

# HealthPathways

## What is HealthPathways?

*HealthPathways* is an online health information portal for GPs to be used within patient consultations.

Part of the pathway development includes a redesign process that supports better linkages between GPs and specialist services.

The name *HealthPathways* reflects the referral lines or 'pathways' which connect patients to the best treatment, local services or specialist.

*HealthPathways* is dynamic with new pathways constantly under development and created pathways regularly reviewed in light of changing evidence, technology or service re-design.

### What is it?

*It is a systematic way to improve care between general practice and hospitals.*

### How does it do it?

*Driven by local clinicians HealthPathways identifies local issues, seeks local solutions and measures local changes.*

### What makes it unique?

*HealthPathways is available online. It gives the most important information from clinical guidelines and shows all the referral options as well as providing links to referral forms.*

## Who creates HealthPathways?

*HealthPathways* is a collaboration between a Medicare Local and a Local Health District. GPs, hospital specialists and allied health providers are all involved in creating locally relevant pathways.

*HealthPathways* is based on a successful model of collaboration developed in New Zealand. It has developed hundreds of pathways that has resulted in significant improvements in the way hospitals and GPs share the care and clinical management of patients. It has reduced costs and improved the quality of care to patients.

*"In a few clicks I can see what services are available for my patient and how to make the referral with links to referral forms"*

*General Practitioner*

## How does HealthPathways benefit patients?

*HealthPathways* is designed to make a real difference to patients by ensuring that they receive the right treatment whilst experiencing shorter waiting times.

*HealthPathways* enables GPs to better help patients by outlining:

- The best management and treatment options for common medical conditions based on best practice standards
- Information on how to refer to the most appropriate local services and specialist
- Educational resources and information for patients—to enable better self management of health.

## How does HealthPathways benefit Primary Care?

*HealthPathways* is designed to be quick and simple to use. Using one website GPs can identify the most effective treatment and management options, access best practice guidance and quickly determine the most appropriate local specialists and services for their patients.

## Who can use the HealthPathways portal?

*HealthPathways* is designed to be used by GPs and Practice Nurses at the point of care, but is also accessible to other clinicians. The pathways are not designed to be accessed by the general public, patients, or their families and carers.

Using *HealthPathways* is quick and easy. Users just need to:

- Log on to the *HealthPathways* portal.
- Enter the patient's condition or suspected illness in the search bar.
- Assess symptom outline and management options.
- Access information on how to refer patients to the appropriate local services and specialists.

## How does HealthPathways benefit the Local Health District?

By providing GPs with key service information, appropriate patient referral criteria and condition management indicators *HealthPathways* in conjunction with other service delivery initiatives will deliver a change in the pattern of hospital presentations leading to:

- A reduction in the need for follow-up appointments.
- Shorter waiting times for patient procedures.
- A decrease in emergency attendances.
- An increase in shared care rates and a decreased number of patients coming into the hospital due to localised treatment within the community.
- An increase in the capacity to deliver elective services.

## How is HealthPathways different in each region?

The pathways and information are localised for each region; including referral information. Each region also prioritises the pathways to be localised.

## Further Information

### Central Coast NSW HealthPathways

Sarah Bradfield, HealthPathways Program Coordinator  
Pat Simmonds, HealthPathways Program Facilitator  
Amanda Martin, Clinical Improvement Manager  
t: 02 4365 2294

sarahb@ccnswml.com.au  
pat@ccnswml.com.au  
amanda@ccnswml.com.au

### HealthPathways Sydney

Paul Bennett, Program Manager  
t: 02 9395 2038  
Cameron Stewart, Project Officer IWSML  
t: 02 8752 4939

paul.bennett@sswahs.nsw.gov.au  
cstewart@iwsml.com.au

Central Coast NSW

# HealthPathways

HealthPathways SYDNEY