



Coonamble Aboriginal Health Services

USING AN ELECTRONIC DECISION SUPPORT TOOL TO IMPROVE PATIENT CARE

**“We’re trying to better implement evidence based guidelines”
Daniel Jackman, Practice and Systems Manager**

Coonamble Aboriginal Health Service wanted to increase their use of evidence-based guidelines to guide clinical decisions and improve their service. To achieve these aims the team decided to implement an electronic decision support tool that provides easy access to guidelines related to patient care. Previously clinicians needed to go through the patient’s paper-based file notes to track the patient’s history and treatment plan as well as trying to recall the details of a large number of best practice guidelines.

A whole of organisation change management approach was used. All staff were trained in the use of the electronic decision support tool, and regular feedback loops were employed with staff encouraged to continually assess what worked for them and what didn’t work. Systems were adapted to meet local needs, for example the service extended the use of the tool to the reception area.

Electronic decision support tools can improve quality of care
Involving all staff can help with organisational change
Tools and systems often need local adaptation





By using the whole of organisation approach and the electronic decision support tool, the Coonamble AHS team feel more confident about the consistent use of current evidence, and have also found there have been improvements in the ways they are working together. Using the tool has helped Coonamble AHS staff to increase the identification of cardiovascular risks such as smoking, blood pressure and cholesterol for their patients, enabling staff to provide early treatment and otherwise assist patients to reduce their risk.

An additional benefit of the tool has been ensuring that all consultations, tests and treatments are correctly billed and therefore that Coonamble AHS receives the correct Medicare revenue.

“...it’s all a lot easier, it prompts us as to what needs to be done straight away.”
Lisa Fernando, Practice Nurse

