

## **Abstract: 13th International Conference for Emergency Nurses**

### **Nurse Delegated Emergency Care – an innovative patient care model in rural and remote EDs in NSW**

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The Nurse Delegated Emergency Care (NDEC) model promotes and supports high quality patient care through a framework for managing specific low risk, low acuity ED presentations. It aims to address some of the key challenges in delivering 24/7 emergency care in rural and remote areas, especially in facilities without full-time medical coverage. Under the model, patient presentations assessed as eligible are managed entirely by trained and credentialed Registered Nurses (RNs), under the explicit delegation of local Medical Officers.

The NDEC framework includes an education and accreditation package to provide RNs with the essential skills and knowledge to deliver NDEC. Operating the NDEC model is within the scope of practice of a Registered Nurse. Qualification or endorsement as an Advanced Practice Nurse or Nurse Practitioner is not required.

Over the past 18 months the ECI has been working with local clinicians, including GPs and LHD Executive teams, to implement NDEC at sites throughout rural and remote areas of NSW. The ECI provides a central point of support, coordination and orientation for facility implementation teams. It has also developed an extensive suite of patient care resources, project management tools and an evaluation and auditing framework for facilities to monitor their performance against the agreed guidelines.

Intended benefits of NDEC include:

- patients with less-urgent conditions can access timely and appropriate clinical care;
- NDEC-accredited RNs are empowered to operate within their scope of practice to manage entire episodes of care involving minor injuries and illnesses;
- a more sustainable clinical workload for doctors through a reduction in call-backs, particularly after-hours;
- rural health services can benefit from a collaborative framework for delivering quality care in their EDs; and
- rural communities can begin to address some of the barriers to recruitment and retention of doctors

This presentation will also describe results from a baseline analysis, preliminary outcomes following the first phase of implementation and lessons learnt along the way.