



Community Engagement: Home Care Packages e-Register Advocacy Project

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Plans, Aims and Strategies:

The Central Hume Primary Care Partnership has a Client and Community Engagement Priority as part of its Strategic Plan 2013-2017

Achievements & Successes

- In September 2014, the CHPCP launched a research report on the supply, demand and equity of Home Care Packages (HCP) provision in North East Victoria. We invited the Alpine Community Advocates (Alpine Aged Care Advocacy Service Inc.) to this launch and shared the following findings of the Home Care Packages Evidence Project:
 - * May 2014: 537 older people assessed and registered as eligible for a Home Care Package
 - * Demand was almost twice supply (insufficient packages) with 433 Packages in North East Victoria
 - * People were waiting a long time for packages to become available
- At the launch John Cullen, a Community Advocate, suggested a partnership with the Central Hume Primary Care Partnership and the East Hume Aged Care Assessment Service
- John Cullen suggested the Community Advocates could phone people to ask how they were managing while waiting

Advocacy

- The Central Hume PCP catchment does require an independent voice that supports older people in accessing services and care — advocacy services do this as they stand with the older person and speak for them
- Advocacy is important because the Aged Care system is complex, many older people are vulnerable and older people are entitled to respect and dignity as they age

Bringing it Together

- The Home Care Packages e-Register Advocacy Project began in January 2015. A partnership between the Community Advocates, Aged Care Assessment Service — East Hume, Alpine Health and Central Hume PCP. The planning and process involved the following:
 1. 300+ letters were sent to people on the e-Register by the Aged Care Assessment Service asking if people would consent to be phoned by Community Advocates and asking if they wanted to remain on the e-Register (list of people waiting Home Care Package)
 2. Project Information Sheet developed
 3. A questionnaire to use when phoning consumers was developed
 4. The questionnaire was tested for clarity and usability with the Community Advocates in a training session with the Central Hume PCP Engagement and Planning Coordinator and the Alpine Health Volunteer Coordinator
 5. Phone calls were made by the Community Advocates over a couple of months
 6. An evaluation was conducted with the Community Advocates
- To summarise:
 1. Over 150 people were telephoned by the Community Advocates. Up to three phone calls made to contact people
 2. Data collected via questionnaires
 3. The Central Hume PCP is currently analysing and will report on the data

Engagement and Planning Coordinator

- Facilitates and provides resources around Engagement at the client level and at the community level
- Facilitates the quarterly Central Hume Aged Care Planning Forums and resource the Central Hume Aged Care Taskforce
- Networking, collaboration, consultation and communication

Visions for the Future

- Working with Community Advocates is a very effective method of Community Engagement
- The project highlighted the importance of *people contact* for older people — not a website and not My Aged Care (Commonwealth Contact Centre)
- When people said they were 'coping at the moment', it seemed to be when they were accessing other services and/or utilising the support of their families
- The project illustrated the value of people having access to an independent advocate
- This project has been a great partnership and the Central Hume PCP would like to continue to partner with the Community Advocates
- Other Local Government Areas are interested in this model

Future Sustainability

- This partnership project with Community Advocates has demonstrated a way of monitoring the health and wellbeing of older people assessed and eligible for a Home Care Package, who are waiting on the e-Register for a Home Care Package to become available

