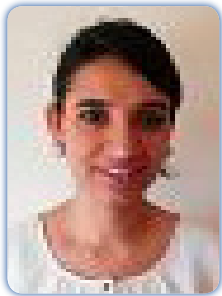


25TH WORLD NURSING AND NURSE PRACTITIONER CONFERENCE

October 22-23, 2018 Osaka, Japan



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Monash University, Australia

Innovative nurse practitioner model addressing the disparity in health care system

Nurse practitioners have existed in many countries for nearly 50 years and despite the literature supporting the important role they play in health care systems there has been a relatively slow uptake of this model of care in Australia. Most nurse practitioner models in public health services in Australia are developed to fill gaps in the health care delivery systems. The roles often aim at improving access to healthcare for marginalized population, reducing fragmentation in the delivery of healthcare and/or targeting priority areas like reducing hospital admissions and ED waiting times. One such priority area and identified gap is the physical health needs of mental health consumers. People with mental illness have higher morbidity and mortality which is further compounded by disparity in health care provision. Suggestions have been made to develop integrated models whereby mental health services share the responsibility of managing medical comorbidities of these consumers. An innovative model utilizing a NP to address this gap was trialed at one of the biggest public health service in metropolitan Victoria. The NP was based in a long term community mental health team and their role focused on conducting assertive screening and arranging treatment and follow up for the medical comorbidities and initiating preventative measures for those at risk. The trial for 4 years included another funded project across 2 different community teams and showed significant improvement in the screening, referrals to specialist agencies and coordination of care and improved consumer satisfaction amongst the consumers followed up by the teams.

Biography

Gaganpreet Khaira is a Nurse Practitioner in Mental Health working across two community's mental health teams at Monash Health (largest metropolitan public health service in Victoria). She also does education sessions and evaluations for nurse practitioner students at Monash University and nursing students at the hospital. She has been working with the mental health program developing a framework and clinical practice guidelines for managing physical health comorbidities of mental health consumers.

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