

The Emergency Department Frequent Presenter Project: looking at alternative pathways.

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Introduction:

Hospital Emergency Departments (ED) are experiencing increases in overall presentations, some of which can be attributed to a number of people presenting more frequently (also known as frequent presenters, repeat presenters or frequent flyers). These frequent presenters can consume significant resources. The ED is not always the most appropriate place for treatment. The frequent presenters' project at the PAH was established to strategise and initiate new, innovative approaches, to manage this often complex group of patients.

Aims:

To reduce the overall number of presentations of PAH Emergency Department's most frequent presenters by 50%.

Methods:

A core engaged multidisciplinary steering committee was formed with clear vision and terms of reference.

A monthly report is generated, highlighting those who have presenter 5 or more times in one month. From this, individual cases are reviewed, issues identified, internal and external stakeholders engaged and appropriate interventions developed. This may range from a single intervention to a complex formal multidisciplinary management plan.

Findings / Results:

Since July 2013, 56 frequent presenters have been identified, with 29 identified as requiring formal management plans. As of December 2013, there had been a reduction of 37% in the number of presentations following individual case review and in some cases, implementation of individual case management plans.

The project has also focused on establishing referral pathways and engaging frequent presenters, in order to develop relevant strategies and top tips for staff in managing individuals. This has resulted in consistency, greater empowerment and confidence of staff in managing individual frequent presenters and greater satisfaction, rather than frustration in managing their care

Conclusion, summary or discussion:

Early identification, more robust engagement (internally and externally), increased collaboration with a case management approach and continually reviewing and refining of these processes have allowed us to expect further and ongoing reductions of these presentation by the end of 2014.