

TITLE: Grass Roots Health Information Management – Quality, Processes and Financial Incentives

AUTHOR/S: Lisa Gardiner

Cairns & Hinterland Health Service District, Queensland, Australia

Medical Record Policies and Procedures, Information Technology, Clinical Classification and Casemix funding. How can a co-operative approach encompassing these subjects be driven by Health Information Services to ensure the optimal collection, classification, review and availability of clinical information?

Health Information Services for the Cairns and Hinterland Health Service District in Far North Queensland is embarking on a fresh approach to service provision to profile the role the unit plays in the provision of quality clinical information, suitable for review of activity levels, service planning, and patient care outcomes. The service encompasses health information management practices for Cairns Base Hospital as well as three other casemix funded facilities within the District.

This paper will profile the review and development of appropriate policies, procedures and review strategies that impact the quality of documentation and medical record formats; the grass roots of clinical care and clinical classification. Consideration will be given to the emergence of electronic clinical record keeping systems and the availability of clinical information across the continuum of care.

The paper will review the quality of activity collection within hospital based computerised information systems and report on the success of strategies put in place to enhance the accuracy and completeness of data collection processes, particularly as it impacts the quality of information submitted to Corporate Office. Integral to these strategies is the work being undertaken by the Senior Health Information Manager for Clinical Coding & Data Quality within Health Information Services.

It is important for Health Information Services to maintain a collaborative working relationship with the Casemix and Clinical Analysis Unit, now part of the Business Support and Finance Branch for the District; to claim ownership over data quality; and implement strategies and review mechanisms to enhance the quality, availability and accuracy of clinical information.