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takingaction Divisions of General Practice Network Forum 2004



Health*Connect* in the Real World

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Divisions Forum Sept 2004

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Southern Tasmania

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- Population 235,000
- 1 Tertiary Hospital
- General Practice
 - 290 GPs
 - 97 Practices
- 2 Pathology Providers

Trial Summary

- Adults with Diabetes Mellitus

	Phase 1	Phase 2
● Duration ('active')	8.5 mths	17 mths
● Consumers	400	890
● GPs	42	116
● Hospital Clinicians	>50	>100
● Private Specialists		32
● Allied Health		34
● Pharmacists		24
● Diabetes Educators		2

Trial Features

- Fast Tracked
- **'Off the shelf' software**
- Provider readiness variable
 - GPs: 95% computerised; single software system
 - Hospital: limited IT utilisation; 3 software systems
 - Pathology: electronic results (legacy format)
- Provider interest high
- Need for 'data cleansing'
- Unique identifier created

Trial Evolution

- Second phase essential
- Bandwidth critical
- Initial consent model unworkable
- Pathology authorisation
- Provider interest dependent on utility

Trial Outcomes

- **Positives**

- Participation
- Cooperation
- Software adaptation
- On time...within budget

- **Negatives**

- Software issues
- Health outcomes lacking
- Disproportionate loads
- Utility

Event Summaries created

GP	5980
Hospital I/P	160
Hospital ED	90
Diabetes Educator	330
Diabetes O/P	320
Optom./Ophthal.	150
Podiatrist	280
(Consumer viewing	60)

Trial Reflections

- **Who gains?**
 - Funders vs Providers
- **Who takes the risks?**
 - Security; legal liability
- **Are we ready?**
 - GP system support; other providers; hospitals
- **How to evaluate impact?**
 - Against other quality improvement initiatives
- **Political issues**

Implementation Non-negotiables

- **Trial evaluation findings to be applied**
- **High level of utility to GPs**
- **Simplicity in design and functionality**
- **Potential to improve patient outcomes**
- **Must be cost and time effective for GPs**
- **Realistic load on practices**
- **Development in the national context**
- **Genuine consultation**

Implementation Wisdom

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“Go slow...start low”

Jarrett

**Health Online Summit
Brisbane 2003**