

HARC (Hospital Alliance for Research Collaboration) – Scholarship opportunity to improve burn care in NSW

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Introduction

The Hospital Alliance for Research Collaboration (HARC) scholarship program is available to employees of the HARC partnership organisations: Sax Institute, Clinical Excellence Commission, Agency for Innovation and Bureau of Health Information.

Gaps in current burn services were identified particularly in post-acute care and an opportunity to attend the ISBI Edinburgh Congress 2012. The author, who is a Burn Network Manager, was awarded the scholarship.

Method

The author travelled to the UK for three weeks; attended the 2012 ISBI Congress Edinburgh then went onto visit three of the UK Burn Care Networks which included visiting eleven burn care hospitals and interviewing two of the Burn Care Network Managers.

Results

From visits, discussions and interviews with a wide group of burn care and service providers in the UK gave an opportunity to identify gaps in our local NSW services that were addressed by UK services. These areas included:

- Outreach services – home based, peripheral clinics
- Reintegration programs
- Scar management practices
- Accreditation of facilities
- Technology – burn assessment app

The NSW burn network has since the scholarship been able to start filling the some of the gaps identified with some of the findings from the visits.

Conclusion

This invaluable experience gave the opportunity to both learn from and share with burn care providers from a geographically distant but otherwise in many ways similar service. There were elements in all the facilities visited that had something that was different to NSW burn care and showed positive outcomes for patients. Visiting so many facilities illustrated that no one service had all the features of an ideal service but there was something to learn from all.

Key Words

burn, network, service, scholarship