A sub-regional alliance of healthcare organisations has developed a Hub & Spoke Cardiac Rehabilitation Model of Care aiming to improve rural community member access to cardiac rehabilitation programs in the Wimmera region.

Prior to this pilot, cardiac rehabilitation was only available at Wimmera Healthcare Group in Horsham, Western Victoria, as an eight week multi-disciplinary program. Patients throughout the region may not have previously accessed or completed this service due to the burden of travel. Economy of scale has dictated that multi-disciplinary approaches to cardiac rehabilitation have not been available elsewhere in the Wimmera region.

Therefore, the study utilized the ‘Hub’ of multidisciplinary team members in Horsham to provide cardiac rehabilitation education via telehealth, whilst outlying ‘Spokes’ at Rural Northwest Health and West Wimmera Health Services provide face-to-face physical activity classes. This allowed a wider range of remote community members to successfully access a high quality, best practice program with improved peer support.

Since the implementation of the program, along with improved access, the service has:
1. saved thousands of dollars in travel costs and travel time,
2. provided opportunities for peer support and social connectivity,
3. enhanced staff support and their scope of practice,
4. increased telehealth skills, and
5. has created a replicable model for delivery of specialised interventions to remote populations.

Biography

Pawel is a grade 1 physiotherapist employed at West Wimmera Health Service. He graduated from the Royal College of Surgeons in 2014. He has been involved in the implementation of the Telehealth Hub and Spoke Model from the beginning of 2015 and he currently coordinates the program. His interests include cardiopulmonary rehabilitation.