

Brisbane North Outpatients Co-Design Report

Executive Summary

During August to November 2020, Brisbane North PHN and Metro North HHS have jointly undertaken a co-design process that aimed to explore the opportunities for improvement and innovation in the delivery of specialist outpatient services and primary care across the Brisbane North region. An external consultancy, Beacon Strategies, was engaged to lead the co-design process and report back to Brisbane North PHN and Metro North HHS as part of a jointly governed project. Several engagement activities were undertaken with key stakeholders across general practice and primary care, Metro North HHS (including specialists and General Practice Liaison Officers [GPLOs]) and consumer and carer representatives to:

- map existing touchpoints and interfaces between primary and specialist care
- understand stakeholder experiences relating to accessing and interfacing with Metro North specialist outpatient services
- identify opportunities for service improvement and redesign specifically relating to the patient cohort of Category 3 referrals.

Insights shared by *consumer and carer representatives* were captured primarily at a principle-level, which supported the need for any system improvement solution proposed to be focused around the following outcomes of interest:

- timely and effective communication between providers
- communication and expectation management for patients
- assistance to navigate health services/systems
- alignment in care planning between providers
- person-centred and compassionate care

Many of the issues identified by *participating GPs* were centred around themes of:

- collaboration and integration between primary care and specialist services
- optimising the scope of practice of GPs and primary care providers to manage patients with low acuity and/or chronic conditions, with specialist input only where necessary
- variability of experience in interfacing with outpatient specialist services between specialties and facilities.
- focusing on the experience, quality and outcomes of care for patients (i.e. '*right care, right place, right time*')

- systems, funding, technology and logistical arrangements which can either enable or limit the delivery of effective and efficient care.

From the findings captured through initial engagement activities, four concepts for potential solutions or 'programs of work' were identified and explore further with GPs and specialists alike:

- establishing General Practitioner (GP) Advice Line/Service(s) for GPs to obtain specialist advice and input
- improving bidirectional communication between GPs and specialist outpatient services
- establishing shared care models
- improving availability of information for GPs.

Each of these potential solutions were further explored with GPs and practice managers, consumers and carers, GPLOs and specialists, which identified there was considerable interest in progressing solutions, particularly relating to the concept of a GP Advice Service. *Specialists working in HHS specialist outpatient services* provided a level of support for three of the potential solutions e.g. GP Advice Service(s), improving bidirectional communication and shared care models, with lesser support reported for focusing on availability of information for GPs in isolation of other initiatives.

Engagement with GPs, consumers and carers and specialists working in HHS specialist outpatient services led to the identification of anticipated benefits, challenges, existing examples, design considerations/principles and recommended implementation steps for each potential solution outlined within this report.

A number of project-level recommendations are outlined to consider the findings of the project, and plan and prioritise the potential solutions to be progressed for pilot implementation, with a focus on shared governance, sound project management principles, change management communication and performance monitoring and evaluation.

For a copy of the full report, please contact Jennifer Hains (Manager Integration) at Brisbane North PHN on Jennifer.Hains@brisbanenorthphn.org.au or 07 3630 7306.

