

*Specialist Speech Pathology
and Nutrition mentoring for
cancer professionals in
regional Victoria*

StV

Sue Wilson

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St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne

Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing



St Vincent's

*Continuing the Mission of
the Sisters of Charity*

Background

- St Vincent's, Melbourne is a national and state-wide centre for complex head and neck cancer surgery
- Significant patient numbers having surgery at St V's live in rural and regional locations

Project



Specialist Speech Pathology and Nutrition Care Mentoring
for Cancer Professionals in Regional Victoria Project

Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing

Aims

- To improve access for head and neck cancer patients to skilled allied health practitioners at their regional health services, thus reducing the number of outpatient visits to St Vincent's
- To facilitate improvement in clinical skills and confidence in speech pathologists and dietitians working in regional and rural Victoria in the area of head and neck cancer management

Key Activities

- Regional workshops conducted by St V's staff in targeted partner regional health services
- Funded shadowing visits to St V's by regional/rural speech pathologists
- Ongoing mentoring partnerships

Partnerships

1. Goulburn Valley Health Service
2. Ballarat Health Service
3. Bairnsdale Health Service
4. St V's Melbourne



Workshops



- Two day duration
- 57 Allied Health participants-29 speech pathologists
 - 22 dietitians
 - 6 other – 1 physiotherapist
 - 1 occupational therapist
 - 4 nurses
- St Vincent's staff – 2 speech pathologists
 - 1 dietitian

Workshops



Day 1

Morning - multidisciplinary

Afternoon - speech pathology and nutrition

Day 2

Morning – speech pathologists

Afternoon – speech pathologists and patient participants

Shadowing Visits



- 13 funded visits to St Vincent's by rural and regional clinicians
- A further 6 shadowing visits since the completion of the funding period
- Consolidation of the hands on skills learnt at the workshops

Ongoing Mentoring

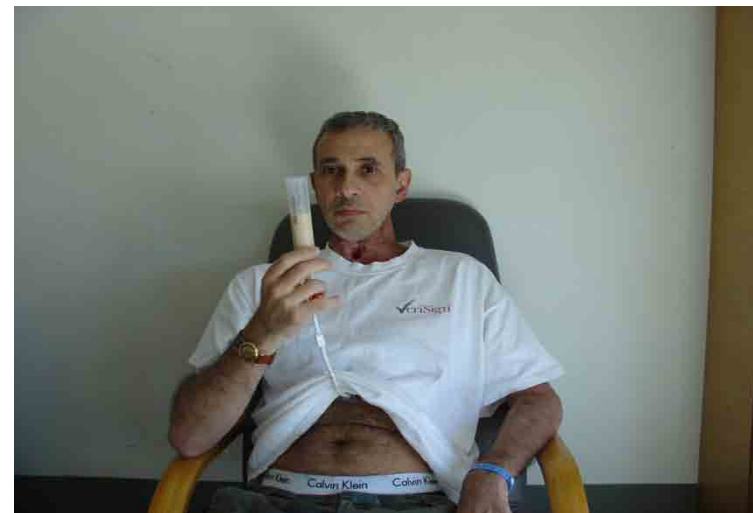
- Telephone and email contact
- 163 specific contacts in 8 months from February to September 2007
- 112 further mentoring contacts since the end of the funding period (till June 2009)

Patient Outcomes

- Improved patient care central to project
- Workshop patient participants (N = 13) now all managed or co managed at regional level
- All new laryngectomy patients transferred to regional speech pathologists post operatively (a further 11 patients till June 2009)

Patient Outcomes

- Available allied health support at a local level
- Access to specialist speech pathology and nutrition services closer to home
- Increased confidence and liaison with local health services



Allied Health outcomes



Improved **confidence** in managing head and neck cancer patients across a number of parameters

- Managing
 - dysphagia
 - tracheostomy
 - communication
 - radiotherapy side effects
 - enteral feeding
 - feeding tube issues

Allied Health Outcomes



Increases in confidence (cont.)

- Using videofluoroscopy
- Coping with emergency procedures regarding laryngectomy and voice prosthesis maintenance

Allied Health Outcomes



Significant knowledge increases

- Swallowing management for laryngectomy and tracheostomy patients
- Anatomy and surgical procedures
- Stoma management
- Communication options
- Voice prosthesis insertion, care, problem solving strategies
- Equipment sourcing and ordering

Outcomes



Discharge Template

57 survey responses

87 separate items

Collated to 13 sections

personal information

radiotherapy

voice prosthesis Mx

swallowing

enteral feeding details

education provided

STV contact information

STV admission

communication

stoma/trache care

nutrition Mx

equipment provided

follow up arrangements

Discussion



BARRIERS

- Staff attrition
- Succession planning
- Patient volume
- Service delivery strategy

Sustainability



- Shadowing visits
- Mentoring availability
- Discharge tool
- Professional development opportunities

Acknowledgement



St Vincent's Speech Pathology and Nutrition Departments
Natalie Simmance, Chief Dietitian, St Vincent's Hospital

Speech Pathology and Nutrition Managers at project partners;
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Regional Health Service.

References

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