

## CASE STUDY

# Increasing efficiency with daily huddles

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Turuki Health Care is using daily huddles to improve communication within the practice team and better coordinate care.

The huddles take place every morning at 10am and include all staff at the practice – GPs, nurses, healthcare assistants, managers and administrative staff. During the huddle, staff run through a standardised agenda which covers the day’s roster, tasks, notices and priority patients. Each huddle takes no more than 15 minutes.

Staff share responsibility for leading the huddle and for taking minutes, which are circulated by email immediately afterwards.

Before the huddles started, practice manager Renee Muru had concerns about staff taking time out from clinical duties to attend.

“There was a lot of money sitting in that back room having a huddle. As a practice manager, that scared me. But after about the third huddle I started to see the difference it was making in our team.”

Ms Muru noticed the huddles produced better communication and teamwork within the practice.

“We’re seeing improved communication and teamwork across all levels, because everybody has the same information and we all know what’s happening: who’s on the roster, what everyone else is doing, what’s going to happen each day and which patients we can expect. We no longer work in professional information silos.”

The improved teamwork enables better coordinated care that benefits the practice and its patients.

“Care is more efficient and effective because we plan ahead as a team. For example, if a patient is coming in with special needs, such as a language barrier, or cultural or clinical needs, we can make sure we have people with the right skills available to meet that patient’s need when they arrive,” says Ms Muru.

In addition, reminders given at the huddles prompt staff to talk about priority health targets, such as smoking cessation and mammograms, with patients.

Practice staff value the benefits huddles have brought and the opportunity to get together as a team. Engagement is high.

“Everyone attends. It shows the success of the huddles that staff prioritise attending. Occasionally, one or two staff may be unable to attend because they’re seeing patients, but people want to come and the brevity of the huddles makes that achievable,” says Dr Lily Fraser, GP.

Because huddles improve communication and bring the practice team together, they help to sustain engagement in other EPC change projects, Dr Fraser says.

“If there’s something new we’re going to do, the huddle is where we get reminded about that. We don’t have to rely on weekly meetings or people getting time to read emails. It’s a useful tool for promoting change.”

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