

Can I handle It?

A partnership to manage complaints in
Community Care



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Background



- Care Managers diverse in backgrounds & experience
- Care Manager plays central role in managing client care & expectations within limits of care package
- Increasing complexity of care & expectations of clients
- Service experienced difficult complaint that escalated to CIS
- In late 2007 Benetas engaged Proactive Complaints Management to assist with resolution of this complaint
- Complaint identified need for better complaints handling & partnership with Proactive Complaints Management was born



Focus



Focus was to:

- build the leadership skills of Team Leaders and
- provide care managers with skills, tools & systems to effectively manage client issues and expectations
- promote a customer service & well-being approach



Urgent Plan



- The experience of staff with the CIS complaint created a sense of urgency
- Urgent & immediate needs identified were to
 - ✓ implement new Client Agreement
 - ✓ clarify roles in complaints handling
 - ✓ upskill Care Managers in how to respond to a complaint
 - ✓ improve leadership & confidence of Team Leaders
 - ✓ increase understanding & confidence of care managers to inform clients/carers when package was exceeding budget



The Guiding Team

- A team was established to drive the changes required
 - ✓ Steve Aivaliotis-Proactive Complaints Management
 - ✓ Carol Julian-Exec Manager Community Care
 - ✓ Team Leaders Community Care





The Vision



The Outcome Sought was:

- More than improving complaints handling
- Seeking better outcomes for clients
- Ensuring tools & systems support Care managers to build trust and positive relationships with clients/carers





How to achieve the change and Get Buy In?



- Training course delivered by Steve Aivoliotis
- Clearly communicating need to change/improve
- Alongside new tools such as client agreement
- Some resistance initially-a vocal minority
- Others excited & supportive with ideas to make client agreement more user-friendly





Empowering others to act

- Team leaders & some care managers were champions
- They generated ideas to make new client agreement easier to explain (user friendly script developed & one page agreement summary-translated)
- Follow up team sessions were led by Team leaders with Steve present for support
- This provided momentum/leadership for overall change





Short Term Wins

- When agreement was implemented the first short term win was achieved
- Care managers empowered with the tools to manage their client's expectations at the beginning of care journey





Consolidate gains & more improvements



- Through training and role plays
 - strengthened skills in complaints handling
 - demonstrated need to set clear boundaries on package funding & how to do it
 - clarified roles in managing complaints (Benetas Complaints Resolution Process)
 - explained role of CIS
 - explained security of tenure
- Improved complaints tracking, follow up & reporting





Creating a new culture



- Building confidence to proactively manage complaints required ongoing support during transition
 - Team leaders attend client mtgs with Care Mgrs
 - Team Leaders access senior managers
 - Team Leaders access Steve Aivoliotis as the specialist mentor for advice
 - Temporary External Case Management in very difficult circumstances



Are we succeeding?

- Feedback from staff has been very positive
- External complaints have resolved positively
- On average 4 to 5 phone calls to SA per week-now reduced significantly
- Currently 2 clients (very difficult circumstances) are case managed by Steve temporarily & transition back to an internal case manager is being planned
- Team leaders have been able to show care managers how to deal with difficult relationships and not get embroiled in non relevant arguments





Comment from Steve Aivoliotis



“Overall the performance of Benetas Community Care certainly meets best practice regarding the provision of services and being attentive to the needs of their client group?”

