Travelling the path together?

Early process and utilisation evaluation of HealthPathways Barwon and HealthPathways Perth Central and East Metro
Background

- What are the HealthPathways Clinical Work Groups?
- And how do they work?
Aims

- Clinical Work Groups Focus groups - explore group members’ reflections on:
  - Reasons for implementation
  - Workgroup process
  - Experiences as end-users
  - Barriers and facilitators to use
  - Measuring outcome

- Survey – identify Barwon GPs’:
  - Frequency of HealthPathways use in the past 12mths
  - Reasons for using/not using, any perceived benefits
Methods

- Clinical Work Groups process-Focus groups:
  - 2 focus groups: orthopaedics and paediatrics workgroups
  - Semi-structured group interview based on Hunter and New England HealthPathways evaluation
  - Coding and thematic analysis using Dedoose

- Utilisation-Survey
  - Brief paper-based survey mailed to all practices in the Barwon region
Results – Focus Groups

• 5 broad themes:
  • Purpose of HealthPathways
  • Work group process
  • Barriers and facilitators to HealthPathways use
  • Impact of HealthPathways
  • Measuring performance
Results – Focus Groups

Key findings

- Drivers for implementation of HealthPathways broad
- HealthPathways as a concept viewed positively
- Work group *process* itself valuable for improving relationships
- Habit major barrier to use
- Sustainability a concern
- Difficult to measure direct impact of HealthPathways
Results - Survey

- Return Rate: 36% (129 of 358 GPs).

Q6 In the past year, how often have you used HealthPathways in your clinical practice?

- Never
- Rarely (approximate...)
- Sometimes (approximate...)
- Often (>10 times)

Answered: 128  Skipped: 1
Results - Survey

- GP registrars significantly more likely to have used HealthPathways ($p=0.043$, confidence interval 95%);
- No association with age, practice size, gender, work hours;
- The most common reasons for ‘never’ or ‘rarely’ using HealthPathways:
  - ‘I don’t think to look at HealthPathways’ (62%)
  - ‘I don’t know what HealthPathways is’ (28%).
Results - Survey

For those who had ever used HealthPathways (67%):

- 77% said the website easy to access
- 81% said the website easy to navigate
- 72% said the program had improved their knowledge of local services
- 51% said it saved them time
- 55% said it improved their confidence in managing clinical problems
Results - WA

In Favour of Concept
- “Where was HealthPathways 20 years ago when I started out? ...This is fabulous”
- “…a great communication tool at all levels”

Behavioral Change
- “…out of sight out of mind”
- “I’m a creature of habit. If I don’t get reminded that it’s there, I won’t use it.”
- Lack of confidence during consultation.
- Technological barriers.
- Not all GPs are aware of added value.

Outcome Measures
- Some practices open to the idea of sharing data

Usage
- “Look, I’ve been a GP for over 20 years an there’s very little I haven’t seen…You give me those rare (to diagnose) pathways that I seldom use - and then I will find it [HealthPathways] useful.”
How often have you used HealthPathways in your clinical practice?

- Never
- Rarely (1-3 times)
- Sometimes (4-9 times)
- Often (>=10 times)
Implications

- Future challenges
  - Promotion
  - Incorporating HP into GPs’ existing routines – habit major barrier in focus groups and survey
  - Sustainability of pathway writing and editing
  - Getting more GPs and specialists involved
  - Developing discharge pathways
  - Developing measures for complex outcomes
  - Life after Medicare Locals