

WAKE-SENSE: Makes Sense - A Pro-active Model of Care



Aims –

To create a workplace culture that is proactive and effective in providing patient-centred care especially to those with a cognitive impairment.

Progress - The Wake-sense initiative was a double-pronged approach, creation of a new model of care and multi-sensory space.

The model of care was modified to create more opportunities to interact with the patients. Staff created a document that provided guidance on daily routines. Staff encouraged patients to get changed into their own clothes every day, collaborating with families and carers to bring in their own clothes or using donations from the ward. Patients are also encouraged to mobilise to the dining room for meals, increasing the social interaction between patients, carers and staff.

Background – Wakefield Ward is a 28 bed sub-acute aged care ward in Balmain Hospital. We care for patients who are recovering from a medical illness or surgery requiring ongoing treatment. A large number of patients admitted have a cognitive impairment including dementia and/or delirium.

Methods – Utilising the essentials of care framework we collected 18 staff satisfaction surveys (82% completion rate), 5 patient surveys, 2 patient stories and ethnography sessions were completed. 72% of staff indicated they did not have adequate time to provide person centred care and it was a challenge providing care to patients with a cognitive impairment..



Next Steps - Initial evaluation was conducted by facilitating staff focus groups. Wakefield ward is aiming to continue evaluation through audits and surveys. Although it has been a challenging process, informal feedback suggests a positive workplace culture and effective nursing care is benefitting both staff and patients.

At first no-one thought it would work, I'm surprised to say it does and we feel inspired that we see patient and families talking to each other, building relationships. I feel connected to patients and it's great to catch up with the ones I was looking after last week.

If anything the lounge gets a bit overwhelming with all the noise of chattering.

We know patient are safe in the lounge—there is always a nurse to supervise mobility but also with dysphasia and swallowing issues.



Refurbishment of the dining room to create a multi-sensory space that is more engaging and dementia friendly for patients to retreat to. As per the NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation Principles for improving healthcare environments for patient with dementia, they enjoy spaces and objects that are familiar to them in earlier life. The new dining room now has a clearly defined lounge area, kitchen and dining area. They have been fitted with lounge chairs with pillows, an imitation fireplace and a fish-tank to keep the patients engaged. There is also a garden and other activities for patient to be involved with to help increase interaction between staff and patients

The only thing I worry about is some patients not eating enough but there is always a nurse there helping.

Things would be even better if there was some more colour around or even some flowers on the table.

I am overwhelmed with how everyone is talking to each other and respecting each other in the dining room. My husband is a patient on Wakefield Ward and I am confident everyone is safe when he is with the other patients. Patients are interacting and connecting with each other and everyone is included in the ward environment.

