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# Spinal Physiotherapy Screening Clinic (SPSC) Telehealth Clinic

Initiative Type

Model of Care

Service Improvement

Status

Sustained

Added

13 July 2018

Last updated

05 April 2023

URL

<https://test.clinicalexcclence.qld.gov.au/improvement-exchange/spinal-physiotherapy-screening-clinic-spsc-telehealth-clinic>

## Summary

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The Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Spinal Physiotherapy Screening Clinic and Multidisciplinary Service (SPSC&MDS) Telehealth clinic was implemented to enable access to appropriate non-surgical management for people who are unable to access equivalent allied health services within their local community.

#### Key dates

Jul 2016

May 2018

#### Implementation sites

Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital

## Key Contacts

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## Aim

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To enable access to appropriate non-surgical management for those patients seen by the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH) Spinal Physiotherapy Screening Clinic who are unable to access equivalent allied health services within their local community.

## **Benefits**

- Enables equitable access to healthcare interventions in an affordable and timely manner, regardless of patient location.
- Improved continuity of care, as episodes of care remain within the service, thereby strengthening communication between all parties. Care does not need to be delayed or cease when the patient is required to be away from home.
- Most patients seen within the service achieved a clinically significant improvement in function at the time of discharge.
- Reduced steps in the patient journey, with two-thirds of patients removed from specialist outpatient waiting lists.

## **Background**

Chronic musculoskeletal conditions are a leading cause of pain and disability within Australia, where recommended first-line interventions include a multidisciplinary non-surgical approach. Unfortunately access to such services can be severely limited for individuals who reside in regional and rural Queensland. Telehealth is considered an appropriate medium to deliver recommended services in a timely and clinically effective manner. The RBWH Spinal Physiotherapy Screening Clinic and Multidisciplinary Service (SPSCMDS) Telehealth Clinic commenced clinic activity in February 2017. This three day per week clinic is comprised of a multidisciplinary treatment team (physiotherapy, occupational therapy, psychology, dietetics and pharmacy) where clinical care is delivered directly into the patient's home via their own internet-enabled device. A collaborative partnership was formed with the Centre for Research in Telerehabilitation (University of Queensland) for this project.

## **Solutions Implemented**

The RBWH Spinal Physiotherapy Screening Clinic and Multidisciplinary Service (SPSCMDS) Telehealth Clinic (implemented early 2017).

## **Evaluation and Results**

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- A total of 355 patients were referred to the SPSC and MDS Telehealth Clinic (from January 2017 - May 2018 inclusive), resulting in 673 individual allied health referrals and 1,844 completed service occasions.
  - The clinic was demonstrated to be financially sustainable with generated revenue more than covering the costs (labour and non-labour) required to run the service.
  - A toolkit of resources (Allied Health Musculoskeletal Telehealth Clinic – Implementation Guide and Toolkit) was developed, including a suite of resources which can be adapted by local HHSs.

## **Lessons Learnt**

- Significance of dedicated, ongoing administrative and operational support to achieve an efficient and sustainable service model.
- Debunked the myth that older patients have insufficient technical infrastructure, skills and self-efficacy to engage with a home-based telehealth service.

## **References**

[The Allied Health Telehealth education package](#)

## **Further Reading**

Please contact the project lead for detailed project resources.

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