Identifying the Deteriorating Mental State of Consumers in Adult Community Mental Health Teams

Aim Statement:
Within 6 Months 95% of files audited will have a clearly documented Mental State Examination, Risk Assessment Formulation and Care plan.

Team members
Sponsors
• Alison Thorne

• Project Team – Jacinta Elphick

• QI Advisor – Sonya Bull/CEC

• Consumer – Barbara Hall & Spencer McGill

Link to National Standard or Strategic Imperative
2 Partnering with consumers
5 Comprehensive Care Standard
6 Communicating for Safety Standard
8 Recognising and Responding to Acute Deterioration Standard

Literature review
The literature review focused on two elements. 1. What makes a safe and high quality CMH service? and 2. What is best practice when identifying the deteriorating mental state of MH consumers? The list below is a sample only.

Gaskin C, Dogley G. Recognising Signs of Deterioration in a Patient’s Mental State. Sydney: ACCHS; 2018


Ibid, 6(3), e010294.

Overall Outcome of Project:
We reached our stretch goal for documented MSE’s with a care plan. This needs to be transferred to choc documentation to be easily identified by all MLHD MHDA services.

The research is still progressing and we are yet to see if our average goals will be met.

Plans to sustain change
1. Standardisation
Once the team is happy with an approach to obtaining documenting reviewing and escalating the information in clinical decision making we will present to other CMH teams in MLHD.

2. Documentation/Measurement
We will continue to collect data on a regular basis and remind teams of where the documentation needs to occur for easy access.

3. Training
Training has commenced District wide on Clinical Formulation we would like this to be expanded to include a standardized approach to documenting MSE’s.

We would also like to see a shift in practice to include Family/Carer and consumer concerns about changing mental state seen universally as a red flag for deteriorating mental state along with gaining collaborative information and identifying individual early warning signs and developing safety plans with that in mind.

Plans to spread/share change
Spread findings across MLHD Community Mental health teams

Source funding and a research partner to measure the efficacy of implementing the Australian Commission on Quality and safety in Health Cares proposed clusters and signs of mental state deterioration


Gaskin C, Dagley G. Recognising Signs of Deterioration in a Patient’s Mental State. Sydney: ACCHS; 2018


