Capricornia Allied Health Partnership (CAHP): A collaborative clinical placement model cultivating competent clinicians for clients with chronic conditions

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Faced with significant health service and workforce challenges, Allied Health staff members of Central Queensland Health Service District in 2007 conceptualised the development of a chronic disease service that embeds a coordinated interprofessional placement program into its service model as core business.

The Capricornia Allied Health Partnership (CAHP) project organises pre-entry (third year, fourth year and Graduate entry masters) Allied Health student placements, from universities around Australia, into an interprofessional clinical team to deliver integrated allied health chronic disease ambulatory services. Students provide clinical consultations under the supervision of professional staff within the scope of their own profession but work within an interprofessional environment to increase their understanding of other profession’s roles and enhance their clinical and referral skills.

CAHP is an ambitious response that blends the workforce potential of student placements with un-met local health care needs that:

- Addresses service delivery gaps for chronic disease early intervention and management
- Provides an exceptional clinical education & training opportunity for students, and
- Demonstrates leadership in developing the future health workforce to reflect strategic direction and work-readiness.

From February 2010 – February 2012, 159 pre-entry Health students from a range of disciplines including Nutrition and Dietetics, Exercise Physiology, Medicine, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Pharmacy, Podiatry and Social Work, representing 11 different universities completed a clinical placement. Student placements were between 2 and 10 weeks in length.

The effect on patients care has been primarily demonstrated through increased access to previously limited services. Over 1000 clients have received chronic disease intervention and prevention strategies through an integrated collaborative practice model with the team delivering over 10000 occasions of service.

This paper introduces the CAHP Interprofessional Practice model and describes:

- Drivers that led to the establishment of the project
Challenges, learnings and influences for a paradigm shift in Workplace Clinical Education Models;

Emerging Challenges for collaborative and interdisciplinary placement models.

Overview of outcomes from a student, client and system perspective.