



Australian Divisions of **General Practice**

■ Implications for consumers in the Global Health Village – a General Practice opinion

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Australian Divisions of General Practice

Key Messages

- Primary care (as embodied by general practice and divisions) is far ahead in terms of e-health (as a sector), and should be leading the way - not responding to other sectors.
- Good health care in the 21st century requires interconnected health care systems, despite the barriers.
- Investment required to achieve efficiencies, improve outcomes and save LIVES.



Consumers are Patients!

- **This year 84% of the Australian Population are going to do THIS.**
- Walk into a surgery, register at the front desk and have their details confirmed in the practice
- See the Doctor
- Have a GP do an initial diagnosis or refer when specialist advice is required
- Experience a relationship with the GP, who acts as a counsellor, friend, guide, and provides the medical knowledge to manage medical conditions



Patients are Consumers!

- **Australians have three major needs when they enter into Primary Health Care**
- How do I access appropriate Medical Services?
- Are these services going to respond to both my perceived and real needs?
- What costs will I incur?



Patients are Consumers!

- Patients are more knowledgeable:
 - “I have X and you need to do Y”
- Technology is beating a drum on medical treatments.
- Evidence based approaches are not stationary. with new tests, new drugs, and the world still shrinks and specialization is built in.



GP Business

- Systems within practices are changing, moves to team based care are working and a focus on wellness and prevention is par for course.
- Doctors need the latest evidence and advice if they are to remain at the forefront and be trusted source of managing patients in the Australian context.



Caring for the Patient!

- Care to the patient is no longer a diagnosis, treat and cure. Its tied to the ability to manage ever increasing chronic conditions and multiple solutions possible.
- Care is specialising
 - Complex needs for complex conditions
- Care is being shared
 - Team based approaches
- Care is changing
 - Information and advanced IT contributes to decision making



Involving the sector

- To solve the problem GPs must evolve a relationship between the patient and a range of other health professionals,
- Different information from different sources: human, paper, electronic.



Interconnectivity of health services

- Prevention and early intervention requires patients to be amenable to
 - Recalls
 - Reminders
 - Careplans and the ability to access required services
 - Registers
- Care is no longer limited to the consulting room, but linked to lifestyles and patient circumstances – aged care, remote medicine, and afterhours care.
- Patients may not realise that the glue to bring it all together is the clinical notes – ALL OF THEM!



The elusive shared EHR

- Without shared electronic health record that reflect the thinking and investigations that GPs and Specialists are entrusted to provide - the health systems is failing Consumers.
- Patients presume that Health Knowledge is shared. As a GP I know that it is **NOT!**



A patient centric system – it's a journey!

- GPs are the entry point to coordinated multidisciplinary care.
 - Information must be shared
- Care must be coordinated in a seamless way regardless of funding arrangements.
- GPs then empower patients by setting goals, problem solving and self management plans.



A patient centric system – it's a journey!

- With education comes understanding
 - Setting goals
 - Solving problems
 - Empowering individuals
- Health Information is the catalyst for improving outcomes
- Sharing Health information remains is not the barrier, it's a solution – but the technology and connectivity isn't common!



Division's are here to help not hinder!

- Linking community based activities
- Promote and support General Practice and communities
- Share within the network solutions and best practice
- Collect and contribute to data collections,
- Adopt best practice and support information flows between providers.



SmartCards

- Topical but long awaited
 - It should not be solely an EFTPOS card? It must be a Key to unlocking health information. Its value is that IT systems can identify who, what, where, when, and how.
- Its potential will remain stifled if Government shies away from making the important decision on privacy, consent. Lets finish the debate and get on with it!
- Savings have to be reinvested in infrastructure and support for Health Care, not returned to Government coffers



Back to Key Messages

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Thank you.....

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Gerald addresses his body.

