



WEST AUSTRALIAN DIVISION



The New WA Assessment Framework Forum

AAG and ACSWA Joint Event



On Tuesday 27 September the WA Division of the AAG together with Aged and Community Services WA (ACSWA) held their much anticipated seminar on the new WA Assessment Framework. Delegates from varying backgrounds attended to hear how the new framework has been perceived by many of the different stakeholder groups involved.

Luke Garswood, Senior Policy Officer at the Aged and Continuing Care Directorate of the WA Department of Health introduced the topic and provided an overview of the reasons and objectives behind the implementation of the new WA Assessment Framework. The new framework is designed to facilitate the emerging thinking and trends in access and assessment in community care, in particular the “wellness” approach. It also recognises and reinforces reforms underway in the WA Department of Health and at a national level targeted at improving the clients journey and streamlining access throughout the health and community care system¹. The goal of the new framework, as outlined by Mr. Garswood is that “all community care clients and their carers receive personalised, quality supports that are underpinned by an assessment that identifies their needs, builds on their strengths and reflects their aspirations”.

Judy Waymouth, Manager of the Metropolitan East Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre gave an overview of the CCRC role within the new framework. She outlined the referral process and some of the positive and negative aspects encountered since the introduction of the framework. The new framework has enabled relationship building, increased referral to a wider range of providers and has allowed for options to be discussed with ineligible clients. Some issues identified were getting the model right, capacity to manage unpredictable volumes, and the understanding and acceptance of change among clients, HACC providers, social workers and GPs.

¹ Government of Western Australia Department of Health (2009). *Western Australian (WA) Home and Community Care (HACC) Program Assessment Framework Service Redesign*. Perth: Government of Western Australia Department of Health.

Ricki Smith, General Manager of Access Care Network Australia, Silver Chain, outlined the Regional Assessment Service (RAS) process. She stated that the process has allowed stronger collaboration between CRCC's, RAS' and service providers, that the WA Assessment Framework Interface (WAAFI) has made it possible to have a central record that can be shared by all parties involved in the care of the client and that clients have reported high levels of satisfaction with the number of assessment visits they are receiving and the length of time the process is taking. The next steps in improving the process will be to allow access to ACAT assessments and to determine how clients with special needs such as those with dementia or mental health issues can be better supported.

Rosie Lawn, Acting General Manager at Perth Home Care Services (PHCS) reflected on the providers perspective of what was working well and not so well following the implementation of the new framework. She commented that referrals to the organisation had been steadily increasing, that they had received a large amount of referrals for domestic assistance, that crisis referrals are strong and that relationships and communication between the Regional Assessment Service (RAS) and PHCS were improving. Some issues identified were that PHCS overall referrals were down, that there exists a lack of appropriate assessment and information for those with complex needs, that the process itself and relationships with the RAS needs to be further developed and that there are some issues with information and documentation.

Ken Marston, the Chief Executive of Council on the Ageing WA (COTA WA) discussed the consumer perspective of the new WA Assessment Framework. He stated that we are experiencing a paradigm shift in aged care. The simplified gateway to the aged care system proposed by the Productivity Commission report is a major step in implementing consumer directed care and Mr. Marston feels that the assessment process is critical to its success. He argued that during this first period of implementation there will need to be testing of ideas as well as tracking and analysis of barriers and unintended consequences.

Marise Goddard Jones, Director of GGJ Consultants provided an update on the recommendations made through the WA Assessment Framework Evaluation report. GGJ Consultants evaluated the WA Assessment Framework against its stated objectives through a review of intake and referral processes, a review of assessment and referral processes and a review of support planning and service provision. Some findings of the evaluation were that there were issues with the recording of data at Care Needs Identification Inventories, Assessments and in support plans. Positive findings were that overall, assessments were adequate to determine and define HACC client need and that support plans reflected assessed needs. The next evaluation report which includes data from clients, CRCC, RAS, service providers and others is currently being collated.

The session concluded with questions and a debate, where those attending could address their views, relate their experiences and express their own opinions.



Upcoming Events

The first event for 2012 will be held in March with a futuristic technology theme. Forum will be titled ***“Technology: Making older people’s lives better”***. Speakers and venue are still to be announced.

Student Representative

The WA State Division are currently seeking a student representative to join the Committee. If you are undertaking postgraduate study on ageing or aged care and would like to be involved please contact Kristen De San Miguel: KDeSanMiguel@silverchain.org.au.

Committee Members

President – Leon Flicker

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Committee Members – Donelle Rivett, Eyal Gringart,
Roger Warne, Frank Schaper, Gill Lewin, Anne Zubrick & Orla Hill



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Orla Hill, Newsletter Representative, WA Division