

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

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Abstract Title: Transforming the experience of rural residential aged care: A Collaborative Improvement Process

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Background: Multipurpose Services (MPS) are unique facilities in small rural communities across Australia that provide a combination of health services, including residential aged care.

As acute and aged care services are provided in the same facility, residents are sometimes cared for as patients in hospital rather than residents in their own home with associated choices, freedom and attitude to risk.

'Living Well in MPS Principles of Care' have been developed to support staff in providing care for residents of MPS - not as patients in hospital, but as people living in their home. The toolkit includes the principles of care, a self-assessment checklist, a resource guide of evidence based strategies and an evaluation package.

Approach: The ACI Rural Health Network recruited 25 MPS to be part of a Breakthrough Series Collaborative to implement the principles of care. Over 12 months the sites participated in three learning sets and three twelve week action periods. They completed rapid PDSA change cycles and shared the results with their peers at other sites to enable faster collective improvement. Sites were supported with weekly change management coaching and an online portal to share ideas and network with their colleagues.

Outcomes / Results: To date, the participating MPS have completed over 300 change cycles. Outcomes are being measured using a standardised quality of life tool (resident reported) and a process checklist. Sites are showing a 10% improvement in compliance against the principles that they have focused their improvement in. Qualitative resident feedback shows an improvement in enjoyment of life and the range of activities that they are offered. Quantitative resident feedback will be available at the time of presentation.

Take Home Message: The Collaborative methodology has been successful in creating and expediting large scale change across rural areas. The short PDSA change cycles were easy for MPS staff to learn and teach to their colleagues. The networking between MPS sites and across LHD boundaries was a source of learning, enthusiasm, solidarity and ideas. The online portal was a successful way of collaborating between learning sets. Expansion of this will spread successful strategies to other MPS across the state.