

Victorian Statewide Referral Form in GP clinical software

Information Resource November 2003

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE PRIMARY CARE SYSTEM IN VICTORIA

Service Coordination is a major initiative in developing an effective primary care system in Victoria. The primary aim of Service Coordination is to improve the experience of people using the primary care system. Improving communication about patient needs between General Practitioners and other service providers and supporting a 'patient-centred' approach to care is essential for successful service coordination.

To support Service Coordination, a **statewide referral form** (officially known as Service Coordination Tool Templates) has been developed for collecting and sharing patient information. The statewide referral form replaces the multitude of agency developed referral forms with one common set of information, which makes referrals simpler and easier for service providers. The statewide referral form has been implemented in all major client management software used by the DHS funded community-based services and is gradually being included in clinical software used by GPs.

Consumer Information <small>If question is irrelevant or information not known, write Not Applicable or N/A</small>	Patient Name: Patient DOB: GP Record No.
Consumer Details Family Name: Given Names: Date of Birth: Preferred Name/s:	Sex: Title:
Contact Details Contact Address (for correspondence, home visits etc) Usual Address (if different from contact address)	Contact Phone Numbers: Can leave message? Y or N Home: Work: Mobile: Fax: Email:

Benefits to GPs and their patients

- The multitude of agency specific referral forms are being replaced with a single statewide referral form
- Referral processes are simplified using existing software (e.g. Medical Director)
- Patient consent to sharing information is supported using a Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP¹) endorsed form and process
- GPs receive referral feedback from the funded community-based services
- Quality inter-professional communication is supported

USING GP CLINICAL SOFTWARE FOR MAKING REFERRALS

The current objective is to enable GPs to receive consistent referral information from the funded community-based agencies and for GPs to be able to generate the statewide referral form automatically from their clinical software applications in order to refer patients to funded community-based services.

To achieve this, the statewide referral form has been updated in Medical Director clinical software (November release), accessed through the 'Letter Writer' facility as a document titled "Victorian Statewide Referral Form". The statewide referral form will also be included in other GP clinical software such as MedTech32, Medical Spectrum and Locum.

The following set of information is included in the statewide referral form for GPs:

- Cover sheet (to support various modes of referral e.g. fax, mail and secure email)
- Consumer Information (basic patient demographic information)
- Summary and Referral Information (consistent statewide referral)

¹ EPC step-by-step care planning (<http://www.racgp.org.au/epcsite/cparticle.asp?ArticleNo=51>)

In addition to the statewide referral form, a **standard consent form** for sharing patient information and a privacy information brochure is available as a single document titled "Patient Consent Form". This resource meets both Commonwealth & State privacy legislation and can be used as required.

CAN I MAKE CHANGES TO THE STATEWIDE REFERRAL FORM?

No. The format and content needs to be consistent, however, changes will be considered after a period of 6 months following use by GPs. Comments should be provided to the local GP Division, Primary Care Partnership or to General Practice Divisions Victoria (GPDV). If there is an urgent requirement to modify the form, for example to meet specific project requirements, please contact Jenk Akyalcin from DHS to discuss (email jenk.akyalcin@dhs.vic.gov.au or tel. 9616 7155).

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT ISSUES FOR GPs

The statewide referral form in Medical Director is easy to generate. Most of the data on the statewide referral form matches existing data fields in the software. Therefore complete and up-to-date patient information in Medical Director will maximise the auto-entry of this information from the database to the statewide referral form. This also applies to the Medical Director 'Address Book' as it's used to auto-enter contact details of the 'referred to' agency.

The statewide referral form in Medical Director software includes a range of auto-entered personal health information. The Summary and Referral Information includes warnings, allergies, social history, current medication and past medical history. It is important GPs check the output generated to ensure (i) it's relevant to the purpose of the referral and (ii) it meets patient privacy requirements (i.e. patient may place limits on information disclosure).

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT FROM A GENERAL PRACTICE PERSPECTIVE

For more information about the statewide referral form and Primary Care Partnerships and how it relates to quality improvement from a General Practice perspective, please see the Step-By-Step Care Planning **Case Study: Service Coordination** on the RACGP web site (<http://www.racgp.org.au/epcsite/cp.asp>).



AGENCIES RECEIVING REFERRALS FROM GPs USING THE STATEWIDE REFERRAL FORM

The statewide referral form in GP clinical software has been designed to meet the needs of GPs but in a way that keeps as much of the integrity of the standard Service Coordination Tool Templates. The main difference that agencies will notice is that the Consumer Information tool template has been reduced to one page. However agencies should note that the data from the second page of the Consumer Information tool template has been included on the bottom of page one of the Consumer Information tool template.

Agencies receiving a patient referral from a GP using the statewide referral form will need to transcribe the "Additional Consumer Information" onto page 2 of the Consumer Information tool template **if using paper versions of the Service Coordination Tool Templates to refer the consumer onto another service.**

MORE ABOUT PRIMARY CARE PARTNERSHIPS AND SERVICE COORDINATION

Further information is available on the Department of Human Services Primary Health Knowledge Base (www.dhs.vic.gov.au/phkb) and on the GPDV web site (www.gpdv.com.au/PCPs).