

**Submission to ANZSGM for ORAL PAPER to be presented by Dr Nicholas Waldron (Advanced Trainee in Geriatric Medicine)**

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**A MAP of delirium (Assessment, Management And Prevention) – A method for translating evidence into clinical practice**

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**Problem:**

Delirium is common but under-recognised during acute hospital admission. The burden of associated morbidity and mortality is high. Australian guidelines recommend clinical practice strategies to prevent, assess and manage delirium. (1)

**Aim:**

To develop a process for routinely assessing cognition in a busy medical ward. To improve recognition of delirium, address modifiable risk factors in the nursing care plan and provide practical resources for ward staff. To improve staff knowledge about delirium.

**Method:**

A project officer was employed. Baseline data included a ward focus group, staff perception survey and point prevalence audit. An Intervention package was developed and implemented over 6 months. This included, an educational program, clinical pathways, modified nursing care plan, “delirium box” with practical resources, carer pamphlet, delirium and pharmacology guidelines. Outcome data will be collected at the project’s conclusion.

**Results:**

The point prevalence of delirium was 37% (half were identified by the medical team). Confusion was noted by nursing staff in all delirium cases. The group was “high risk” with an average of 3/6 screened risk factors. Knowledge of delirium was good but staff felt resources and support was poor. Initial follow up shows support for the devised process with high staff enthusiasm.

**Conclusion:**

Nursing staff are well placed to screen for patients with delirium. The high incidence of risk factors in our population supports a global approach to preventative interventions. Final evaluation of our method for implementing best practice will be presented at the conference. Resources are downloadable. (2) If successful, widespread dissemination throughout RPH is proposed.

**References:**

1. Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Management of Delirium in Older People, V4 October 2006. Clinical Epidemiology & Health Service Evaluation Unit, Royal Melbourne Hospital, Victoria, Australia
2. <http://line-ten.net/waldron/delirium.htm>