

# Better Skills, Best Care

**Role:** Allied Health Assistant – Community Aged Care

## Pilot setting

Lorne Community Hospital (home-based and group sessions)

## Role description

A multi-skilled community support worker role was piloted at Lorne Community Hospital to provide health promotion, health screening and intervention services for elderly people in their homes, as well as encourage attendance at group therapy sessions. The focus of the role is on a NoFalls program for people experiencing decreased physical activity.

## Tasks

### **Tasks for home exercises require the ability to:**

- Understand the purpose of each exercise
- Deliver exercises, with awareness of repetition and progression
- Observe and correct client technique
- Review and interpret performance
- Measure client ability
- Set up the home for exercise program

### **Participation in case management meetings requires the ability to:**

- Prepare information to report
- Liaise with peers
- Communicate effectively
- Apply clinical reasoning

### **Education of and working with groups requires the ability to:**

- Modify information to suit individuals
- Understand the benefits of group exercise

### **Knowledge of referral processes and pathways**

Apply Quickscreen<sup>®</sup> Clinic Falls Risk Assessment Tool. (This multifactorial tool is designed for use in a clinical setting. It requires minimal equipment and is carried out in 5 to 10 minutes. It consists of measures for the following important falls risk factors: previous falls, medication usage, vision, peripheral sensation, lower-limb strength, balance and co-ordination. The Tool is available from the Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute for a cost of \$4000 + GST (short form kit) or \$9000 + GST (long form kit))

### **Communication and documentation of No Falls Program**

Apply Mental Health First Aid, in particular as it relates to the elderly with depression and dementia.

## Education and training

*HLT42507 Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance* is the appropriate qualification for this role. See [www.ntis.gov.au](http://www.ntis.gov.au) for full course details.

The following units of competency are recommended as electives in the Certificate IV qualification:

- Deliver and monitor a client-specific exercise program (HLTAH401A)
- Deliver and monitor exercise program for mobility (HLTAH403A)
- Assist with the development and maintenance of client functional status (HLTAH408A)
- Conduct group sessions for individual client outcomes (HLTAH409A)
- Provide specific information to clients (HLTCOM301B)
- Apply advanced first aid (HLTFA402B)
- Provide support to an older person (CHCAC1C)
- Work effectively in a home and community care environment (CHCHC301B)
- Undertake home visits (HLTRAH302A)
- Plan and organise group-based delivery (TAADEL401A)
- Facilitate group-based learning (TAADEL402A)
- Conduct a recreation program for older persons (SRCCRO009A)
- Conduct a recreational program for people with a disability (SRCCRO010A)
- Assess and deliver services to clients with complex needs (CHCCS6B)

In addition, training in the following areas is also required:

- *No Falls Exercise program*

NoFalls is a 15-week group exercise program, with a strong focus on balance enhancement.

- *Mental Health First Aid*

The course teaches the symptoms, causes and evidenced- based treatments for the common mental health problems of depression, anxiety disorders, psychosis and substance use disorder. It also addresses the possible crisis situations arising from these mental health problems and steps to help.

### Providers

Delivery of qualifications and units of competency from the new Health Training Package HLT07 requires TAFE institutes and private Registered Training Organisations to formally apply to the Office of Training and Tertiary Education for Registration to deliver training. It is anticipated delivery could commence by Semester 1, 2008.

Information about VET providers can be accessed on [www.ntis.gov.au](http://www.ntis.gov.au)

The No Falls Exercise Program is conducted by registered trainers through Monash University. <http://www.monash.edu.au/muarc/projects/nofalls/index.html>

Mental Health First Aid, developed at the University of Melbourne is conducted by registered trainers state wide. [http://www.mhfa.com.au/instructors\\_vic.htm](http://www.mhfa.com.au/instructors_vic.htm)

### **Costs associated with undertaking training**

Until nominal hours for delivery of Health Training Package units are established, costs of delivery cannot be provided.

No Falls is of 15 weeks duration. Costs are determined by the provider, and can be subsidised.

Mental Health First Aid is of 12 hours duration and costs from \$70 – \$300 per person or from \$1,000 – \$2,000 per course, usually on a sliding scale.

### **Training gaps and delivery options**

*HLT42507 Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance* is suited to Australian Apprenticeship pathways.

Some skills may be best developed through in-house training, where site-specific requirements can be addressed.

### **Contact details for piloted role**

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