

FACT SHEET

Hunter New England Health Chronic Disease Services Plan

Background

HNE Health has developed a suite of plans that outline the direction of health service development and delivery across the Hunter New England Health area for the next five years.

The plans include:

- A New Direction for Hunter New England – Health Service Strategic Plan towards 2010
- Area Healthcare Services Plan 2006 - 2010
- Clinical Service Plans, including:
 - Aged Care and Rehabilitation Services Plan
 - Cancer Services Plan
 - Mental Health Services Plan
 - **Chronic Disease Services Plan**

Additional clinical services plans will follow, as will plans for corporate services that support the delivery of clinical services.

What is the Chronic Disease Services Plan?

Strategic actions and initiatives to be implemented are identified in the plan. These actions and initiatives aim to build on the strengths of HNE Health's Chronic Disease services by enhancing the delivery and quality of those services.

An integral part of this plan is improving relationships, referral information and care coordination with GPs and other service providers.

The Chronic Disease Services Plan is a living document. It will be reviewed annually and annual Operational Plans developed to prioritise the work to be undertaken. The operational plans will identify key initiatives to be implemented within existing resources and through reallocation of resources.

Some initiatives in the plan require new funding. Whilst every effort will be made to secure the funding required, both by the services' management and by the Area Executive Team, we cannot guarantee we will be able to get all the

The Chronic Disease Services Plan sets the direction and priorities for chronic disease service development in the HNE Health region over the next five years

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funding needed.

Without additional funding, some things identified in the plan may not be able to be achieved.

What is a Chronic Disease?

Chronic diseases are those which are long-term and persistent, becoming more prevalent with age and gradually leading to deterioration of health. They typically have complex and multiple causes, and compromise quality of life through physical limitations and disability.

Chronic diseases include diabetes, cardiovascular disease (stroke and heart failure), cancer, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, arthritis and musculoskeletal disease, dementia and mental health problems and disorders.

In the HNE Health area over half the population's death date is attributed to chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes. More than 20 per cent of hospital stays are attributed to the same disease groups.

Aboriginal communities experience a disproportionately high burden of chronic disease. For example, diabetes related deaths and illness are ten times more prevalent in Aboriginal people than non-Aboriginal.

Risk factors for developing chronic conditions include:

- Tobacco smoking
- High risk alcohol use
- Physical inactivity
- Poor nutrition
- Excess weight
- High blood cholesterol

Hunter New England Health Chronic Disease Services Plan

How was the Chronic Disease Services Plan developed?

HNE Health's Chronic Diseases Services Plan has been devised in consultation with clinicians, managers, relevant service and consumers.

The plan will guide the provision of services to adult patients accessing specialist and generalist hospital and community services, youth transitioning from paediatric to adult services, and carers of people with chronic conditions.

The plan encompasses the chronic disease journey including:

- Prevention strategies in the well population
- Identification of risk factors and disease onset
- Supported self management
- Care coordination
- Psychological support
- Ongoing monitoring
- Advanced care planning
- Palliative care

What will we see in the next five years?

With the increasing prevalence of chronic diseases and the rapidly shifting balance between acute and chronic health problems, there is a need to expand the skills of health professionals to meet these new complexities.

Consultation with staff identified four priorities for chronic disease service development in the next five years:

- Smoking cessation across all services,
- Development of advanced care planning systems to assist end of life patients with decision making and guardianship issues,
- Implementation of the National Service Improvement Frameworks for all chronic conditions to ensure best practice guidelines are followed,
- Staff training programs for chronic disease management.

Other strategies identified in the plan include:

- Development of models of care that improve access and co-ordination of services (e.g. a central point of contact)
- Improved data collection relevant to chronic disease services
- Improved use of technology such as telehealth systems
- Increased partnering with patients, other providers and communities to ensure more integrated care (e.g. collaboration projects such as the Diabetes Project and the Advanced Care Planning Project currently underway with the Divisions of General Practice)
- More seamless transition between paediatric and adult chronic disease services (e.g. Type 1 diabetes) taking into account independence and self management to avoid young people opting out of care as young adults
- Culturally sensitive education tools and services will be developed to increase the number of Aboriginal people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (e.g. refugees) referred to and attending chronic disease rehabilitation services.
- Improved communication of chronic disease prevention and risk factor reduction and access to services, including the development of a website.

How can I view the Chronic Diseases Services Plan?

The full Chronic Diseases Services Plan can be downloaded from the HNE Health internet site by visiting:

http://www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au/services_plans

For further information, contact HNE Health's Chronic Disease Programs Co-ordinator, Carolyn Bailey on 02 4915 1754.