Ryan’s Rule:
Statewide patient, family and carer escalation

Shaune Gifford
Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Service
Queensland Department of Health
Background

• Queensland’s health care system provides universal access for 4.5 million people living over 1.8 million km$^2$ (over 7 times the land mass of the UK)

• The vast majority of care delivered in Queensland Health hospitals and health services is very safe and effective. In 2012 life expectancy for Queensland females was 84 years and for Queensland males it was 79.5 years.

• Harm from clinical incidents will never be completely eliminated; our goal is to minimise preventable patient harm.

• Patient safety is an approach to understanding what causes patients to be harmed in health care and implementing solutions aimed at strengthening the layers of defence that prevent harm.
Layers of Defence

1. Early Warning and Response System (EWARS) Tools

2. Ryan’s Rule – a patient, family and carer escalation process
Background

- Ryan Saunders died in a Queensland Health facility 2007
- Coroner found his death to be in “all likelihood preventable”
- Commitment to Saunders family to name the patient, family and carer escalation process to honour Ryan
Development

- Liaison with Saunders family
- Literature Review
- Liaison with NSW and ACT
- Focus group
- Statewide Recognising and Responding to Clinical Deterioration (RRCD) Steering Committee with involvement of all HHSs
- Consumer testing \( (n=120) \)
- Health Contact Centre-13HEALTH and Smart Services Queensland (SSQ)
- Integrated Communications Unit
- Pre-implementation piloting
Resource development

- Consumers
  - Brochure
  - Posters

- Staff
  - Education
  - Model guidelines
  - Information sheet
  - Web banners, spotlight
Process

- 3 step process
- Single state-wide phone number
- “Warm” transfer of call
- Email notification to Patient Safety Unit and facility
- Evaluation online
Facility requirements

- Identify 3 positions to take call - available 24/7
- Educate at least 80% of staff
- Governance
  - Accountable committee
  - Approved internal procedure and documentation
- Pass testing of system
• Implemented statewide
• 164 facilities
• 16 HHSs
Reason for call

- Concern or Disagreement Rx plan: 19.9%
- Lack of Knowledge or Understanding: 15.8%
- Pain Management: 8.7%
- Questioning Suitability of Discharge: 5.8%
- Complaint Unrelated to Clinical Care: 5.1%
- Request r/v Mental Health Assessment: 1.9%
- Seeking Results of Test: 1.7%
- Noticeable Change in Patient Condition: 1.7%

Figure 3
Ryan's Rule feedback

- Caller's needs met
- Patient's needs met
- Use Ryan's Rule again

Figure 4
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Questions

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