



Providing Safe, Dignified and Compassionate Care



The Essentials of Care Program Overview

Essentials of Care (EOC) is a framework which aims to enhance the experiences of patients, families, carers and the staff involved in the delivery of care through the ongoing evaluation and development of safe, effective and compassionate clinical workplace cultures.

This aim is achieved by engaging healthcare teams in collaborative processes that utilise evidence from patients and their families, workplace data and research to inform improvements that impact on patient quality and safety at the point where care is experienced.

The Program's success and sustainability is a result of the underpinning Practice Development methodology and skilled facilitation which ensures that engagement in service improvement is collaborative, inclusive, participatory and owned locally.

Quote from a team member involved in Essentials of Care Program;

"The Essentials of Care Program has changed the way we work, improving our teamwork, and the communication between staff. It has led to a culture where open questioning and advocating for patients is welcomed."

Outcomes achieved by team using the Essentials of Care Program include (Cultures that Care Ed 1,2&3):

- Increased patient satisfaction, decreased number of complaints and increased number of compliments.
- Reduction in medication administration errors, MRSA infections, pressure areas and falls.
- Improved communication and handover between healthcare team and patients.
- Increased in patient/consumer engagement in care planning and case review.
- Streamlined organisation of patient care processes.
- Improved documentation and reporting.
- Increased staff retention.
- Increased teamwork and staff satisfaction.
- Increased staff engagement in quality and safety improvements.
- Effective resource management.
- Increased leadership development and reflective practice.



Positive patient outcomes, quality, safety and an engaged workforce are described as outcomes of an effective workplace culture (Manley et al). In healthcare the development and sustainability of effective cultures is an ongoing challenge to managers, leaders and teams aiming to provide evidence-based safe, compassionate, quality healthcare in a safe, complex and changing context.

The Essentials of Care Program offers an effective sustainable strategy to achieve outcomes that align with current healthcare priorities and strategic directions.

This work is achieved by skilled facilitators engaging health care teams in transformational Practice Development in order to:

- Evaluate the quality of care delivery.
- Identify opportunities for the development of practice.
- Activate local actions plans to improve practice.
- Evaluate any changes made.
- Celebrate innovation and excellence in practice.
- Develop a culture of critical inquiry.

And as a result:

- Improve patient safety and outcomes through the implementation of a framework that focuses on the essential elements of care, and
- Enhance the experience of patients, families, carers and healthcare teams.

The Essentials of Care framework and methodology

The Essentials of Care Program is an ongoing ongoing cyclical process around the six phases which enable a systematic and robust approach to local engagement and ownership in reflection, quality improvement and evaluation as follows:

Increasing Capacity for Practice Development and Implementing Essentials of Care

Phase 1 – Preparation

Phase 2 - Assessment

Expected outcomes:

- Information about the Program structure, process and methodology is provided to all members of the team.
- Local Facilitators engage in learning and development.
- Local governance and support structure is established to sustain the Program.
- Effective ways of working that ensure respectful, collaborative and inclusive participation in the program are established.
- The shared values, vision and goals of the team are clarified.
- Information relating to current culture and care practice from patients stories, observations and audits as well as workforce and patient data is collected and collated by the team (Culture map).

Building Practice and Improving Care Services

Phase 3- Feedback,

Phase 4 - Action Planning

Phase 5 - Implementation

Expected Outcomes:

- Culture map is made available and critically evaluated by all team members.
- The team identifies areas to improve and celebrate.
- A number of clinical practice, and care environment improvements are implemented. evaluated and linked to current healthcare priorities.

Sustaining EOC and Service Improvements

Phase 6 - Re-evaluation

Expected outcomes:

- The team engages in re-evaluating culture to demonstrate impact of improvements on patients, staff and workplace culture and identifies future goals for improving practice.

Benefits and Outcomes:

Evidence from local case studies and Essentials of Care Program evaluation project demonstrate outcomes achieved by teams engaged in the Essentials of Care Program in four areas:

- Patient outcomes – Increase in patient engagement in care and patient satisfaction.
- Clinical outcomes – Decrease in falls, medication errors, pressure injuries, and hospital acquired infections, as well as improved documentation, multidisciplinary communication and handover.
- Staff outcomes – Increase in staff satisfaction, staff retention and decrease in sick leave as well as an increase engagement in learning, research and quality improvement.
- Care service outcomes – Cost savings, increased efficiency of care processes, and improved resource management.

“In engaging with the EOC program methodology, clinical staff, administration staff and CSNSW staff all contributed to the collection and collation of data for all to review. This collaborative effort enabled identification of themes from different perspectives, creating opportunities to review how we worked from a unique viewpoint, which had not been previously experienced.” (Terry, 2013)

“The exciting thing is that through EOC, collaboration and inclusivity are becoming the standard for communication and policy development in the MHRU. Not only has EOC assisted with creating a team culture that encourages change and new ideas, it has created a space for ongoing reflection within the team.” (Gamboa, C. et al 2011)

Resources

Essentials of Care is sponsored by the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer Susan Pearce and supported by the Nursing and Midwifery Office, NSW Health.

Each Local Health District has Essentials of Care Coordinators who are responsible for the coordination of the Program, the running of the Facilitation Development Program and building capacity for local Facilitators.

Written resources include a resource guide for Facilitators and curriculum for the Facilitation Development Program and Culture that Care publications that describe outcomes and achievements from the units engaged in the program. These are available from your Essentials of Care Coordinator.

For more information about becoming involved in the Essentials of Care Program, please contact your local EOC Coordinator or go to the NSW Health webpages:

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/nursing/projects/Pages/default.aspx>

References:

Gamboa, C., Keelan, M., Cutler, N. (2011). Roads to Recovery in Nursing and Midwifery Office: Cultures that Care Ed 1, p 55-57. Sydney. NSW Health.

Garling, J. P. (2008). Special Commission of Inquiry: Final report of the Special Commission of Inquiry Acute Care Services in NSW Public Hospitals report. Sydney: NSW Health.

Manley, K., Sanders, K., Cardiff, S., & Webster, J. (2011). Effective workplace Culture: The attributes, enabling factors and consequences of a new concept. International Practice Development Journal 1(2).

McCormack, B., Manley, K., & Garbett, R. (Eds). (2004). Practice Development in Nursing. Oxford, Blackwell Publishing.

Nursing and Midwifery Office (2014). Cultures that Care Ed 3. Sydney: NSW Health.

Terry, J. (2013). Working together-enabling safe and appropriate access to health care in the correctional environment, in NSW Nursing and Midwifery Office. Cultures that Care 2nd Ed, pp 55-57 NSW Health.



"If I was a nurse looking for work or starting my career, I would want to work where Essentials of Care has been embraced and implemented. If I was a patient I would want to be nursed in these wards."

Feedback following Essentials of Care show case 2012.