunities for the Workforce design phase
- Multidisciplinary workshops were held at hospital sites in August & September – 2006
- Local staff members put forward ideas for change

Education and Training

- Education competencies were matched against identified task lists
- Entry pathways for multiple qualifications were mapped against these competency lists
- Existing training courses were identified and training gaps addressed
- Staff will be recruited for the pilots
- A learning needs analysis will be undertaken for each pilot member
- This will assess opportunities for ‘recognition of prior learning’
- Staff will then enrol in identified training

Pilot the role

Next steps

Stage One

- Raise Awareness of successful pilots
- Facilitate uptake by those health services that feel the role would be of benefit in their setting
- Address barriers to embedding roles

Education and Training Grants are available to support services interested in taking up roles that have been successfully identified through Stage 1. See website for further information.

Stage Two

- Sites finalise Position Descriptions
- Consult with staff and unions on position descriptions at the local level
- Broker necessary training
- Commence pilots
- Undertake evaluation

Stage Three

- Sector-wide approach in priority areas