Reflection to Recovery in Aged Care Psychiatry & Neurosciences Unit

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INTRODUCTION

Person-centred Care is integral to Nursing Care within the Aged Care Neurosciences Unit at St Joseph’s Hospital. Essentials of Care (EOC) supports our unit in the promotion of person-centred care and our EOC project of introducing perspex mirrors to patient wardrobe bedspaces reflects this.

The aim of this EOC project was to promote consumer self-care in our unit as it can be an indicator (along with other behaviours) that a patient is recovering as they take initiative and pride in their appearance.

BACKGROUND

The first cycle of the Essentials of Care (EOC) Program in Aged Care Psychiatry and Neurosciences Unit, St Joseph’s Hospital commenced in 2013. As part of the Culture Care and Mapping phase 10 patient stories were collected.

Through analysis and critique of the patient stories, a recurrent theme identified by the staff was the mirror availability on the unit.

“Gives me confidence”
“Helps me to comb my hair”
“Makes me feel like I am at home”

ACPNU

The Aged Care & Psychiatry Unit at St Joseph’s Hospital is a gazetted 15 bed acute inpatient admission unit which provides assessment, investigation, treatment and rehabilitation and placement for patients generally over 65 years with a variety of psychiatric disorders and behavioural disorders.

CHALLENGES

Consumers especially women discussed in their stories the challenge of making themselves presentable in the morning including doing their hair and makeup without the availability of mirrors in their rooms.

Mirrors were available in the bathroom although these proved to be inaccessible at all times as they were in use the majority of the time especially in the morning peak times.

Glass mirrors were not appropriate for our unit as deemed a risk and as such consumers were impacted by not being allowed to keep their own handheld mirror.

An audit of the mirrors on the unit highlighted that there were only 3 mirrors available to use in bathrooms.

OUTCOMES

To promote person-centred self-care we undertook a risk assessment on perspex (non-glass) mirrors and were able to progress with them as they were low risk. We negotiated a budget, purchased and installed them with assistance from the Nurse Unit Manager.

In April, 2016, we evaluated our action plan with both an audit and patient survey on the mirrors. Our audit results indicated that 100% of the 15 patient bays had a mirror installed in the wardrobe.

CONCLUSIONS

These results were beneficial to us in establishing that these non-glass mirrors are valuable for our patients to help in maintaining their self-care. From these results we have strengthened our communication with our patients to include them into our room orientation when patients are first admitted to the ward.