



ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT 2017

NPS MEDICINEWISE
PROGRAM EVALUATION

DECEMBER 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overall impact of NPS MedicineWise on the quality use of medicines and medical tests in Australia

- Economic evaluations confirm the value of NPS MedicineWise educational programs with cost savings to the Australian Government and positive cost benefits to the community.
- Evaluations this year found improved GP knowledge after therapeutic programs addressing blood pressure, depression, chronic pain, osteoporosis and proton pump inhibitors (PPIs).
- MedicineInsight data has been used to better understand changes in utilisation of medicines.
- The Choosing Wisely initiative, which NPS MedicineWise facilitates, has continued to grow more rapidly than expected.
- Improving the management of chronic diseases has continued, with good results for our programs that address medicine and medical test issues.
- In NSW there was a detected increase in the rate of people with heart failure receiving co-dispensed medicines and a decrease in the rate of unplanned hospitalisations and deaths since the launch of the Heart Failure Program.

Financial Impact

- The 2014 Asthma Program, *Exploring inhaled medicines use and asthma control*, found that for every dollar spent on the program, \$2.44 was gained in monetary benefit.
- The 2015 *Imaging for abdominal pain* program saved \$22.58 million for the Medical Benefits Schedule (MBS), with significant reductions in CT scans and ultrasound services of the abdominal region by GPs.
- Eight therapeutic topics contributed to \$73.65 million worth of savings to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

Impacts on GP practice

- The 2015 program *Chronic pain: opioids and beyond* produced a significant increase in the proportion of GPs who discussed individual goals of therapy with their patients and developed pain management plans (+56%), used pain diaries (+43%) and/or opioid contracts (+35%).
- The 2015/16 program *Preventing fractures: Where to start with osteoporosis* produced improvements in GP knowledge about baseline monitoring, risk factors for males, and correction of pre-existing hypocalcaemia before treatment with an osteoporosis medicine. GPs reported increased confidence in assessing the risks and benefits for six osteoporosis medicines and encouraging adherence.
- The 2015 program *Blood Pressure: What's changing in how we measure, manage and monitor?* achieved a 43% increase in the proportion of GPs whose patients met recommended blood pressure targets and a 70% increase in the proportion of GPs who assessed and documented CVD risk after participating in the clinical audit. Most GPs (66%) reported that they would use the Australian CVD risk calculator after receiving an educational visit on the topic.
- The 2016 program *Managing depression: re-examining the options* resulted in an 8% increase in GPs identifying inappropriate first-line antidepressants, and a 15% increase in GPs identifying appropriate first-line treatment for adolescents when an antidepressant is required. Other impacts included improved GP confidence in selecting antidepressants that do not interact with other medicines;

increased referral of patients to online mental health programs; and increased preference for SSRI antidepressants rather than SNRIs for first-line treatment of severe depression.

- The 2015/16 *Proton Pump Inhibitors: Too much of a good thing* program continued to have a positive impact. Choosing Wisely contributed to this message with new recommendations about the quality use of PPIs. Overuse of PPIs improved with an estimated 3.4% reduction in the volume of high strength PPI concessional prescriptions over the program period.

MedicineInsight data program 2016/17

- Over 2,500 health professionals from over 400 general practices enrolled in the MedicineInsight program received practice-based, facilitated educational sessions informed by clinical data relating to depression, type 2 diabetes and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- 70% reported their practice had reflected on patient care, 48% made more informed decisions at the practice, and 46% improved data recording.
- 41% reported that they had changed patient management and reviewed patients using the patient lists generated within the practice by MedicineInsight tools.

Australian Prescriber

- Users of Australian Prescriber were satisfied with the publication content and found the online publication to be accessible.

National Pharmacist Survey findings

- Pharmacists consider NPS MedicineWise an independent and trusted source of information about medicines and medical tests that promotes evidence-based practice.
- About 60% of pharmacists reported using NPS MedicineWise resources such as NPS RADAR, Australian Prescriber, MedicineWise News and the website, with 66% referring their customers to the website.
- Australian Prescriber and NPS MedicineWise are among the top sources for pharmacist's continuing professional development (CPD).

Choosing Wisely Australia

- 80% of medical colleges as well as several societies and associations are now participating in Choosing Wisely in Australia.
- During the second year of Choosing Wisely Australia, 13 medical colleges, societies and associations submitted lists of recommendations.
- The website recorded a monthly average of 8,009 sessions and 6,451 users.
- Social media channels, including Facebook and Twitter, reached over 1.5 million impressions.
- Choosing Wisely Australia and its recommendations gained over 1,123 media mentions with an audience estimated at almost 6 million people.