Appropriate care
THE RIGHT HEALTHCARE AT THE RIGHT TIME
‘Appropriate care’ is healthcare in line with best practice based on the latest medical evidence. AIHI’s CareTrack projects are helping deliver better quality care to more patients.

AIHI’s CareTrack projects

Delivering evidence-based care at the right time is critical to ensuring the best possible outcomes for patients. Yet, the AIHI’s landmark CareTrack Australia study revealed Australians receive ‘appropriate’ health care in only 57% of consultations. This first national snapshot of clinical care in Australia was only the second such study worldwide. First published in the Medical Journal of Australia (MJA) in 2012, and widely cited and discussed since, CareTrack Australia provides a road map for more efficient and cost-effective care delivery. By establishing crucial baseline data, it has also laid the foundation for internationally-significant ongoing research. This includes the development of succinct, accessible electronic care guidelines and the AIHI’s major follow on study of appropriateness of care provided to children, CareTrack Kids.

US research indicates some 20-30% of today’s care delivers no benefits, the equivalent of up to $45 billion of wastage in Australia’s annual health spending. At the same time, the rate of harm remains unacceptably high, at 10% in hospitals. As ageing populations and new healthcare technologies put increasing pressures on stressed healthcare budgets, we urgently need to simultaneously reduce costs and improve patient outcomes. By identifying and understanding current shortfalls in appropriate care, AIHI’s CareTrack projects are providing unprecedented opportunities to build new, evidence based solutions.

57% of Australian consultations receive ‘appropriate’ health care

20-30% of today’s care delivers no benefits

$45 billion of wastage in Australia’s annual health spending

1 Based on $147.4 billion/year. Find out more
The findings of the CareTrack Australia study are now informing a simpler, electronic approach to clinical guidelines aimed at making it ‘easy to do the right thing, and hard to do the wrong thing’. Led by Professor Bill Runciman (University of South Australia and AIHI), AIHI researchers are examining today’s complicated and voluminous clinical guidelines that are difficult to synthesize, and hindered by duplication and out of date information, discouraging their routine use. New brief, plain English, wiki-style guidelines for use on smart phones and other devices – and suitable for both clinicians and patients – are being piloted by AIHI for low back pain and gout. Although approximately 5% of low back pain requires expensive imagery, about 30% of patients are currently referred for scans. Likewise, gout is almost entirely preventable, highlighting the considerable potential benefits of enabling ‘appropriate care’.

The current CareTrack Kids project led by Professor Jeffrey Braithwaite will establish the appropriateness and safety of care delivered to Australian children for 16 common conditions, including asthma and juvenile diabetes. It will also identify and investigate the barriers to appropriate care and the frequency and nature of adverse events involving children.

The CareTrack Australia project was undertaken as part of an $8.4 million National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) program grant supporting safer, more effective healthcare. The $2.5 million CareTrack Kids project is funded by the NHMRC and partners, including the Bupa Health Foundation.
Who are we?

Cl’s CareTrack Australia

PROFESSOR BILL RUNCIMAN
PROFESSOR IN PATIENT SAFETY AND HEALTHCARE HUMAN FACTORS
An internationally recognised expert on patient safety.

PROFESSOR JOHANNA WESTBOOK
DIRECTOR OF AIHI’S CENTRE FOR HEALTH SYSTEMS AND SAFETY RESEARCH (CHSSR)
Her research expertise centres on the design and execution of complex multi-method evaluations in the health sector with a particular focus on the effective use of information and communication technologies.

PROFESSOR ENRICO COIERA
DIRECTOR OF AIHI’S CENTRE FOR HEALTH INFORMATICS
His research focuses on the application of information and communication technologies (e-Health) to solving health service delivery problems.

PROFESSOR RICHARD (RIC) DAY, AM MD FRACP
PROFESSOR OF CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY, ST VINCENT’S HOSPITAL CLINICAL SCHOOL AND PHARMACOLOGY, SCHOOL OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, FACULTY OF MEDICINE, UNSW
DIRECTOR CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY & TOXICOLOGY, ST VINCENT’S HOSPITAL, SYDNEY
His fields of research include: Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics, Rheumatology and Arthritis, Psychiatry, Endocrinology and Decision Support and Group Support Systems.

PROFESSOR JEFFREY BRAITHWAITE
FOUNDATION DIRECTOR, AIHI AND DIRECTOR OF AIHI’S CENTRE FOR HEALTHCARE RESILIENCE
He is a leading health services and systems researcher with an international reputation for his work investigating and contributing to systems improvement. Professor Braithwaite areas of research expertise include:
Patient Safety, Quality of Care, Health Systems, Clinical Governance, Health Services Management, Health Services Research, Health Policy, Population Health

Cl’s CareTrack Kids

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What are we doing?
BUILDING ON CARETRACK AUSTRALIA USER FRIENDLY CLINICAL GUIDELINES ‘PROOF OF CONCEPT’ PROJECT

The CareTrack team led by Professor Bill Runciman, Professor Jeffrey Braithwaite and Mr Peter Hibbert are developing clear, succinct, wiki type guidelines for two common conditions, gout and low back pain, that will not only inform clinicians but will tell patients what to expect in plain English. The project will build a template to revolutionise the way clinical guidelines are presented, accessed and updated, ensuring they can be retrieved easily on multiple devices and are suitable for multiple stakeholders.

EXAMPLES OF WHAT WE HAVE PUBLISHED


CARETRACK KIDS IS NOW WELL ADVANCED, IN SEEKING TO:

1. Obtain national agreement on sets of indicators for management of 16 common paediatric conditions.

2. Measure the appropriateness of healthcare delivered to children in Australia in hospital settings.

3. Measure the frequency and type of adverse events in children in Australia.

For more information please go to CareTrack Kids.
Who should you contact?

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