

MEDIA RELEASE

Trial project on improving quality of patient discharge summaries

14 July 2022

A new project in Gippsland will ultimately make a patient's discharge from hospital to their doctor for ongoing care a seamless process.

The project is in response to feedback from doctors and patients over a long period of time. Their concerns included issues with the format of discharge summaries to Gippsland general practices following acute episodes of hospital care.

Gippsland Primary Health Network (Gippsland PHN) and Latrobe Regional Hospital (LRH) have responded to this feedback with an initiative to investigate using the Electronic Medical Record to improve the quality of discharge summaries as a tool for handover of care.

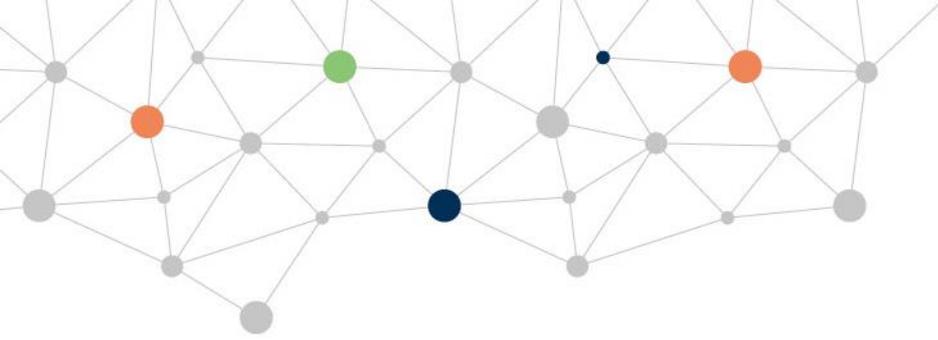
Gippsland PHN will fund the Gippsland Health Alliance to undertake the pilot and work with a focus group of general practitioners. The key objective is to design a discharge summary format that is acceptable to general practitioners and fit for purpose as a tool for handing over a patient's care from the hospital to their doctor.

Gippsland PHN Chief Executive Officer, Amanda Proposch, said the announcement of this important partnership was a great outcome for the community and came after discussions between LRH and the chairs of Gippsland PHN's Clinical Advisory Councils.

"We know the frustration from our doctors when they often discover their patients have had a serious episode that has required hospitalisation and after the patient is discharged, they don't have all the information to support their ongoing care," Ms Proposch said.

"We are looking for a new format that clearly communicates the information GPs need to take over the care of patients after they have been discharged from hospitals.

"We all want a safe handover of care and the current system in use can be much better."



LRH Chief Executive, Don McRae, said an improved discharge process may lead to better outcomes and recovery times for patients.

“Our team is hoping timely and responsive care in the community will reduce the risk of a patient being readmitted to LRH. This coordinated approach certainly has the potential to do so,” Mr McRae said.

The project will be undertaken over 12 months. The Gippsland Health Alliance will work with a group of general practitioners. It is hoped the new discharge summary will be implemented by 30 June 2023.

Captions: Mr Don McRae, Ms Amanda Proposch

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For more information, contact Lynne Smith at Gippsland PHN on 0437 918234.