

Preparatory training programme for practice nurses and physiotherapists

A written preparatory training manual was created and used by the members of the research team to train the practice nurses to consistently deliver the PRINCE structured education pulmonary rehabilitation programme (SEPRP). Practice nurses received a three day training programme (Murphy et al 2010; Casey et al 2011). The initial two days of training involved practice nurses becoming familiar with the structured education programme and learning how to facilitate the programme in an empowering way. On the third day, which was held a week later, the practice nurses delivered elements of the programme content to their peers which was observed by the research team who provided structured feedback and guidance to each participant on their performance. The aim of this feedback was to further facilitate standardization of SEPRP delivery. The physiotherapists received a one day training programme which included the same key aspects of the practice nurse training programme but also focused on the exercise components of the programme in particular how to assess and safely prescribe exercise for persons with COPD. Again to ensure standardization of SEPRP delivery a written physiotherapist preparatory training manual was created and used by the member of the research team, to deliver the physiotherapist training programme to all participating physiotherapists.

To enhance the quality assurance of SEPRP delivery, during the 8 weeks of the programme members of the research team who developed the SEPRP and who delivered the preparatory training programmes, audited one of the 2-hour sessions delivered in each general practice. A structured audit feedback form was created. In the event that the audit revealed that the delivery of SEPRP did not adhere to programme principles or content, the form required the completion of an action plan detailing what the problems were and strategies to be used for overcoming same. Each of the eight audits revealed that the practice nurses and physiotherapists were adhering to the SEPRP philosophy, principles and programme content.