

FESTIVAL OF CONTAGIOUS IDEAS 2016



NEW SOUTH WALES
HEALTH INNOVATION
Symposium 2016

Collaborative Team

Early recognition of dementia: Memory assessment program Northern NSW Local Health District

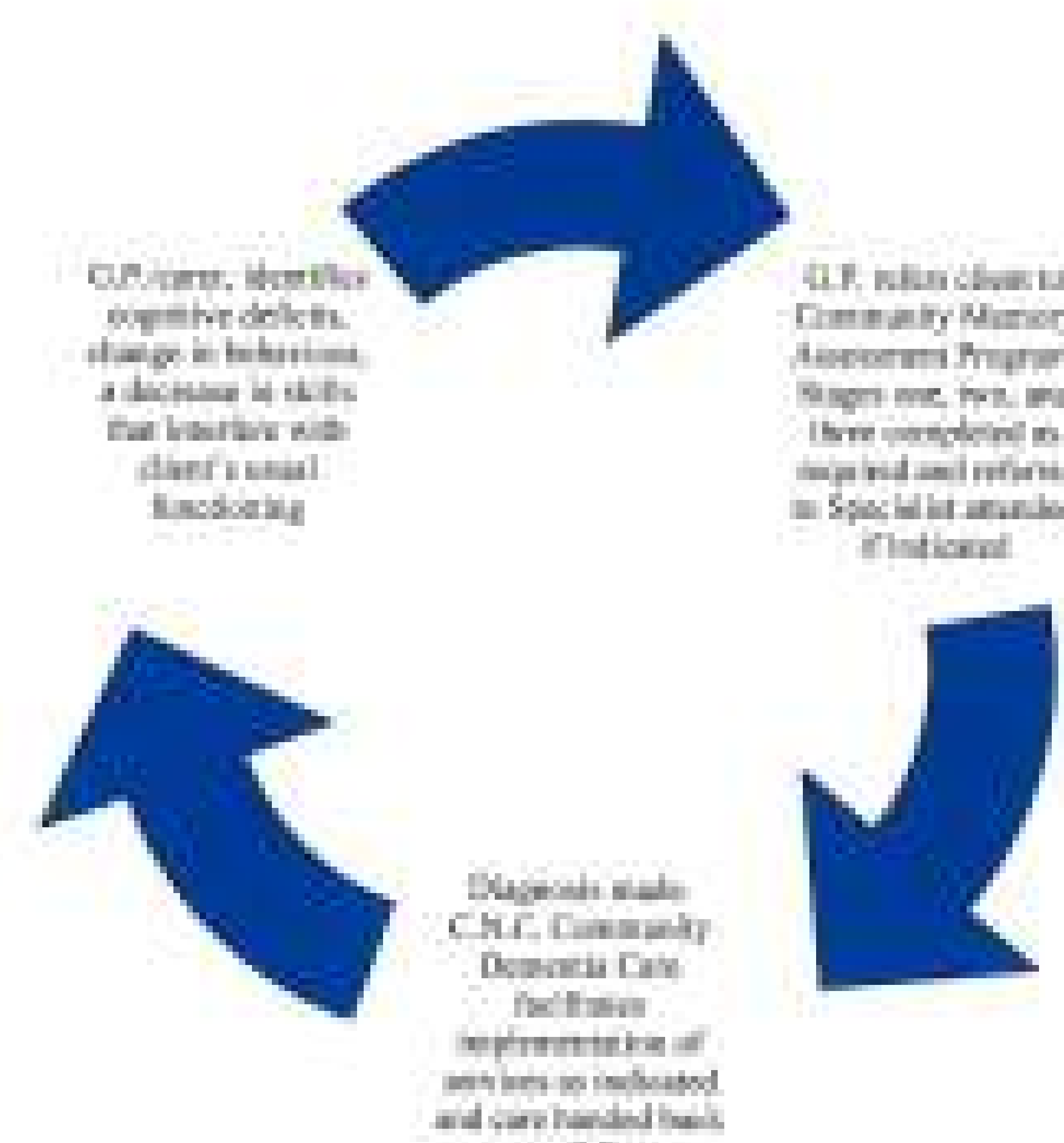
Challenge

The Tweed Valley has been identified as having the highest prevalence of people with dementia in NSW. A new clinical nurse consultant position was established to set up a program to assess people suffering with memory loss. We met with general practitioners who were frustrated at the lack of access they had to a specialist memory clinic. They were keen to get a single point of entry into the service as historically this had not been available.

The aim was to set up a telehealth service to address these service gaps as local specialists were unavailable.

our program into a pilot she was starting, which linked the district with private sector services via telehealth using the Lync videoconferencing system.

There were challenges that needed to be overcome including the IT/ firewall issues, convincing general practitioners to refer patients to a telehealth program and patient and carer acceptability. We provided education to help get people on board.

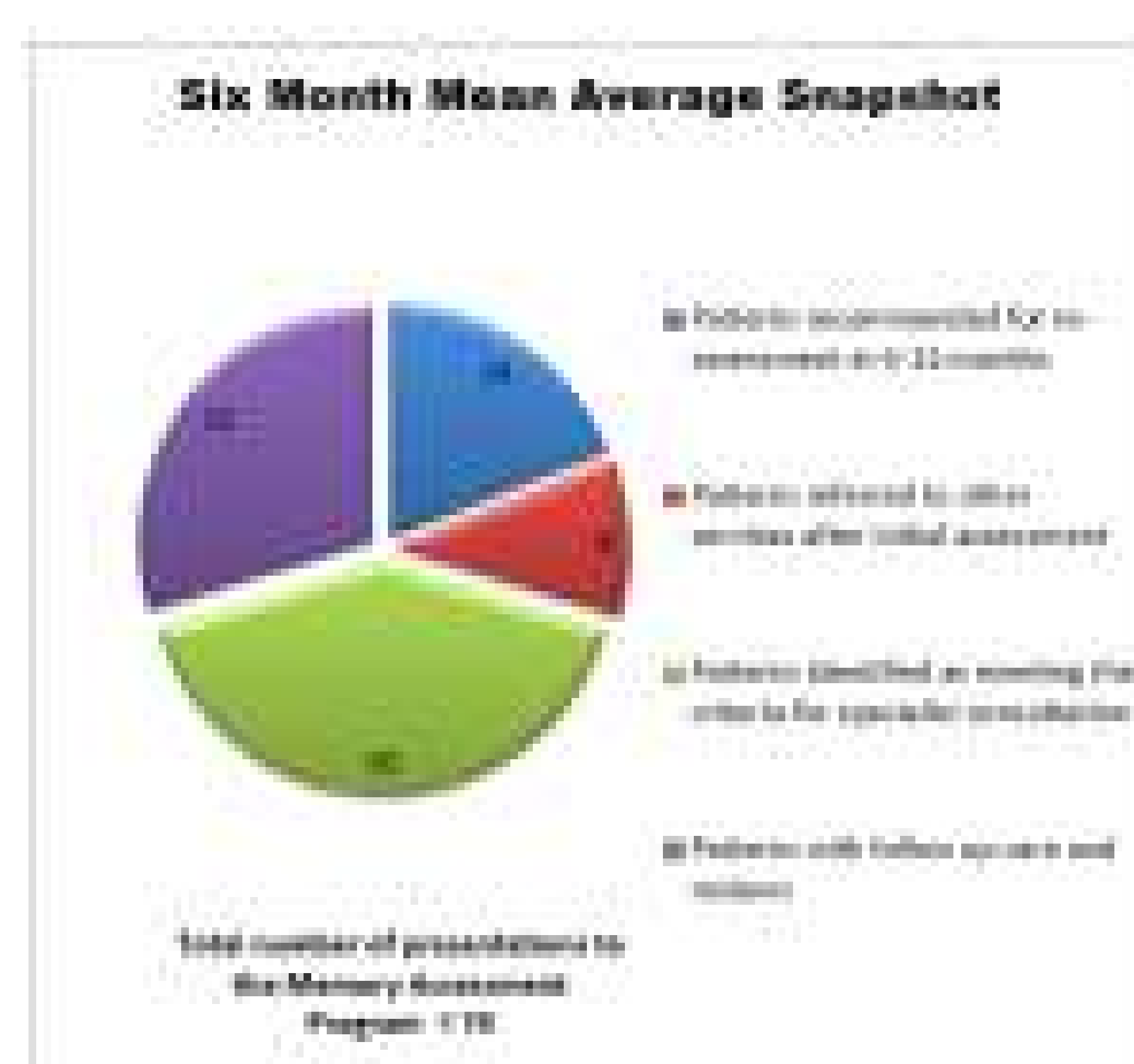


Results

We have been running the clinics for over two years and with feedback to general practitioners after-hours clinics, referral to other services and non-government organisations we have greatly increased the number of referrals and are now seen as the “go to” clinic for anyone suffering with memory problems. Referrer and patient satisfaction surveys have been overwhelmingly positive.

Patients receive local memory assessment services at no cost to them. Our project has now been replicated by other health services.

| Category | Count |
|---|-------|
| Patients recommended for assessment in 0-11 months | 11 |
| Patients referred to other services after initial assessment | 3 |
| Patients identified as meeting the criteria for specialist consultation | 11 |
| Patients with follow up care and review | 11 |
| Patients in receipt of care for specialist assessment program | 11 |
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Solution

We met with the Area Telehealth Manager and convinced her to enrol

