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AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE

Support for Health Services Implementing the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards

Health services should have by now received a box set of the Safety and Quality Improvement Guides and Accreditation Workbooks developed by the Commission.

These documents were developed to assist health service organisations implementing the *National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards* (NSQHS Standards). These resources have been finalised following a public consultation in August and are now available for use. They include a Safety and Quality Improvement Guide for each Standard and Accreditation Workbooks for hospitals and day procedure services.

You can download the Safety and Quality Improvement Guides and Accreditation Workbooks at www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/accreditation/nsqhs/safety-and-quality-improvement-guides-and-accreditation-workbooks/.

Health services should keep an eye out for other resources that will be released on the Commission's web site in coming weeks, including a

Word version of the Accreditation Workbooks and an Excel self assessment and reporting tool for those people coordinating accreditation. A workbook for mental health will also be released for consultation this month.

Work is commencing on tools and resources for implementing the NSQHS Standards in the community sector from January 2013. Health services interested in receiving information or participating in this work can contact the Commission's National Safety and Quality Accreditation Advice Centre on 1800 304 056 or email accreditation@safetyandquality.gov.au.



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Please feel free to forward this newsletter to others who may be interested in Commission activities. If this newsletter was forwarded to you by someone else and you would like to receive future issues directly, please contact Frances Harvey at the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care: (02) 9126 3600 or frances.harvey@safetyandquality.gov.au. If you do not wish to receive future issues please let us know.

Annual Report 2011/2012

The Commission was pleased to release its first Annual Report on 15 October 2012. The Annual Report details the work undertaken within the Commission's programs and financial statements for 2011/12.

The report demonstrates how this work supports the priority functions that guide the Commission and includes an assessment of the safety and quality of health care.

You can download the *Annual Report 2011/2012* at www.safetyandquality.gov.au/publications-resources/annual-reports/.



Antibiotic Awareness Week

Addressing antimicrobial resistance is a key focus of the Commission's healthcare associated infection program. November 12–18 was Antibiotic Awareness Week, a global initiative to highlight the issue of antibiotic resistance. 2012 marks the first year that activity for Antibiotic Awareness Week has been undertaken in a nationally coordinated way.

The Commission worked with state and territory representatives, private hospitals and National Prescribing Service (NPS) MedicineWise, to develop a range of resources and activities to raise awareness of the significance of antibiotic resistance and the importance of appropriate use of antibiotics in hospitals and the community. The theme for the week was 'Preserve the Miracle', and resources included a poster and MINDME prescribing pocket card, as well as a Powerpoint presentation that could be downloaded for use by hospitals.

The Minister for Health, the Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP joined the Commission and NPS MedicineWise to mark Antibiotic Awareness Week in Brisbane on 14 November.

Launching the week the Minister spoke about the importance of combating antimicrobial resistance and the role of Australian, state and territory governments in encouraging the safe and appropriate use of antibiotics in hospitals and the community. She also highlighted the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, in particular *Standard 3: Preventing and Controlling Healthcare Associated Infections* which includes, among other things, the appropriate prescribing of antimicrobials.

During Antibiotic Awareness Week the Commission and NPS MedicineWise also launched a series of e-learning modules on antimicrobial prescribing. The modules are available from www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/healthcare-associated-infection/antimicrobial-stewardship/antimicrobial-prescribing-online-modules/.

The modules are aimed at prescribers in their first two years out of medical school, as well as nurse practitioners, hospital pharmacists and university students. The modules have been released as part of the Commission's antimicrobial stewardship initiative and a broader five-year campaign from NPS MedicineWise to tackle the issues associated with antibiotic resistance in the Australian community. The modules address specific areas where antibiotic use in hospitals is suboptimal.

You can read more about the Commission's antimicrobial stewardship initiative to combat antibiotic resistance at www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/healthcare-associated-infection/antimicrobial-stewardship/.



Minister Plibersek, Dr Cruickshank (from the Commission) and Dr Randall (from NPS MedicineWise) at launch of Antibiotic Awareness Week 2012.

Call 1800 304 056 for the National Safety and Quality Accreditation Advice Centre



The Commission's National Safety and Quality Accreditation Advice Centre is now operating. The Advice Centre provides information and support to health services via direct telephone and email. The Advice Centre has averaged 50 calls per week in the first six weeks of operation.

The Advice Centre enquiries so far have focused on clarifying the accreditation processes and seeking information on the Healthcare Associated Infection, Patient Identification and Recognising and Responding to Clinical Deterioration Standards.

The Advice Centre has also been establishing networks for health services preparing for accreditation in 2013.

From 2013, the Commission will offer mediation between accrediting agencies and health services when differences of understanding and expectation arise during a survey visit. While the Commission cannot determine the outcome of an action being assessed, we can help by explaining the intent and expectation of the Standards.

We have commenced ongoing discussions through the networks with health services to provide regular contact, resources, support and expert information for people on the ground implementing the Standards.

Ninety three health services have already joined the network of hospitals, day procedure services and public dental services. While most are from the public sector, there is over 30% representation from the private sector.

For more information, contact the Advice Centre on 1800 304 056 or email accreditation@safetyandquality.gov.au.

The National Residential Medication Chart

The *National Residential Medication Chart* (NRMC) is being developed to support medication safety in Australian residential aged care facilities (RACFs). It will also permit the direct supply and claiming of PBS/RPBS medicines from medication charts being used in aged care, removing the need for a separate prescription form.

The phased implementation of the NRMC will commence in 30 sites across NSW over the next two months, and will be completed by June 2013.

The phased implementation will allow assessment of the NRMC for approximately 6 months in each RACF. These RACFs represent a diverse mix of aged care settings and models of aged care. They include facilities in rural NSW, metropolitan Sydney and the Central Coast, stand-alone facilities and facilities from large approved providers of aged care, and facilities in which medications are administered by registered nurses while in others they are administered by personal care assistants. The rural sites are in the Northern Rivers, New England, Orana Far West and Riverina regions of NSW.

Currently, audits are being undertaken of the medication charts being used in each facility in preparation for the implementation. Pre and post implementation data will enable comparison between the NRMC and existing medication charts and provide valuable information for the final development of the NRMC.



Australian Safety and Quality Goals for Health Care

In 2011 the Australian Health Ministers asked the Commission to identify a small set of national safety and quality goals that would benefit from a coordinated national approach to improvement. Following a development and consultation process, the Ministers agreed to the following Goals in August 2012:

1. Safety of care: That people receive health care without experiencing preventable harm.
Initial priorities are in the areas of:

- 1.1 Medication safety
- 1.2 Healthcare associated infection
- 1.3 Recognising and responding to clinical deterioration

2. Appropriateness of care: That people receive appropriate, evidence-based care.
Initial priorities are in the areas of:

- 2.1 Acute coronary syndrome
- 2.2 Transient ischemic attack and stroke

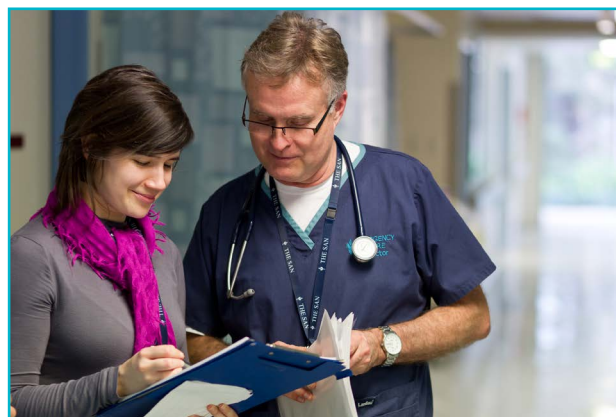
3. Partnering with consumers: That there are effective partnerships between consumers and healthcare providers and organisations at all levels of healthcare provision, planning and evaluation.

The Commission has now developed a set of documents to explain the Goals, including an overview and a series of Action Guides describing practical activities supporting change and improvement in six priority areas identified within the Goals.

The Action Guides describe key outcomes that will contribute to meeting each goal, and possible actions that individuals and organisations could take to contribute to making the changes required. The action guides are intended as guidance only; they are not exhaustive and are generally not mandatory. Where relevant, some actions relate to components of the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards. These actions supplement the actions identified in the Standards.

You can read more about the Goals, how they were developed and the Action Guides at www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/national-perspectives/goals/.

Clinical Care Standards



The National Health Reform Act 2011 specifies that the Commission will develop clinical standards and recommend to Health Ministers the clinical care standards suitable for implementation as national clinical standards.

Health Ministers have approved the development of Clinical Care Standards in the areas of acute coronary syndrome, stroke and antimicrobial stewardship. The Commission has commenced the Clinical Care Standards program with the aim of developing three Clinical Care Standards over the next 12 months.

Each Clinical Care Standard will consist of a small number of quality statements that describe the key components of clinical care that a patient should be offered for a specific clinical condition or defined part of a clinical pathway, along with derived quality measures and national indicators.

Accompanying each Clinical Care Standard will be a recommended implementation approach and practical tools to help consumers and clinicians make decisions together about appropriate care choices.

The Commission is establishing the Clinical Care Standards Advisory Committee to provide high level strategic advice on the ongoing focus of the Clinical Care Standards Program and help ensure that the clinical standards are appropriate and used within the Australian health system.

Each Clinical Care Standard will be produced collaboratively with a Topic Working Group comprised of clinicians, consumers and other groups with expertise in the specific clinical care area.

The Commission will undertake a formal public consultation process for each draft Clinical Care Standard.

Update on the Review of the Open Disclosure Standard

The review of the *Open Disclosure Standard* is nearing completion.

National consultation on a revised Standard, the *Australian Open Disclosure Framework: Consultation Draft*, was conducted between 1 June and 31 August 2012.

Consultation consisted of an online survey, a call for written submissions and six face-to-face forums with representatives of key stakeholder groups around the country.

Consultation materials can be viewed on the Commission's web site at www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/open-disclosure/the-open-disclosure-standard/consultation/.

The Commission, in liaison with its Open Disclosure Advisory Group, is currently finalising the revised Standard based on the consultation feedback.

The Commission is also developing a suite of resources to support the implementation and uptake of open disclosure in Australian health service organisations.

It is anticipated that the revised Standard will be released in the first half of 2013.



Health Literacy in Australia

Earlier this year the Commission undertook a national stocktake of health literacy initiatives. This was aimed at getting a better understanding of the kinds of activities which were occurring within Australia.

The stocktake also provided an opportunity for making connections between people and organisations who are interested in health literacy and identifying areas where the Commission can contribute and add value to the work already being undertaken.

Sixty six organisations provided submissions, which described over 200 different health literacy initiatives. These initiatives included policies and frameworks, health information for consumers, strategies to improve individual health literacy skills, environmental initiatives, workforce training and capacity building and research activities.

From the small sample which the Commission received it is apparent that there is a broad range of activities occurring to address health literacy, with many pockets of excellence and innovation.

However, it also appears that the activities to improve health literacy in Australia are often fragmented and disconnected. There is much work at the local level, but there is currently no coordination or leadership at a national level. Consequently, opportunities for organisations to learn from each other and build on the work of their colleagues is hampered.

Over the coming months the Commission will be commencing further work aimed at improving the coordination of effort and activity to address health literacy within the health system. As information on this work progresses it will become available at www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/patient-and-consumer-centred-care/health-literacy/.

The Consultation Report on the Commission's health literacy stocktake is expected to be released and available on the Commission's web site at the end of the year.



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