PATIENT ADMINISTRATION

PATIENT MOVEMENT

REFERRALS

SOCIAL WORK

Keywords:

AIM

To provide the information to ensure appropriate and timely referrals to the Social Work Department for psycho-social assessment and the provision of social work services (includes welfare assistance and resource development). Social Work services are available to both inpatients and outpatients at the hospital. The department is committed to maximising the patient’s potential in an environment of human rights and dignity.

OBJECTIVES OF THE DEPARTMENT

- To provide social work and welfare services to patients, their families and significant others, who experience social and emotional difficulties associated with obstetric and gynaecological conditions or treatments.
- To contribute to Hospital, Departmental and Directorate planning and policy development as it relates to social emotional care of patients and resources.
- To identify patients' social and emotional resource needs within the Hospital and community and promote access or development of these.
- To contribute to the continuing professional development staff by participating in staff development, training, education, consultation, analysis and review of practice with in WNHS.
- To initiate research and quality improvement initiatives within the Social Work Department and as members of multidisciplinary teams to improve the psycho-social care of patients.
- To administer the Social Work Service in Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

WHAT IS THE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT

- The Social Work Department is managed within the Allied Health Directorate
- The Social Work Department has 12.4 FTE including a Head of Department, Senior Social workers, Social workers, Senior Welfare Assistant, an Aboriginal liaison officer and secretary.
- Social workers hold professional qualifications in social work and have to be eligible for registration with the AASW.
- Social Workers are allocated to the Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Oncology and the Neonatal Clinical Care Unit.
- The Social Work Department is open between 8:30am and 4:30 pm.
- The Phone number is 9340 2777.
- The social workers carry a pager. The Department is located in B Block, Lower Ground Floor. Referrals can be made using the Social Work Referral form and urgent referrals may also be made by phoning the Department and speaking to the allocated social worker.
- There is an after-hours social work Service for urgent matters. This service is managed through a service level agreement with Princess Margaret Hospital, Social Work Department. The after-hours social worker carries a mobile phone and can be contacted via the after Hours Manager or Switch.
OBSTETRICS

**Antenatal patients** – written referrals are preferred for patients not identified via screening in specialist clinics.

**Referral criteria for Antenatal patients**
- Other children not in the care of the mother
- Ongoing or recent history of alcohol or other poly-drug use
- Family and Domestic Violence identified (current or recent past)
- Known history of past parenting problems / involvement with DCP
- Grief and bereavement (to support families experiencing; stillbirths; FDIU; neonatal death)
- Under 18 years of age
- Currently in prison
- Intention to relinquish baby
- Intellectual or physical Impairment /disability
- Admission to NCCU
- Parents of babies born with a disability
- Multiple-birth (triplets or more)
- Homelessness
- Newly arrived- unable to speak English and any one of the above
- DNA in 2nd trimester and any of the above
- Indigenous and from remote community
- Mental health issues and any one of the above.
- Mothers wishing to discharge themselves and the baby against medical advice. (See [NCCU Clinical Guideline Discharge Against Medical Advice](#))

**Refer Senior Welfare Assistant**
- Request for Emergency Financial Aid
- Transport
- Accommodation
- Inquiries from patients from the country about Patients Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS)

GYNAECOLOGY AND ONCOLOGY

Gynaecological and Gynae-Oncology patients can be referred from - Out Patient Clinics, Emergency Centre, Day Surgery and Ward 6 as well as patients themselves, relatives and community agencies.

**Referral Criteria for Gynaecological patients**

**Pregnancy Loss**
- Termination of pregnancy – elective or fetal anomaly (not being seen by genetic services)
- Under 18
- Grief and bereavement
- Family and Domestic violence
- Homelessness
- Intellectual Impairment
- Over 75 living -alone
- Surgical Patients with minimal social support

**Referral criteria for Oncology Patients**
- Advanced disease on diagnosis
- Grief and Bereavement issues
- Younger than 55 years
- Single/separated/divorced/widowed
- Lives alone
- Marital or Family problems
- Lack of social support
- Children younger than 21 years
- Financial concerns or issues
- Previous episodes of depression/psychiatric illness mental health problems
- History of stressful life events
- Problems related to drugs or alcohol

(Adapted from the The Psychosocial care referral checklist is adapted from the National Breast Cancer Centre and National Cancer Control Initiative, 2003. Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Psychosocial Care of Adults with Cancer. National Breast Cancer Centre, Camperdown, NSW.)

SOCIAL WORKER ACTIVITY
- Conduct assessments of risk whenever possible so that crises; enable co-ordination of services and maximise the family's ability to support the patient.
- Refer the family to agencies for specialist services, including further assessment, planning and co-ordination of services.
- Collaborate with other health professionals and external service providers so that families are engaged in a partnership and are included in plans that affect them.
- Document concerns, evidence, plans and interventions regarding child protection issues; domestic violence or other risks for individual patients.

DOCUMENTATION
- Social Work notes are wherever possible, integrated into the patients notes in the patient’s Medical Record.
- Social Work entries in the Medical Record will be made in the Outpatient, Inpatient or notes or the correspondence section of the record.
- A Social work Report (MR085) may also be written for more complex cases or when the initial assessment is undertaken at the first patient contact with the social work service.

Social work documentation will provide a brief description of the key social circumstances and will outline the plan. In some circumstances where there is significant psycho-social complexity there may be additional notes held in a ‘File by Exception’ in the Social Work Department but the important information and planning will be summarised in the patient’s Medical Record.

Documentation with comply with requirements for recording in Medical Records and Clinical Handover Guidelines.

REFERENCES (STANDARDS)
| NSQHS Standards – 12 Service Delivery | Nil |
| Legislation - | Nil |
| Related Policies | Nil |
| Other related documents – | Nil |

RESPONSIBILITY
| Policy Sponsor | Director Allied Health |
| Initial Endorsement | August 1999 |
| Last Reviewed | October 2014 |
| Last Amended | |
| Review date | October 2017 |

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