

How are allied health primary contact models of care evaluated? A mixed methods exploration

Caitlin Brandenburg^{1,2}, Elizabeth Ward^{1,2}, Maria Schwarz¹, Michelle Palmer¹, Carina Hartley¹, Joshua Byrnes³, Anne Coccetti¹, Rachel Phillips¹ & Laurelie Wishart^{1,2,3}

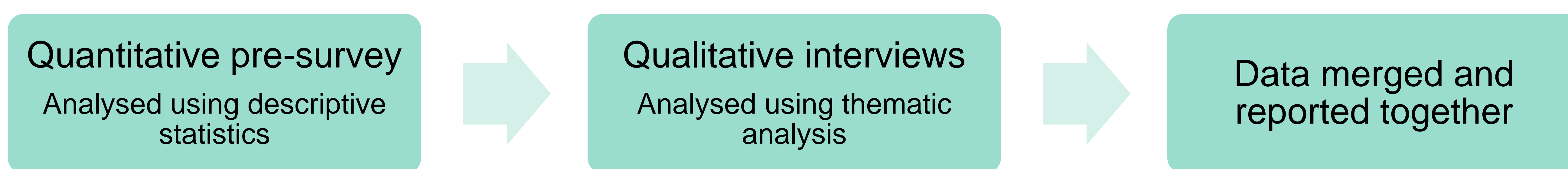
1. Metro South Health, QLD; 2. School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Queensland, QLD; 3. Centre for Applied Health Economics, Griffith University, QLD

Background:

- Allied Health Primary Contact Clinic (AHPCC) models of care have been increasingly implemented to address the growing demands on healthcare systems. There is an expectation that these models are comprehensively evaluated.
- However, AHPCC evaluations often focus on a limited set of metrics, and the reasons for this are unclear.

This project aimed to understand current evaluation practices and explore clinician attitudes to service evaluation across a variety of AHPCC models implemented within a Queensland metropolitan health service^{1,2}

Convergent mixed methods approach:



Results:

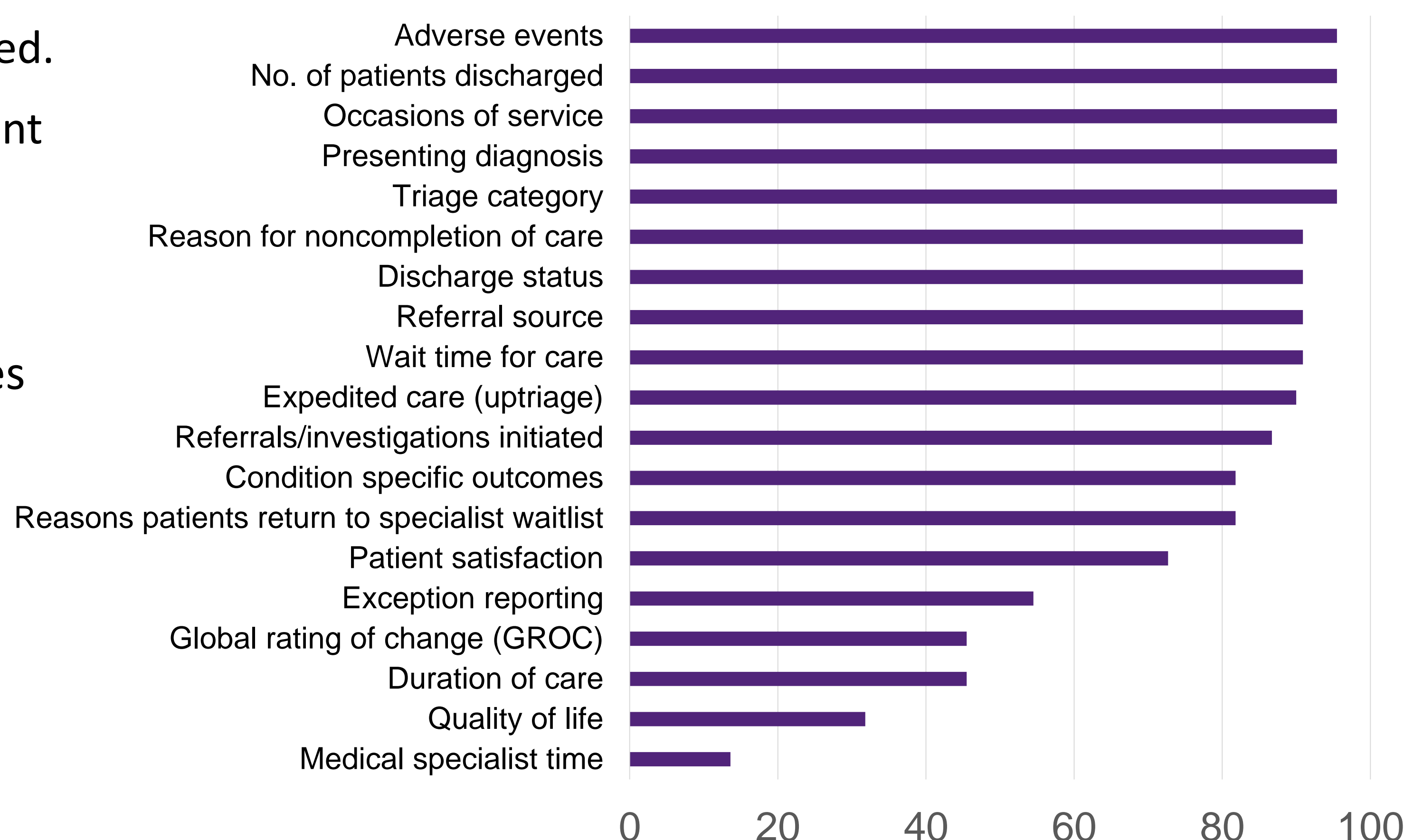
Participating clinicians and clinics:

- Twenty-three lead clinicians from 30 eligible AHPCCs participated.
- The AHPCC models were complex and varied, including first point of contact, secondary point of contact and other models.

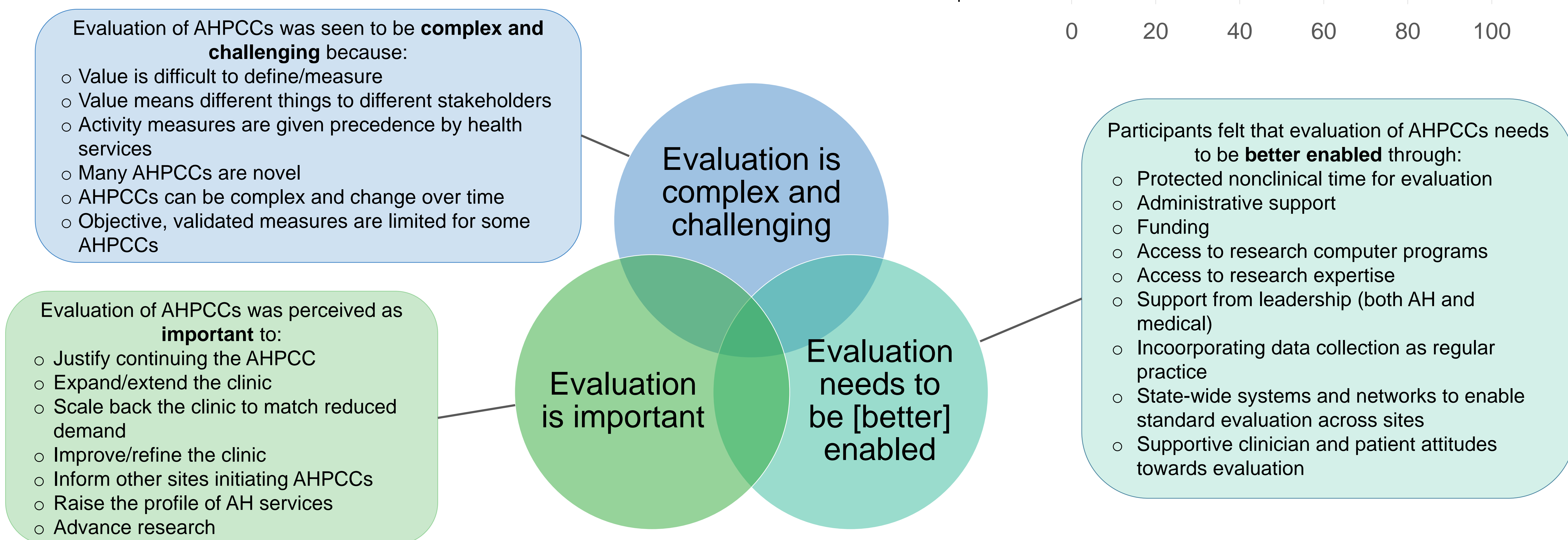
Measures:

- As shown in the graph, almost all AHPCCs collected measures that would be collected as part of routine records (e.g. wait time, adverse events, discharges).
- Few AHPCCs collected quality of life and resource use (e.g. medical specialist time) measures.

Evaluation data currently collected by AHPCC clinics, structured according to the Moretto framework³



Staff experiences with evaluation:



Takeaway messages

Current evaluation of AHPCCs is suboptimal

Comprehensive evaluation needs to be better valued and resourced at a local, statewide and national level

Routine robust evaluation of AHPCCs would enable health services to understand their value and drive evidence-informed decision-making and strategy

References: 1. Brandenburg et al. (2024). Evaluating allied health primary contact models of care: A mixed methods analysis of current practice. *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice*. Advance online.

2. Brandenburg et al. (2024). 'The big value of it is getting the patient seen by the right person at the right time': clinician perceptions of the value of allied health primary contact models of care. *International Journal for Quality Health Care*, 36(1).

3. Moretto et al. (2020). A uniform data set for determining outcomes in allied health primary contact services in Australia. *Australian journal of primary health*, 26, 58–69.