Health of Older People (HOP) Squad
Cross-service collaboration to improve complex discharge planning for at-risk elderly patients

Authors: Julie Yap Clinical Nurse Specialist-Gerontology, Sharlene Bingham Service Manager Health of Older People, Cindy Blackwell Improvement Advisor

Introduction

A lack of co-ordination in discharge assessments, along with a lack of knowledge and confidence within General Medicine ward clinicians of the available community services and supports for frail/elderly patients on discharge led to prolonged inpatient stays. This in turn impacted on acute patient flow within the hospital.

Aim

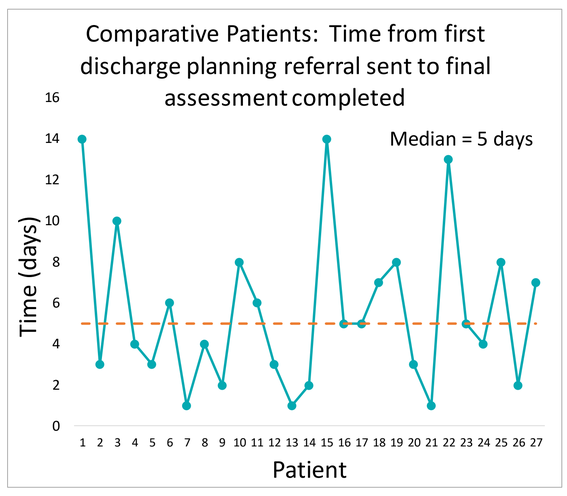
To provide input from a dedicated multidisciplinary HOP (Health of Older People) Squad on general medicine wards to reduce discharge delays for frail/elderly patients through early co-ordination of complex discharge planning activities and improving ward clinician knowledge of and confidence to refer to community-based services.

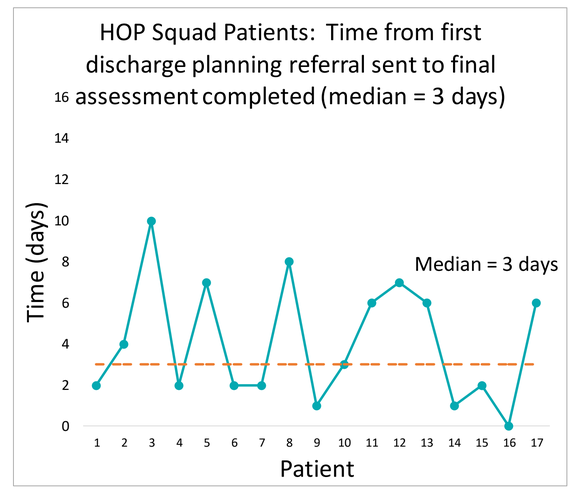
Discussion

The HOP Squad held weekly MDT huddles on the ward. Planning of clinical interventions needed prior to discharge was coordinated, and discharge needs identified, resulting in a discharge plan A and/or plan B; occasionally a plan C. Data was collected on length of stay, readmission rates, referrals to community, and clinician knowledge and confidence. Ethnicity data was captured to ensure equity in service provision. To test the effectiveness of the intervention, comparative data was captured on a large cohort of patients who also met the HOP Squad criteria from a neighbouring General Medicine ward

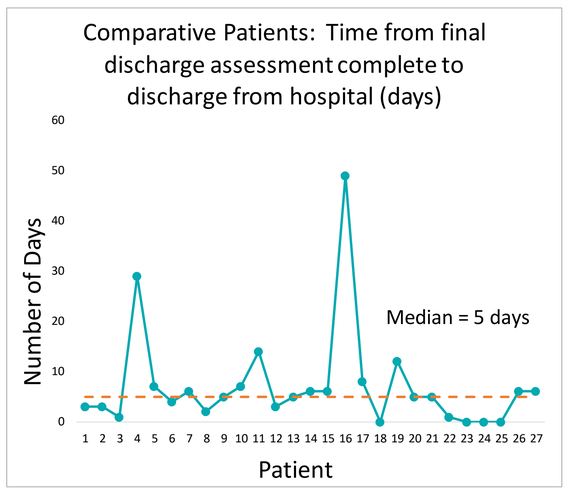
Results

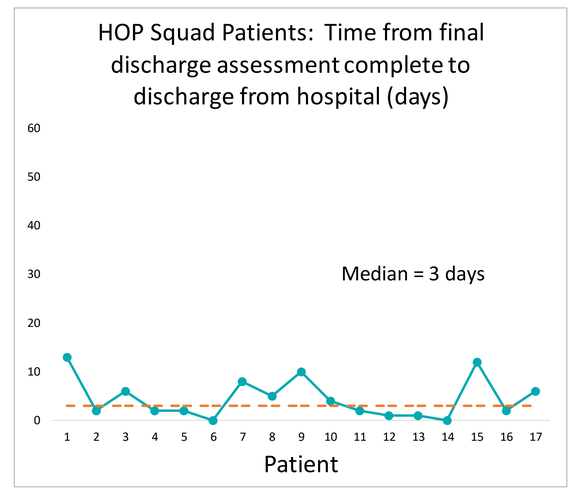
Timely Discharge Assessments



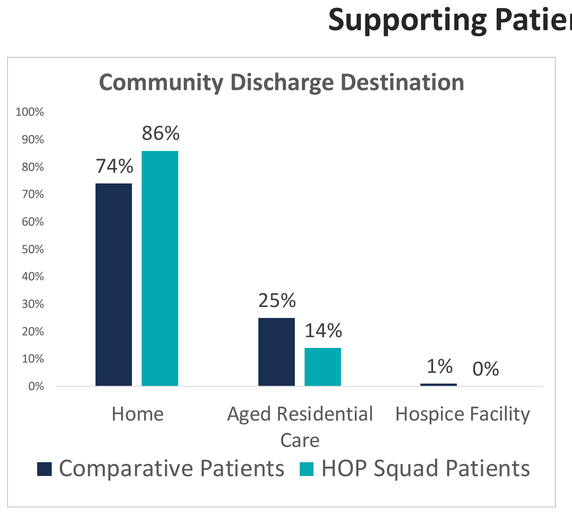


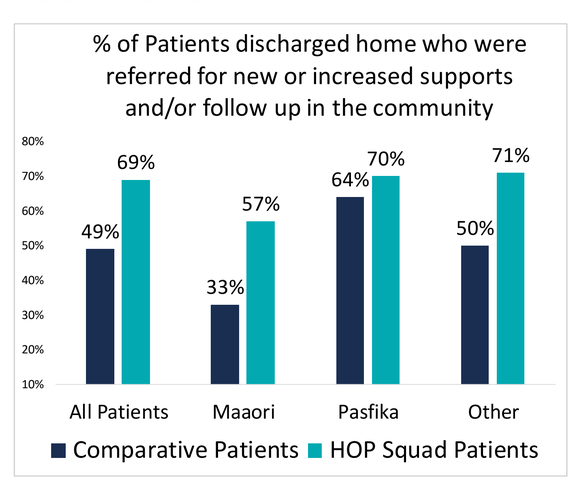
Discharge Delays



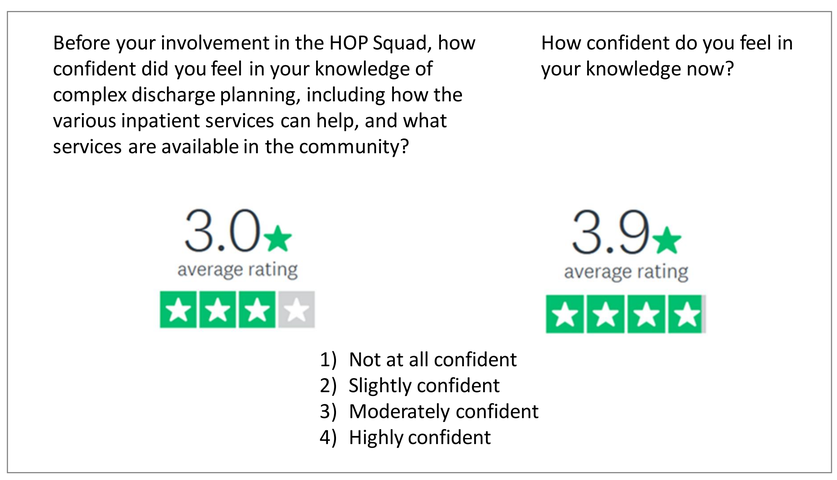


Supporting Patients to Return Home



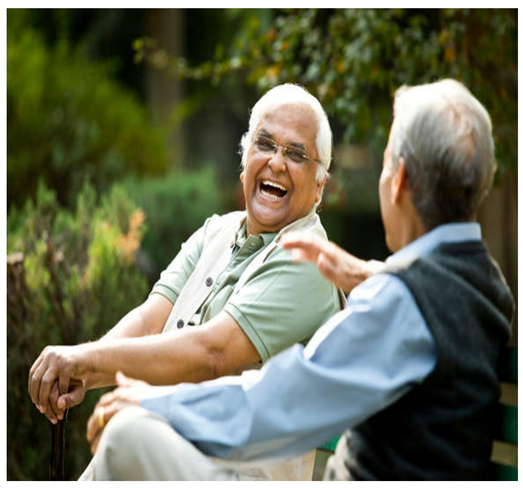


Clinician Survey



Conclusion

The HOP Squad proved to be beneficial in improving clinicians' knowledge, improving the coordination of discharge planning, reducing delays to discharge and enabling a higher number of patients to return home who otherwise would have gone into aged residential care. It was noted that the greatest increase in uptake of community supports was in Māori and Pasifika patients.



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