

Evaluating the Role of Social Work in a Subacute Bed-Substitution Model

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Introduction

Rising demand for inpatient care nationwide has prompted shifts towards innovative healthcare models outside of traditional hospital settings. Peninsula Health's At Home Subacute (AHS) program commenced in 2021 as an alternative to inpatient subacute wards to provide care to GEM, Rehab and Palliative care clients within their homes, as well as Early-Supported discharge patients. AHS has access to a full Allied Health team including Social Work (SW).

This study aimed to evaluate the AHS SW service; referral types received, SW interventions with patients and additional interventions provided outside of referral reason.

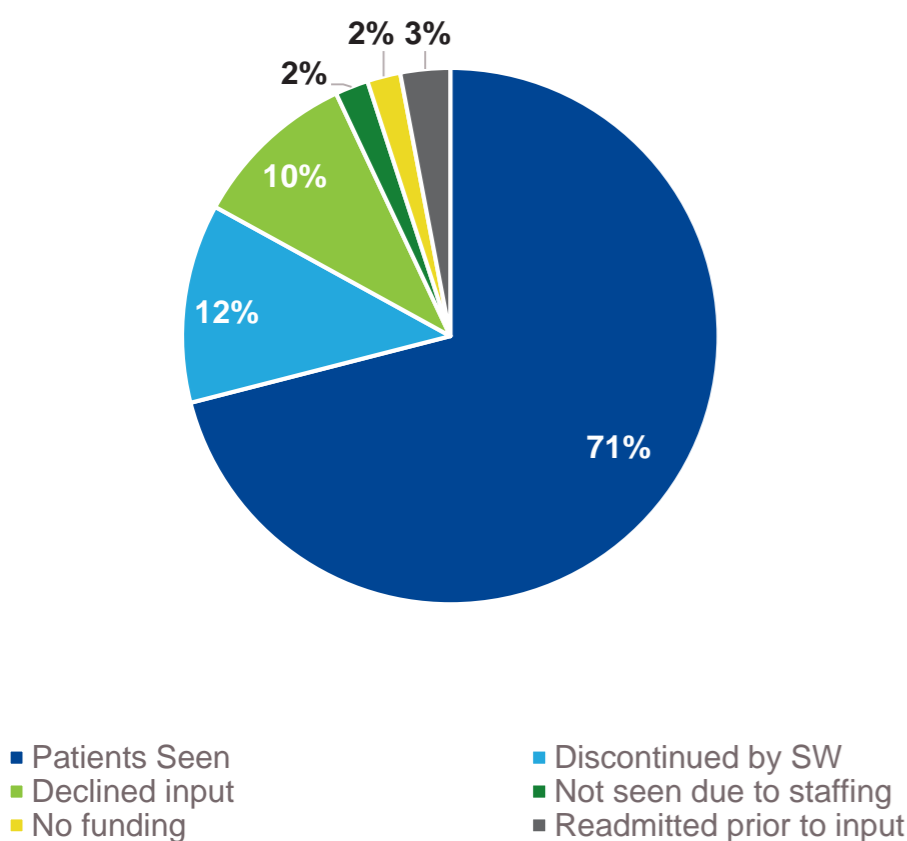
Methods

Data was obtained on discharge from the SW service in 2024. Data points included; referral numbers, referral reasons, interventions addressed, and additional actions completed.

Data was analysed using frequency statistics.

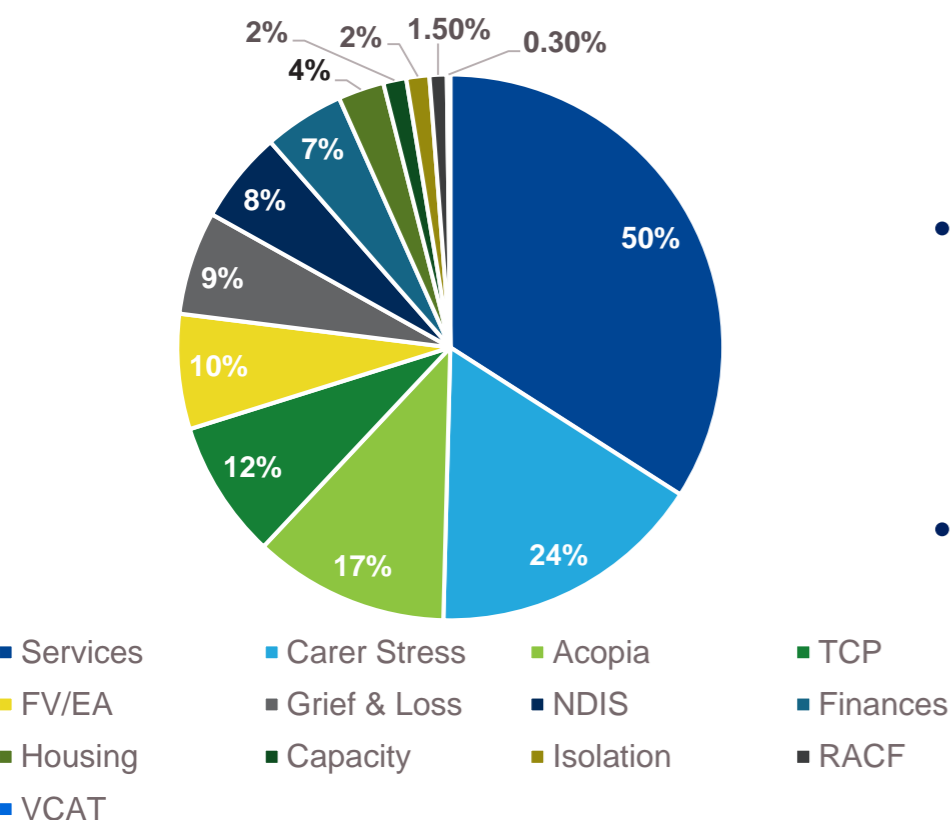
Results

Referrals to Social Work



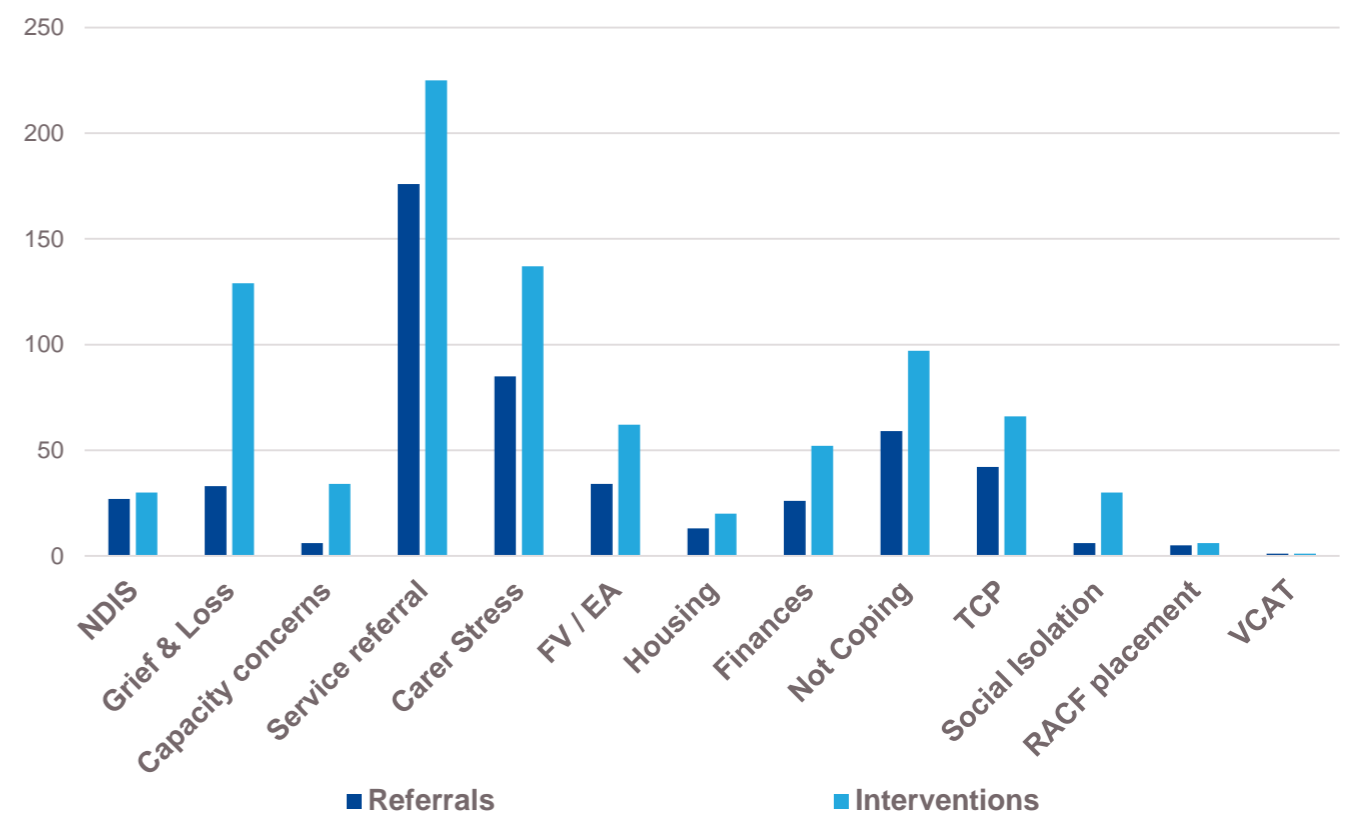
- **488** referrals to SW in 2024
- **71%** of these patients (n348) seen by SW
- **10%** of patients (n48) declined SW input
- **3%** patients (n18) readmitted to hospital prior to SW input

Percentage of Referral Reasons



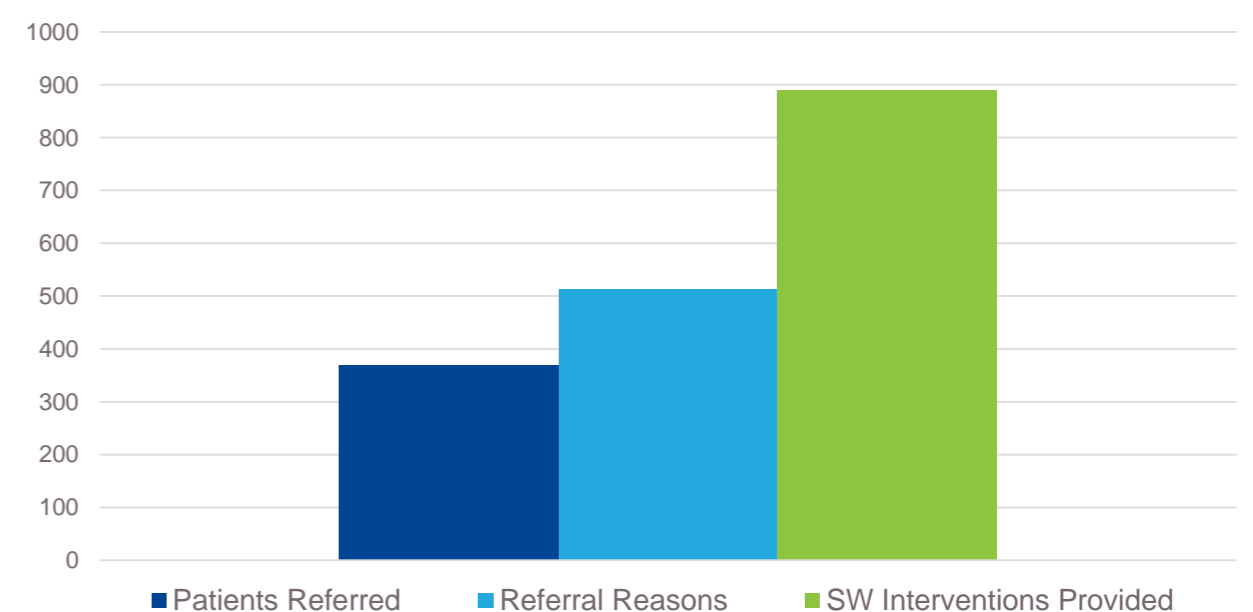
- **50%** of referrals were for Service information and referral
- Other top referral reasons: Carer Stress, 'Acopia', Transition Care referral and Family Violence.
- Blanket referrals introduced- additional **118** clients were seen by SW without referral

Referral Reasons Vs Interventions



- Over **84%** of patients had all referral reasons addressed during SW intervention
- **Less than 55%** of Family Violence interventions received a referral

Patients Referred Vs Referral Reasons and Interventions



- **30%** of patients were referred to SW for more than 1 reason
- **59%** of patients required and were provided more interventions than reason/s referred
- More than **79%** of clients were provided with more than 1 intervention

Conclusion

This evaluation highlights the value and vast scope of the Social Work role in the Subacute At Home space.

Importantly, it also underlines the importance of further professional development for broader healthcare staff regarding early identifiers of Family Violence to ensure timely referral, assessment and safety planning for patients.