

Issue 3
June 2006

**NSW Therapeutic
Advisory
Group**

Project Leader:
Karen Kaye

Project Officers:
Jocelyn Lowinger
jlowinger@
stvincents.com.au

Helen Stark
hstark@
stvincents.com.au

Ph: 8382 2852
Fax: 8382 3529

ISMP field test update

Sixteen hospitals, representing a range of facilities, participated in field testing the Australian versions of the ISMP self assessment tools. Participating hospitals included public, private, metropolitan, rural, principle referral and specialty hospitals in NSW and interstate. Preliminary results indicate that the self assessment tools provide hospitals with a systematic way to assess current practice and identify areas for improvement.

Completing the self assessment provided a range of benefits to participating hospitals. However, some hospitals also reported practical challenges in carrying out the process. These will be taken into account in designing an implementation plan.

Benefits in completing the self assessment included:

- Help in identifying areas of need in medication safety processes, especially in areas that had not previously been thought about
- Development of a prioritised medication safety plan for the next 12 months
- An opportunity to engage a multidisciplinary team to discuss medication safety issues
- Highlighting differences in understanding of different disciplines regarding medication safety

Challenges included:

- In some cases, a feeling that the self assessment was too long, detailed and time consuming and potentially difficult to carry out annually
- Difficulty in maintaining multidisciplinary involvement over the entire process, particularly with medical staff
- A perceived lack of relevance of some questions to some institutions, particularly private and small hospitals
- Some concerns about scoring and the potential use of the data for benchmarking purposes.

The PIMS project team will consult further with members of the steering committee, field test hospitals and ISMP USA to resolve any outstanding issues in the final revisions.

The timeline for finalising the tools is July 31. After this an electronic reporting tool and implementation plan will be designed and the tools will be made available for use in all Australian hospitals. The Australian Council for Healthcare Standards (ACHS) has agreed to include the ISMP tools in their revised accreditation standards due for release in 2007. This will encourage usage and uptake of the self assessment tools.

THANK YOU:

We would like to thank all of the field test hospitals for their participation to date. We will be coordinating feedback sessions and reports in the near future.

Indicator selection update

Indicator selection for field testing is well on its way. The following principles have been followed in selecting indicators:

- The area was important to clinical practice and/or system improvement - including evidence that the practice results in improved outcomes
- There is evidence of an important gap in clinical practice
- The indicator would be meaningful for a variety of hospitals
- The indicator would be likely to drive improvement
- Original TAG indicators would only be deleted where there is a good reason to do so
- Structure indicators would only be included if not already addressed in the ISMP tool

We have also been mindful of the following barriers to implementation:

- Indicators should not be included unless they are likely to drive improvement
- Indicators should ideally utilise existing data sources if such sources exist
- Indicators that relate to future technology, not yet widely available in Australia, should not be included.

National Medicines Symposium

A poster on the PIMS project has been accepted for presentation at the upcoming National Medicines Symposium to be held in Canberra from June 7-9 2006.