

A SHARED CARE MODEL FOR ALLERGY – KIMBERLEY REGION PILOT

ABSTRACT

Background

The National Allergy Strategy (NAS) is keen to identify a shared care model for allergy that allows the right patient to be seen at the right time by the right person in the right place. To determine if such a model could exist in a rural setting, a Shared Care Model (SCM) pilot was undertaken in the Kimberley region in Western Australia.

Method

Engagement with key stakeholders and administrators in the Kimberly region was undertaken. Teleconferences were held with hospital and community based health professionals to determine what activities were required and achievable. A clinical immunology/allergy specialist, clinical nurse specialist (CNS) in allergy, paediatric allergy dietitian and the NAS Coordinator (who was also the Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia representative) travelled to Broome to undertake the agreed activities.

Results

Meetings were held with key stakeholders. Clinical education sessions for staff from the hospital and wider community were provided as well as community education sessions to parents and school and early childhood education staff. Since the visit, a partnership between the hospitals has been established with weekly Telehealth consults of local patients, planned monthly telehealth education sessions and establishment of a low risk food challenge unit at the Broome hospital.

Discussion

Patients that previously needed to travel more than 2000 km to access specialised care are now able to be seen and managed locally in most cases providing equitable access to services without compromising patient care and obvious psychosocial and financial benefits to all parties.

Planning and engagement with key stakeholders

- In planning the Shared Care Model visit, several teleconferences and meetings were held with key stakeholders.
- These meetings allowed us to identify where we could provide support and education and what events would be held.
- We were also able to identify on the ground support for our visit.

Events held in the Kimberly region

Meeting with key health department staff

- On arrival, we met with key health department staff and hospital administrators to discuss possible future engagement.

Education for health professionals

- A health professional dinner education session attended by hospital and community medical and nursing staff, pharmacists and dietitians.
- A full day of training for hospital and community dietitians.
- Training session for hospital food service staff.
- Training session for hospital nursing staff.
- Clinical immunology/allergy specialist and allergy nurse specialist attended clinical rounds at Broome Hospital and provided consults.

Education for community

- Both evening and morning education sessions were held for the general community.
- These sessions were attended by parents, early childhood education care staff and school staff.

The allergy team

- Paediatric clinical immunology/allergy specialist
- Allergy clinical nurse specialist
- Allergy dietitian
- National Allergy Strategy Coordinator
- Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia representative

Outcomes since the visit

- Piloting of National Allergy Strategy food service resources for hospitals, in Broome Hospital.
- Ongoing engagement between Perth Children's Hospital and Broome Hospital – medical, nursing and dietetics.
- Weekly Telehealth consults of local patients with Perth Children's Hospital to ensure timely access to specialist care where required.
- Monthly Telehealth education sessions for health professionals in the Kimberley region.
- Establishment of low risk food challenges in Broome Hospital – a new service which saves many families having to fly to Perth.

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