

The Doctors Control Panel:

Improving patient care while making your life easier!

Working in general practice as a GP, practice nurse or member of the practice's staff is fulfilling but stressful, making many demands on your time and energy. You are busy caring for patients, and don't want to spend your time and energy on tasks that your practice's computer system can do for you.

One of these tasks is to keep checking your patients have received care whose need can be predicted. Predictable elements of care include preventive care and routine assessments and monitoring of patients with known conditions and/or who are using certain medicines. Sadly, patients attending general practices miss out on half or more of such care. This is for two main reasons:

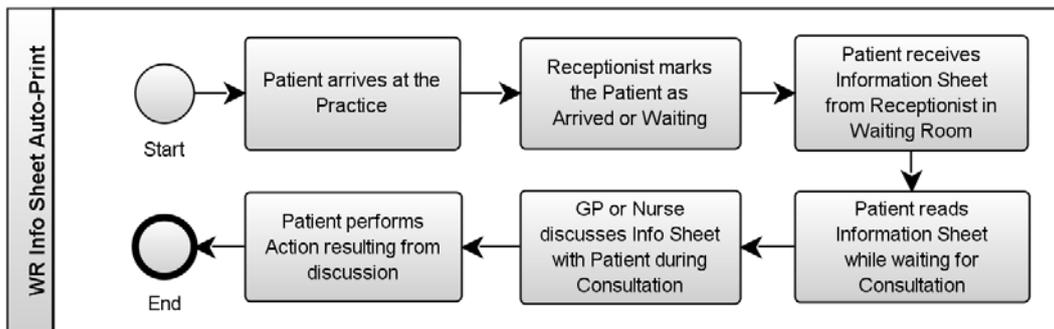
1. Your patients often or mostly don't know what care is indicated for them. If they do know that, they often don't know when each element of care was last done or when it is next due. Patients want and expect their GPs to advise them about care that is relevant for them¹.
2. Your attention, time and energy are taken up in addressing your patient's agenda and your agenda for the consultation. This leaves little or no time or energy to keep checking whether all indicated preventive and other routine care has been performed.

To address this need, Dr. Anton Knieriemen, a GP in Melbourne, created the Doctors Control Panel (DCP) software, to display on screen a wide range of reminders about preventive activities and other care. The DCP compares data in the patient's electronic clinical record with guidelines including the RACGP Guidelines for Preventive Activities in General Practice (the 'Red Book') to generate the reminders. Dr. Oliver Frank, a GP in Adelaide, suggested that because patients have the strongest interest, they might also like to receive those reminders.

The result is that the DCP can now generate and print targeted personalised education, information and advice for patients when they arrive for consultations.

Marking the patient as 'arrived' or 'waiting' in the practice's appointment system triggers the DCP to generate and print the sheet, that the receptionist hands to the patient to read while waiting.

Patients can choose whether to show the information sheet to their GP or practice nurse. The patient with the GP or practice nurse can discuss what action, if any, to take in response to the information. Depending on circumstances and available time, this might be to plan another appointment at which they will address the information and advice on the sheet. Below is a simple workflow diagram summarising the main actions:



Overleaf are some examples of information sheets that are currently being used.

This document is current as at 4 March 2017. It shall expire on 31 December 2017, when an updated version should be sought. Contact DCP Support on 03 9013 5453 or via email on help@doctorscontrolpanel.com.au for updates or to provide any feedback.

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Information Sheet Examples

Best Practice Clinic
1 Best Avenue, Practiceland
0744444444

Important information to help you to stay well

4/03/2017

Dear Alan,

Bowel cancer is the second biggest cancer killer in Australia, mainly affecting people over 50 years of age. The good news is 90% of cases can be successfully treated if detected early through a simple screening test taken in the privacy of your own home.

According to our records, you have not had a bowel cancer screening test. We should arrange a bowel cancer test for you **today or at your next visit**. It's free, and might just save your life.

If you have had a bowel cancer screening test or a colonoscopy previously, please tell me and I will update our records.

For more information on bowel cancer and how to prevent it, please visit www.jodileefoundation.org.au.

Please ask me about bowel screening when we meet in a few minutes.

Dr. Frederick Findacure

Discuss information during a consultation

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According to our records, you have not had a bowel cancer screening test.

If you have had a bowel cancer screening test or a colonoscopy within the last two years, please tell me, and I will update our records.

If you have not had a bowel cancer screening test or a colonoscopy within the last two years, please make an appointment so that we can arrange a test for you. The test is free, and might just save your life.

For more information on bowel cancer and how to prevent it, please visit www.jodileefoundation.org.au.

Please ask me about bowel screening when we meet in a few minutes.

Dr. Frederick Findacure

Make an appointment to discuss information

Reference

1. General practice and preventive health care: a view through the eyes of community members. Danielle Mazza, Lyndel K Shand, Narelle Warren, Helen Keleher, Colette J Browning and Emma J Bruce. Med J Aust 2011; 195 (4): 180-183.

Do you want further help?

To obtain further help or to obtain further information, please contact us as follows:

Phone: 03 9013 5453

Email: help@doctorscontrolpanel.com.au

Website: www.doctorscontrolpanel.com.au