



Electronic Therapeutic Guidelines (eTG) Program

Aim

The aim of the APHN funded eTG program is to improve access to information that supports safer clinical decision making and fewer adverse drug events by primary care providers within the Adelaide PHN region.

Goal

To ensure patients receive safe and quality treatment advice from their care providers

Objectives

- To encourage all eligible primary care providers to access and use digital health tools and resources that improve safety and quality of care.
- To support primary care providers with access to accurate, independent, and practical treatment advice and resources that assist with the better management of a wide range of clinical conditions that are in line with the regional needs.
- To promote a consistent, and evidence-based approach towards better clinical decision making across primary care providers within our region.
- To strategically increase the use of other useful digital health technologies that support the provision of care

Justification

Medication use is the most common intervention in healthcare. In Australia, over 300 million prescriptions for medications are dispensed every year, with national survey estimates of self-report showing 70% of the general population and over 90% of older Australians have received at least one prescription in the last 12 months. In any 2-week period, almost one in two Australians (47%) reported taking a medicine. The estimated cost of medicines to Australians, including both prescription and over-the-counter medicines, is 23.4 billion Australian dollars (AUD\$) annually. This accounts for approximately 12% of annual healthcare expenditure (AUD\$196 billion) in Australia.

The high frequency of medication use means that adverse drug events are also very common. Adverse drug events are unintended and sometimes harmful occurrences associated with the use of a medicine, vaccine, or medical device (collectively known as therapeutic goods). Adverse drug events include side effects to medicines and vaccines, and problems or incidents involving medical devices.

The ground-breaking Quality in Australian Health Care Study, published in The Medical Journal of Australia, reported that 16% of patients in hospitals experienced some form of adverse drug events and approximately 50% of these were preventable.



The benefits of leveraging digital health tools to tackle problems in healthcare are significant and compelling. Digital health technologies can enable access to resources or information that support safer clinical decision making and fewer adverse drug events.

The Therapeutic Guidelines is a leading, independent digital resource with evidence-based, practical treatment advice to assist practitioners with decision making at the point of care. It includes explicit instructions for therapy, assisting practitioners in making decisions to ensure their patients receive optimum treatment and prevent adverse drug events.

According to the APHN Needs Assessment Reports for 2019-2022, Medication misadventures including poor quality use of medicines contribute greatly to the burden of potentially preventable hospitalisations

In view of the above need and benefits, Primary care providers within the Adelaide metro region will be given subsidised access to digital evidence-based resources that enable them better to manage and prescribe treatments or medications particularly for patients with unique or complex conditions. Having access to vital information at the point of care could reduce potentially preventable hospitalisation's due to adverse drug events.

Program Measures

Outcome/Goal	Objectives	Measure/ Data
To ensure patients receive safe and quality treatment advice by their care providers	To encourage all eligible primary care providers to access and use digital health tools and resources that improve safety and quality of care.	Proportion of general practices set up with an evidence-based digital health tool that improves prescription safety
	To support primary care providers with access of accurate, independent, and practical treatment advice and resources that assist with the better management of a wide range of clinical conditions that are in line with the regional needs.	Comparison of the most searched topics or guidelines and its correlation with the medical conditions or events captured as a priority in APHN's Needs Assessment.
	To promote a consistent, and evidence-based approach towards better clinical decision making across primary care providers within our region.	Number of registered prescribers within the region/ Total number of eligible prescribers within the region. Proportion of distinct providers set up with access to online resources
	To strategically increase the use of other useful digital health technologies that support the provision of care	Proportion of registered prescribers participating in other key digital health initiatives.

Performance Monitoring

Relevant indicators from the APHN’s 2022/23-2024/25 Needs Assessment Priorities:

Priority	Needs Assessment Report	Page Reference
Primary care providers are supported to use digital health tools that improve safety and quality of care	2022/23-2024/25	115
Medication misadventure including poor quality use of medicines contributes greatly to the burden of potentially preventable hospitalisations.	2019-2022	2

Relevant indicator from the PHN Program Performance and Quality Framework:

DH1 Rate of health care providers informed about My Health Record
DH2 Rate of health care providers using specific digital health systems

Terms & Conditions

To maintain access to the therapeutic guidelines, relevant prescribers agree to:

- Use the digital resource at least once a month
- Use My Health Record at least once a month (where relevant)
- Contribute to the evaluation of the program

Eligibility Requirements

- The prescriber or practice must be situated within the Adelaide PHN region
- The relevant prescriber or practice must be registered for the My Health Record and Connected to the HI Service
- The prescriber or practice must be set up for Secure Message Delivery



References

- Lim, R., Ellett, L.M.K., Semple, S. et al. The Extent of Medication-Related Hospital Admissions in Australia: A Review from 1988 to 2021. *Drug Saf* 45, 249–257 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40264-021-01144-1>
- Nauman J, Soteriades ES, Hashim MJ, Govender R, Al Darmaki RS, Al Falasi RJ, Ojha SK, Masood-Husain S, Javaid SF, Khan MA. Global Incidence and Mortality Trends due to Adverse Effects of Medical Treatment, 1990-2017: A Systematic Analysis from the Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries and Risk Factors Study. *Cureus*. 2020 Mar 14;12(3):e7265. doi: 10.7759/cureus.7265. PMID: 32195071; PMCID: PMC7075477.
- [https://adelaidephn.com.au/assets/Adelaide PHN 2019-20 NA Report Update Public Version 20200226.pdf](https://adelaidephn.com.au/assets/Adelaide_PHN_2019-20_NA_Report_Update_Public_Version_20200226.pdf)
- [https://adelaidephn.com.au/assets/Adelaide PHN Needs Assessment Report 2022.23 to 2024.25.pdf](https://adelaidephn.com.au/assets/Adelaide_PHN_Needs_Assessment_Report_2022.23_to_2024.25.pdf)