

### **App to support reduction of radiation exposure from CTs for children and young people**

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) and the Western Australian Department of Health have developed the DIP 4 Kids App to support a reduction in unwarranted exposure to radiation from CT scans for children.

Children are more sensitive to the effects of radiation because their bodies are still developing and the use of CT scans in children and young people has been linked to a slight increase in the chance of developing cancer later in life. It's estimated more than 80,000 CT scans are performed on people under the age of 20 each year in Australia.

The DIP 4 Kids App supports clinicians in evidence-based decisions about imaging options for young people and children, including when to use CT scanning. The app provides clinicians, parents and carers with assistance in decisions on paediatric CT for over 20 clinical conditions and injuries occurring in children and young people, and provides links to a range of other resources developed by the Commission. It also includes information on the level of radiation used by each imaging type.

Chair of the Commission's Board, Professor Willis Marshall AC said that it was important that CT imaging should only be performed when clinically necessary, and if performed, using the lowest doses of radiation possible.

"If a CT scan is well justified on clinical grounds, the benefit will almost always outweigh the risk of harm. The app provides ready access to information helpful to making an appropriate decision in each case," Professor Marshall said.

"Health professionals should consider the range of diagnostic modalities available before referring children and young people for CT scans and the app provides information about those options."

The app was developed by the Commission, in partnership with the Western Australian Department of Health, and is based on the paediatric pathways in the Department's Diagnostic Imaging Pathways (DIP).

Co-creator of DIP, Professor Richard Mendelson, Emeritus Consultant Radiologist, Royal Perth Hospital and Clinical Professor, University of Western Australia said that the app was a reliable and convenient tool for clinicians to instantly share resources with parents or carers, to discuss the benefits and the risks of CT scans.

"The app is designed to meet the needs of healthcare providers, giving them swift access to clinical resources, and also providing parents, patients and carers with clear information," he said.

The app is free and can be downloaded from the Apple store – DIP 4 Kids or from the Google Store – DIP 4 Kids.

### **ENDS**

#### **Media enquiries**

Sharene Chatfield, Communications  
Manager  
(02) 9126 3611  
[sharene.chatfield@safetyandquality.gov.au](mailto:sharene.chatfield@safetyandquality.gov.au)

Aimee Cornelius, Communications Advisor  
(02) 9126 3617  
[aimee.cornelius@safetyandquality.gov.au](mailto:aimee.cornelius@safetyandquality.gov.au)

**Notes to Editors:**

**About the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care**

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) is an Australian Government agency that leads and coordinates national improvements in the safety and quality of health care based on the best available evidence. By working in partnership with patients, consumers, clinicians, managers, policy makers and health care organisations, our aim is to achieve a sustainable, safe and high-quality health system. The Commission has an ongoing program of significant national activities with outcomes that are demonstrating direct patient benefit as well as creating essential underpinnings for ongoing improvement.

The Commission aims to use its role as the national body for safety and quality in health care in Australia to ensure that the health system is better informed, supported and organised to deliver safe and high quality care.

**About DIP 4 Kids**

Dip 4 Kids was developed as part of the Commission's *Reduction in Radiation Exposure to Children and Young People from CT Scans* project.

DIP 4 Kids also contains links to other resources aimed at a reduction in radiation exposure for children and young people having CT scans, including information for parents and carers and a link to a game app developed by the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne to help children prepare for medical imaging.

**About the Department of Health, Western Australia**

The Department of Health, Western Australia, functions to support the delivery of public health services by the area health services across Western Australia, including public health, clinical services and research, system policy and planning and resources. Its vision is to provide healthier, longer and better quality lives for all Western Australians regardless of location or circumstance. With over 2.5 million square kilometres to cover, it is the largest area in the world covered by a single health authority.

More information on reducing radiation exposure to children and young people from CT scans is available at: [www.healthdirect.gov.au/ctscansforkids](http://www.healthdirect.gov.au/ctscansforkids)