

***CLIMATE*** prevention

**[www.climate.tv](http://www.climate.tv)**

Gavin Andrews MD,  
UNSW at St Vincent's  
Hospital, Sydney

# Educating patients

- ✦ **On a good day** – waiting room nearly empty, telephone quiet – most doctors can tell most patients much of what they need to know to manage their chronic disease.
- ✦ The only worry is how little patients remember.
- ✦ **On a bad day**, when the waiting room is full and the telephone incessant, few doctors can find the time to do the necessary teaching.
- ✦ Yet unless patients know this information they will not adhere to medication nor make the lifestyle changes necessary for a good outcome.

# What does ***CLIMATE*** do?

- ✦ Computers are good teachers and can supply information in a systematic fashion.
- ✦ ***CLIMATE*** is a computerized patient self management strategy for the major chronic diseases:
  - anxiety, asthma, arthritis,
  - cancer, depression, diabetes,
  - heart failure, and stress incontinence

# How does **CLIMATE** do it?

- It uses an illustrated story line to show how a person with a chronic disease does well, uses homework printouts to supply further information, and checks this learning at the next session.
- It measures functioning at each session, and notifies the prescribing doctor if progress is not as expected.
- Patients can do the **CLIMATE** sessions over the internet – at home, in the GPs clinic, or at the local library.

# Could **CLIMATE** do prevention?

- ✦ General Practice is the correct place to implement prevention. We will develop modules for **weight control**, for **smoking** cessation and **alcohol** abuse, for **falls** in the elderly and for **suicidal** ideation in the young.
- ✦ There is material available to reduce each of these risk factors. The strength of **CLIMATE** is that it brings them altogether in one current delivery system at minimal cost.
- ✦ These **CLIMATE** prevention modules will not eliminate these problems, but simply be another influence to reduce the population prevalence of these risk factors.

# What are the steps?

- ✦ Have an expert write the script for the illustrated story line in three or so sessions.
- ✦ Have that illustrated in Flash 7
- ✦ Develop appropriate assessment measures to identify change
- ✦ Develop appropriate homework materials
- ✦ Have the whole system programmed to run on the CLIMATE database
- ✦ Trial the modules in the participating Divisions
- ✦ Distribute the modules to all GPs using CLIMATE

# What do we want from this meeting?

- Some doctors in some divisions who are interested in participating
- No money, just time and style and hard work
- Look at [www.climate.tv](http://www.climate.tv) to see what it is all about
- Then email me putting CLIMATE as the subject (gavina@unsw.edu.au)