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Overview

Why is quality of care on the agenda?
Addressing quality systematically
How to ‘unbundle’ the concept of quality
The use of quality frameworks to improve quality of care
The role of standards in quality frameworks
Why is quality of care on the agenda?

- Potential to cause harm in any human services intervention
- In acute hospitals, 10% of admissions associated with harm
- 50% preventable, 50% serious
- Health care professionals, patients and community all have an interest in safe care
- What is risk of error or sub-optimal practice in M&CH/community settings?
Addressing quality systematically

- Traditional approaches to quality in human services have been opportunistic and not comprehensive
- *Ad hoc*, self-selected projects may be useful but clearly are not sufficient
- We need to ‘unbundle’ quality into its component parts to ensure that we are ‘covering the field’ in quality monitoring and reviews
- Quality programs need to be comprehensive and systematic
Unbundling quality

- Quality is not a one-dimensional concept
  - Acceptability of services to consumers is one dimension (respect, amenity etc.)
  - Other dimensions include:
    - Service safety
    - Appropriateness of services
    - Access to services
    - Effectiveness of services
Unbundling quality

- Staff competence and training
- Data and information management
- Leadership and governance
- Community engagement
Unbundling quality

If a service is reviewed to ensure it is:
• Safe
• Acceptable
• Effective
• Accessible
• Appropriate

And if the organisation adopts good practice in:
• Staff competence and training
• Data and information management
• Leadership and governance
• Community engagement

Then we can be confident of delivering quality services
Using quality frameworks

• Quality frameworks guide us to plan, monitor, review, report on and improve the quality of services
  • What do we know about the dimensions of quality across our services (safety, effectiveness etc.)?
  • Where are our risks and opportunities?
  • Are our staff competent/trained?
  • Do we use data effectively?
  • Do we have strong governance/leadership?
  • Are we engaging our community?
The role of standards

- We need to be able to answer the question: “How do you know that?”
- Standards help us to answer those questions
- Quality frameworks should be based on objective and accepted standards
Conclusion

• Australian health care professionals are committed, trained and motivated
• For too long, we have depended on that alone to assure quality
• It is unfair and futile to expect that all health care professionals will perform 100% perfect 100% of the time
• Quality systems support health care professionals to provide safe care
• Quality systems need to be based on objective, accepted standards
• In planning and monitoring our quality systems, we need strong conceptual frameworks that ensure our systems are comprehensive and systematic