

Title: Five Years On: Successes and Challenges in embedding physiotherapy led screening clinic services state-wide in Queensland.

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Following a successful pilot program demonstrating clinical, organisational and stakeholder benefits, the Orthopaedic Physiotherapy Screening Clinic and Multi-disciplinary Service has been rolled out state-wide across Queensland. The service is led by experienced Musculoskeletal Physiotherapists working in an advanced scope of practice role. State-wide, over 9000 occasions of service were provided in 2009/10 with the majority of discharged patients removed from orthopaedic waiting lists without requiring further medical review. Stakeholder satisfaction and engagement remains high five years after implementation. A state-wide network has been established with common outcome measures enabling reporting against uniform performance indicators. Despite a competitive funding environment, the service has attracted ongoing investment for expansion in Orthopaedic and Neurosurgical services through strong marketing, targeted advocacy and a focus on outcomes. Implementation of advanced practice roles has improved recruitment and retention of highly experienced physiotherapists in the public sector and contributed to increased enrolments in post graduate musculoskeletal physiotherapy education in Queensland. Some ongoing challenges to implementation and sustainability have been encountered. Recognition and remuneration of advanced scope of practice roles has been contentious during industrial award restructures. Recruiting appropriate staff has been significantly more challenging in some regional areas. Workforce development strategies are required to prepare the workforce to assume these roles in the future and to address the professional development needs of staff in advanced practice roles. Further opportunities exist for research in order to streamline the service model, facilitate early identification and more specifically target services for those patients who can be re-directed from specialist outpatient waiting lists.