

# National Sepsis Program

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## Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of the National Sepsis Program e-Newsletter.

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) is undertaking a program of work to improve early recognition, treatment, outcomes and post-discharge support for people at risk of or diagnosed with sepsis in Australia.

The purpose of this e-Newsletter is to provide members of the National Sepsis Clinical Reference Group (NSCRG) with regular updates about the Program.

## [General Program Update](#)

### **Program end date**

The Australian Government Department of Health and the Commission agreed to extend the end date of the Program to 30 June 2022.

## [Project Update](#)

## **Project 1: Epidemiology of sepsis report**

The first national epidemiological snapshot of sepsis and its impact on Australians and was prepared by [Centre for Health Systems and Safety Research - Australian Institute of Health Innovation \(AIHI\)](#) at Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia.

### **Project update:**

- This report has been published. To view the report [click here](#).
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## **Project 2: National retrospective medical record review**

The Commission engaged KPMG Australia through a competitive tender process to support the delivery of the national retrospective medical record review (MRR) project. The MRR project aims to collect and analyse a comprehensive data set from sepsis patient clinical documentation from Australian public and private hospitals, ambulance and medical retrieval services.

The MRR project will include a pilot phase to review and test aspects of the project including a review tool, data collection methodology and subsequent data analysis.

### **Project update:**

- A Topic Working Group was established to support the development, delivery and evaluation of the MRR project. The first TWG 2 meeting was held on 28 May 2021 to provide an opportunity to discuss key aspects of the MRR project through a hypothesis working session.
  - The KPMG team is in the process of developing a protocol for the pilot review.
  - The Commission team is working to identify and engage suitable sites for the pilot review.
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## **Project 3: Triggers tools systematic review**

The Commission engaged [The George Institute for Global Health](#) to conduct a systematic review of the literature examining trigger tools which support the identification of sepsis in healthcare settings. Following receipt and publication of the report, the Commission is now working towards developing advice to the states and territories in light of the recommendations in the report.

### **Project update:**

- The review is published. To view the review [click here](#).
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## **Project 4: Materials to support implementation of National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards**

The Commission will develop a set of short complementary resources on the NSQHS Standards to provide additional guidance for how actions may apply where a patient has sepsis. These resources will guide health service organisations to strengthen their medication management and response systems to better identify and care for patients with sepsis.

### **Project update:**

- The project will commence in early 2022 and the final materials are scheduled for publication before June 2022.
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## **Project 5: Review of the Antimicrobial Stewardship Clinical Care Standard**

The Commission reviewed the [Antimicrobial Stewardship Clinical Care Standard](#) to further strengthen the emphasis on sepsis.

### **Project update:**

- The updated AMS Clinical Care Standard (2020) is published on the Commission's website. To view the report [click here](#).
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## **Project 6: Sepsis Clinical Care Standard**

The Clinical Care Standards team is developing a dedicated Sepsis Clinical Care Standard and supporting materials.

### **Project update:**

- Eight draft quality statements have been produced. Content has been developed to expand on what the statements mean for patients, clinicians and health service organisations. This content is supported by a literature review, including the Systematic Review of Trigger Tools and extensive expert input.
  - Health Policy Analysis are supporting the Commission to develop a set of indicators for the Clinical Care Standard.
  - The Sepsis Clinical Care Standard is scheduled to be released for a six-week period of public consultation in August 2021.
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## Project 7: Sepsis Awareness Campaign

The Commission is working in partnership with [The George Institute for Global Health](#) to develop a public awareness campaign. The campaign will be tailored to suit both general community awareness and clinician recognition of sepsis. The campaign will include development of new materials and leverage off existing state and territory campaigns and programs.

### **Project update:**

- Phase I – Sepsis awareness campaign scoping review: completed
- Phase II – Development of a sepsis campaign strategy: in progress
  - Examining key recommendations from the scoping review and how these recommendations would be implemented through the development and execution of the campaign
- Phase III – Campaign execution, including activities around World Sepsis Day 2021 (to be delivered).

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## Project 8: Sepsis survivorship

The Commission engaged [KP Health](#) to undertake projects regarding sepsis survivorship. This work is being delivered across two phases.

### **Project update:**

- Phase I: Scoping [report](#) on national coordination of sepsis survivorship services: completed
- Phase II: Qualitative study to investigate the lived experience of sepsis survivors and their families:
  - Project kick-off meeting held in April 2021.
  - KP Health is in the process of undertaking structured interviews with sepsis survivors, bereaved families, clinicians and experts in collaboration with TGI and Commission.
  - A final report describing findings from the study will be delivered to the Commission in August 2021.

The final stage of this project will integrate the available evidence gathered to date, in order to undertake further scoping on key components of a post-sepsis support model.

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[Topic Working Groups meeting updates](#)

## Topic Working Group 1: Sepsis Clinical Care Standard

Purpose: Clinical and technical guidance toward development of the Sepsis Clinical Care Standard.

To date, the Clinical Care Standards team have held three topic working group meetings.

Work to date has produced eight draft quality statements addressing the following:

- Recognition of sepsis
- Escalation of care
- Time critical treatment
- Management of antimicrobial therapy
- Multidisciplinary care and coordination
- Clinical handover and transitions of care
- Patient and carer education and information
- Post-acute care and survivorship.

Content has been developed to expand on what the statements mean for patients, clinicians and health service organisations, supported by literature reviews (including the Systematic Review of Trigger Tools conducted by The George Institute for Global Health) and expert input.

The draft Standard is scheduled for a six-week period public consultation in August and September 2021.

Health Policy Analysis have been engaged to carry out the indicator development work. An indicator subgroup, drawn from the working group, has been convened. Draft indicators for public consultation will be finalised by the mid-July 2021.

#### **Membership**

Membership of the Sepsis Clinical Care Standard Topic Working group has expanded to include Professor Benedict Deveraux (Gastroenterology) and Dr Lorraine Anderson (Director, Kimberly Aboriginal Medical Services).

#### **Next meeting date**

July (date TBA)

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## **Topic Working Group 2: National Retrospective Medical Record Review**

Purpose: Design, implementation and evaluation of the MRR project.

The first TWG 2 meeting was held on 28 May 2021 to provide members with an overview of the project and describe the desired outcomes from the pilot and main reviews. Members were engaged in focused discussion led by the KPMG team regarding the following aspects of the project:

- Approaches to case finding from a data extraction perspective – for example, using ICD-10-AM coding versus clinical / diagnostic investigation parameters to find cases of sepsis.

- Approaches for identifying a national sample to address the key questions of interest for the review
- Agreed definitions to be used to guide development of the review protocol.

### **Next meeting date**

July (date TBA)

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## **Topic Working Group 3: Sepsis Implementation Support**

Purpose: Development of implementation support materials and providing advice on Sepsis Clinical Care Standard, MRR and sepsis awareness campaign projects.

The first TWG 3 meeting was held on 13 April 2021 to provide members with updates in relation to the National Sepsis Program, sepsis awareness campaign project and the Sepsis Clinical Care Standard project.

Members were engaged in focused discussions to consider aspects of:

- Sepsis awareness campaign project:
  - Campaign impacts on consumers
  - Potential consequences of the campaign in respect to timing
  - Aspects from the clinicians' perspective
  - Campaign impacts on health service organisations
  - Content, optimal timing and mode of delivery considering the current environment in Australia's healthcare system.
- Sepsis Clinical Care Standard project:
  - Transitions of care for sepsis patients
  - Resources for consumers at discharge
  - Opportunities, enablers, barriers and challenges of implementing the Sepsis Clinical Care Standard.

### **Membership**

Membership of the Implementation Support Topic Working Group has expanded to include Dr Kate Armstrong (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health) and Prof Joshua Davis (Infectious Diseases).

### **Next meeting date**

The second TWG 3 meeting is scheduled for 23 June 2021.

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*The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to elders both past and present.*

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