

## AHAs in care coordination—people, places and possibilities

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Following participation in the Allied Health Assistant (AHA) Implementation program and finding that 30% of allied health professional (AHP) time for clinical and non clinical tasks could be transferred to an AHA, the Hume Region Strategic Plan recommended that Gateway Health needs to improve the access and utilisation of services by creating a model for AHAs in facilitating care coordination.

Gateway Health is a rural health service providing a broad range of services predominantly to the North East Hume region, with a concentration of services delivered in the Central Hume Primary Care Partnership catchment. Gateway Health delivers HACC funded Rural Allied Health Team services to this catchment. The service is predominantly home based, presenting significant resource challenges when faced with an ageing population, the geography and sparse population in the catchment. Services such as Occupational Therapy are experiencing increased demand, resulting in extensive wait times and pressure on demand management systems.

With the assistance of the Workforce Innovation Grant, Gateway Health is developing a new role for Allied Health Assistants (AHAs) so they can deliver flexible and timely care coordination. The AHA role will be piloted between October 2014 and June 2015 and is the first of its kind in Australia. It is anticipated that outcomes of this role will include documentation describing the integrated Care Coordination Model of Care for the management of complex HACC clients, including:

- care coordination guidelines
- interagency agreements
- resources and tools to support integrated care
- referral pathways and processes
- consumer journey maps
- scope of practice and position description outlining AHA tasks
- competencies developed for the role in consultation with TAFE
- professional and clinical supervision and delegation arrangements and structures for AHP and AHA roles
- orientation resources, staff training/professional development provided to AHAs and AHPs.

This presentation/poster will explore the role of the AHA Care Coordinator in improving the capacity of rural HACC allied health teams to deliver coordinated and flexible support intervention to people with complex needs. It will reflect on the experiences of developing and implementing the AHA role, and will share key learnings from the project, including change management of the existing workforce and ensuring ongoing sustainability of the project. It will also provide preliminary data from 9 months of implementing the new AHA role.