

Chronic wound management

Implementation overview

The Leading Better Value Care (LBVC) program is a NSW Health initiative supporting a value based, sustainable approach to healthcare. LBVC seeks to identify and implement opportunities for delivering better value care to the people of NSW. It identifies and scales evidence-based initiatives for specific diseases or conditions and supports their implementation in all local health districts and specialty health networks across the state.

Chronic wound management has been identified as a clinical initiative for LBVC Tranche 2 and will focus on people with chronic wounds and wounds at risk of becoming chronic. This initiative aims to improve the way wounds are managed to deliver better experiences of receiving and providing care; enhance outcomes for patients, carers and families; and optimise the use of resources.

The LBVC Standards for Wound Management have been developed to provide a foundation for the LBVC chronic wound management initiative. They are intended for use by clinicians, health service managers, administrators and policy makers to guide their planning and implementation of the initiative.

POTENTIAL AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The following areas are proposed as potential areas for action and further development at a state or local level. They may include, but are not limited, to:

- reviewing and refining the existing model(s) of care
- self-assessment against the LBVC Standards for Wound Management (the Standards)
- defining assessment and referral processes, including HealthPathways
- developing and implementing a standardised patient triage process/pathway for wound care regardless of presentation point (for example, exploring an electronic pathway)
- defining and embedding a standardised approach to chronic wound assessment and management
- improving access to specialist chronic wound care (e.g. co-commissioning with private providers, a networked hub model to support services across the state)
- investigating options to support documentation and sharing care plans and information across the chronic wound care 'team'
- improving local data collection and clinical data access

Prioritisation of areas for improvement will occur in partnership with LBVC leads and clinicians to ensure appropriateness to the local environment and validity of identified issues.

The approach focuses on improving alignment of care outlined in the Standards.

There are also a range of areas for system-wide improvement including endorsing relevant patient reported measures, strengthening the electronic capture of wound data and images within the eMR, enabling electronic transfer of clinical information across care settings and improving the state-wide procurement of wound products. Appropriate solutions will be considered by the Ministry of Health working together with the pillar organisations and local health districts.

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SUPPORT OPTIONS

At a local level, the ACI can work with teams at LHDs, SHNs and individual sites to plan the necessary improvement. The support offered is tailored to individual site needs – this may involve mentoring, guidance, facilitation and training throughout the project.

Getting started

- Developing a local case for change
- Project planning, including scoping and scheduling
- Stakeholder engagement and mapping
- Local sponsorship and governance
- Developing a communication strategy – the what, how and who to

Understanding the problem

- Self-assessment against the Standards
- Making sense of the information available about the issue to identify gaps/barriers in clinical care, including review of clinical and administrative data systems
- Using tools such as process mapping, patient journey mapping and root cause analysis to examine current service and care pathways
- Identifying root causes of problems to focus on local targeted solutions
- Creating and prioritising a list of issues that can be considered to address the problem
- Conducting staff interviews and/or focus groups

Planning the change

- Developing solutions to the issues identified
- Prioritising the solutions: quick wins, short-term and long-term projects
- Testing solutions in many different ways
- Introducing the change and person/s responsible
- Coaching to work through challenges/barriers as they arise
- Planning monitoring and evaluation strategy – how, when data are required

Making and sustaining the change

- Implementing the project plan systematically
- Addressing the human elements of change
- Taking a shared stakeholder management approach
- Communicating to all stakeholders
- Evaluating progress and planning for subsequent spread

More information

For more detailed information about the LBVC chronic wound management clinical initiative, contact the chronic wound management team on aci-chronicwounds@health.nsw.gov.au