



AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION ON  
SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTHCARE



# Recognising and responding to clinical deterioration: A national approach to safer care



Nicola Dunbar, 12 March 2010



# Overview

- ▶ Description and update regarding ACSQHC program
- ▶ What does a national approach mean? How can it help?
- ▶ Current activities and opportunities for input



# Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care

- ▶ Established in 2006 to lead and coordinate safety and quality improvements nationally
- ▶ Public / private sectors ; acute / primary care
- ▶ Small organisation that focuses on policy / knowledge / best practice / sharing information / strategy
- ▶ Need to be informed by and work with consumers, governments, providers, professional organisations and other stakeholders to effect change
- ▶ Care of patients whose condition is deteriorating identified as a priority in 2008; new program commenced in 2009

# Recognising and Responding to Clinical Deterioration

- ▶ Current initiatives:
  - Consensus Statement regarding essential elements of care for patients whose condition is deteriorating
  - Implementation guide for using the Consensus Statement
  - Evidence-based observation chart to prompt action
- ▶ Other areas of interest:
  - Needs of specific areas – paediatrics, rural areas
  - Use of clinical judgement to identify patients who are deteriorating
  - Mental health – psychiatric deterioration
  - Prevalence of deterioration
  - Effectiveness and sustainability of METs

# Update on current activities

## ▶ Consensus Statement:

- Considered by AHMAC 4 March
- To Health Ministers 22 April
- Then to be disseminated widely

## ▶ Implementation guide:

- Work commencing now
- Likely to be available late 2010

## ▶ Observation chart:

- Human factors research almost complete
- Plan to test chart in a clinical environment, then pilot more widely



# A national approach

## ▶ International examples:

- Campaigns:
  - started by Institute for Health Improvement
  - hospitals sign up to participate – receive support, implement interventions, measure progress
  - popular model – now being used in UK, Canada and Scandinavia
- National roll out:
  - UK Department of Health funded the establishment of critical care outreach services
- Accreditation:
  - Joint Commission – National Patient Safety Goal / accreditation requirement

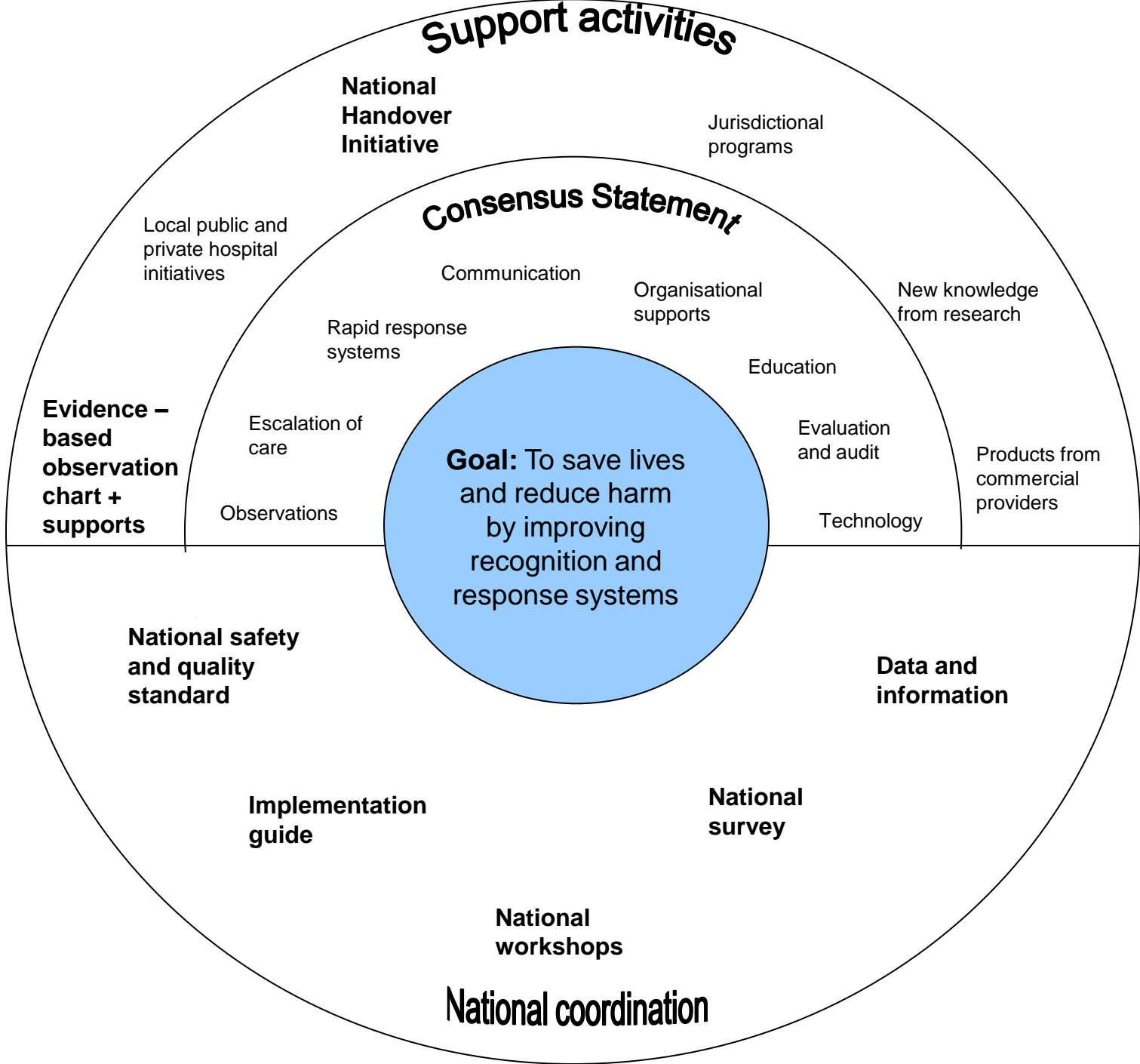
# A national approach

- ▶ What could this mean in Australia?
- ▶ Need to consider structure of Australian health system
  - Responsibility for delivery of public health services by state and territory health departments
  - Mixed public and private system
- ▶ Not all interventions are equally effective at all levels
- ▶ Need to consider role of the Commission



# Leading and coordinating safety and quality...

- ▶ Bring authority and recognition to an issue
- ▶ Set expected practice and standards
- ▶ Develop tools to support effective practice
- ▶ Commission research that adds to evidence base
- ▶ Disseminate innovative work
- ▶ Bring people together
- ▶ Explore new areas
- ▶ Facilitate communication



# Advantages of a national approach

- ▶ Identified national priority – opportunity to raise awareness and push for action
- ▶ Set framework that can be applied everywhere – confident that it brings in best available evidence
- ▶ Provide national standards to support implementation
- ▶ Measure and monitor change – how do you perform against others?
- ▶ Organisational structure to share innovative practice from across the country
- ▶ Can bring in evidence and learning from best practice elsewhere

# Where to next

- ▶ Consensus Statement to be released shortly - can be used to guide development of own systems and review existing systems
- ▶ National Safety and Quality Standard
- ▶ 2nd national workshop – Adelaide 9-10 November
- ▶ Looking at conducting a national survey of recognition and response systems
- ▶ Commission currently undertaking strategic planning for this program regarding long term work – want to know what you think are the priorities for future work

# Conclusion

- ▶ This is likely to be an ongoing area of work for the Commission
- ▶ We want to hear from you
- ▶ Join our mailing list
- ▶ See you in Adelaide in November
- ▶ Email: [nicola.dunbar@safetyandquality.gov.au](mailto:nicola.dunbar@safetyandquality.gov.au)