



CASE STUDY

Healthy Ageing in Kingscliff

Practice Name: Kingscliff Health • **Location:** Kingscliff, NSW • **MM:** 2

Context

Nursing Manager Michelle Gilbert is based in Kingscliff, a coastal town south of Tweed Heads in the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales. At Kingscliff Health, Michelle noticed that many elderly patients are unnecessarily calling ambulances or attending hospitals for minor avoidable injuries.

As a participant in APNA's Building Nurse Capacity project, Michelle established a Healthy Ageing Nurse Clinic to address the gap in provision of full health assessments that target mobility, falls prevention, and injury prevention.

A clear plan

Michelle identified several clear goals for her Healthy Ageing Clinic:

- Increase over 75 assessments by 10%
- Increase uptake of Pneumococcal vaccine in over 75-year-olds by 15%
- Increase uptake of yearly influenza immunisation by 15%
- Reduce presentation of preventable injuries in over 75-year-olds by 10%

Funding

Alongside funding from participation in the Building Nurse Capacity Program (co-sponsored by Healthy North Coast Primary Health Network), Michelle utilised the following MBS item numbers to support the clinic: 900, 701, 703, 705, 707, 11707, 11610.

Location and facilities

Michelle conducted the clinic in a mix between the treatment room and a private consultation room. In the treatment room, Michelle had access to all equipment for screening, blood pressure machine, scales, height measure, ABI, ECG, immunisations, Snellen chart and more. In the private consult room, Michelle assessed mobility and ADLs to ensure home care was adequate. Michelle also had access to a non-clinical office space to complete her administration and data analysis.

Staffing and HR

Michelle has been well supported by her team to lead change in the clinic. She has protected administration time on Fridays to work on her Nurse Manager and Building Nurse Capacity Project duties. Kingscliff Health's GPs have also been supportive of the clinic – providing feedback and recommendations on what screenings can be done for older people.



We acknowledge the Ngandawal and Minyungbal speaking people of Bundjalung Country as the Traditional Custodians of the lands featured in this story and pay our respects to Elders past and present.



Best-practice care

Using the Building Nurse Capacity funding, Michelle purchased an ABI machine to support diabetes patients or patients prone to wounds. The machine helps to check venous and arterial flow, and to determine if vascular intervention or compression therapy is safe to use. Michelle is passionate about preventative health care and is conscious of promoting this among her patients. Michelle also organised for an osteoporosis specialist to visit once a month and support patients with this condition.

Patient engagement

To promote her clinic, Michelle displayed fliers in the reception and treatment room. Michelle is conscious of the additional social aspect to the clinic for older patients who may be isolated. The Kingscliff area has a one year wait for cleaning services through My Aged Care, and Michelle's appointments provide an opportunity to check how older community members are managing at home.

Supporting systems and processes

Patients are screened in treatment room during treatment for other issues (e.g. wound care or immunisations)



Data is checked to see if patient is due for over 75 health check and/or chronic disease management plans



Patients are booked in for appointment with nurse to complete health assessment or care plan

Evaluation and improvement

Michelle has been using PenCS clinical audit tool (PenCAT) for 10 years and feels confident accessing and analysing practice data. Through her clinic activities, Michelle reduced the number of over 70s with no DEXA scan for osteoporosis by 100 people. Michelle's nurse clinic has provided the Kingscliff community with essential injury prevention and healthy ageing care.

Michelle plans to continue with her current model of care and says:



Nurses can provide a lot more health care than what the government gives us credit for.

Michelle is now in her second year of Nurse Practitioner studies and is well supported by her colleagues at Kingscliff Health. Once qualified, she's planning to focus on preventative health to ensure all patients can access the care they need.

APNA's Building Nurse Capacity Program is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing under the Nursing in Primary Health Care Program.