

DML Excellence Awards 2016 Report

Project No: 296 – National Rehabilitation Hospital Pilot Wheelchair & Seating Clinic

Address: National Rehabilitation Hospital

Location: National Rehabilitation Hospital

Brief Description (up to 200 words)

A new pilot service in the National Rehabilitation Hospital between the Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy Departments providing intergrated assessment, trial, prescription and issuing of appropriate wheelchairs and seating equipment to people suffering from severe neurological deficits including spinal cord injury, acquired brain injury and stroke. The service also improves the pathway between primary and community services, with a comprehensive handover package provided to community occupational therapy services post-discharge.

Main goal(s) and aims of the Project

To ensure that a comprehensive assessment, trial, prescription and issue process is delivered in a timely manner to all NRH inpatients who require a wheelchair and seating service.

To increase competency of all staff in the area of wheelchair and seating assessment within a competency framework.

To deliver a service in a fit for purpose facility.

To provide an interdisciplinary approach to the delivery of the wheelchair and seating service which is fully intergrated into the rehabilitation programme.

To measure the outcomes of the pilot service through service user and stakeholder feedback as well as other measurement tools.

To develop a sustainable model of the future/ongoing delivery of the wheelchair and seating service.

Outline of Approach – main steps taken to implement the Project

Outset of service: Liaison with external agencies (e.g. seating clinic in Royal Hospital Donnybrook, HSE Community Area 4, CRC and Enable Ireland) regarding running of services, equipment, facilities and staffing.

Best Practice Guidelines: WHO “Guidelines on provision of manual wheelchairs in less resourced settings”, RESNA “Wheelchair Service Provision Guide” and NHS “Healthcare Standards for Wheelchair Service” all reviewed in accordance with aforementioned external engagement to help develop processes for the service (Referral pathway, assessment, trial, prescription and issuing processes) as well as documentation and scope of service.

Training needs identified for both the staff working in the Clinic as well as the wider physiotherapy and occupational therapy departments. Regular training sessions provided and accessibility to formal training and courses identified and completed. This included a course run by international speaker offered to both NRH staff and staff of our main referring acute hospitals.

From outset of service, key data recorded on all patients (including date of referral, date of assessment, date of prescription, date of issuing, number of appointments, equipment provided, cost of same) to help quantify outcomes, use sustainability indicators and appropriate measures/patient feedback forms to obtain meaningful, presentable information on the process.

Presentation at AOTI conference to introduce service to the attention of OT’s nationally, involvement with Irish Posture and Mobility Network important for increasing awareness of service and improving contacts across the HSE.

Quarterly reviews with Steering Committee addressing key data of service (numbers seen, equipment provided, budget available) to help try to identify patterns throughout the year that can help to potentially notice trends and/or foresee potential complications before they arise.