

Why are there changes to referral templates?

Redesigned referral templates, incorporating new Queensland Government Clinical Prioritisation Criteria (CPC) have been developed by Gold Coast Primary Health Network (GCPHN) and Gold Coast Health (GCH) for all clinicians to complete when referring patients to Gold Coast Health Specialist Outpatient Services.

The new templates are shorter and easy to use. They will accelerate referral decision making and ultimately patient care, by ensuring that patients receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time, by the right person.

Why should I use the CPC?

Gold Coast Health requests that all clinicians use the CPC templates as they are clinical decision support tools that help to standardise referrals. CPC are important because they:

- Improve communication between referring clinicians and specialist outpatient services.
- Provide equitable, transparent and consistent assessment of patients' need for care.
- Deliver specialist outpatient appointments in order of clinical urgency.
- Ensure patients have essential investigations performed prior to their first specialist outpatient appointment, while also avoiding potentially unnecessary tests.

What doesn't CPC cover?

While there are currently CPC for eighteen specialties, not all conditions have CPC criteria. On the Gold Coast, we will continue to update our templates as CPC criteria becomes available for additional specialty areas. However, CPC were never intended to cover every eventuality nor replace all clinical judgement. Clinicians will retain the autonomy and flexibility to adjust referrals if they feel this is justified by context and patient-specific factors.

What was the process for developing CPC?

The CPC have been developed through an extensive, Queensland-wide development process. A Clinical Advisory Group was established for each medical specialty and a medical specialist appointed as the clinical lead. Multi-disciplinary teams of clinicians reviewed reference material including information from state, interstate and international sources and a broad program of consultation and peer review was completed for each CPC.

Gold Coast referral template implementation

The decision to incorporate the CPC into Gold Coast Health referral templates was made after extensive local consultation including the GCPHN Primary Healthcare Improvement Committee and Lead Clinician Group. New templates were developed incorporating the CPC criteria. Six Gold Coast general practices piloted the new templates, providing feedback to ensure that they were user friendly, easy-to-install and compatible with GP systems.

Templates: www.healthygc.com.au/referrals

Questions

If you would like further information or assistance to import referral templates, please contact:

Your GCPHN Practice Support Officer (PSO)
Contact them directly or call GCPHN reception on 07 5635 2455 who will connect you with your PSO.

For further information regarding referral templates
o Email: GCGPLU@health.qld.gov.au
o Phone: GPLU Unit 07 5687 8333

A Referral Template Installation Guide is also available to download from the [healthygc](http://healthygc.com.au) website.

How to access and complete the updated referral templates

To access the templates the templates please visit: www.healthygc.com.au/referrals

This site also contains:

- A detailed guide to completing the templates and an installation guide.
- What are CPC, why we should use CPC and what was the process for developing CPC.

The referral process

GPs can find the appropriate referral templates at the above web address, which can be downloaded and imported into a range of clinical software including:

- Best Practice
- Genie
- Medical Director
- GP Complete
- Zedmed

Once you have imported the new templates into your clinical software, it can be sent electronically and securely to Gold Coast Health Specialist Outpatient Services, as you have always done.

Why are there changes to referral templates?

How have the templates changed?

- Many specialties have more than one referral template
- There may be more than one referral template for some specialties which can be selected for download from HealthyGC from a drop down menu. Alternatively the full suite can be downloaded as a zip file containing all templates for your software.
- There are now less templates to upload and they have been shortened to take less time to complete.
- If a patient presents with a condition not clearly defined there is a generic 'other' template for the required speciality.

The type of correspondence being sent

Clinicians can select the most appropriate type of correspondence relating to the patients condition that will be sent to Gold Coast Health. Sections 2 through to sections 5 are important to ensure the patient can access the appropriate specialist outpatient appointment at the right time.

Reason for referral

- With the addition of provisional diagnosis, symptoms and date of onset the referring clinician can provide more valuable information to support patient access to their outpatient appointment.

Duration of referral

- This section allows the referral to be indefinite or for 12 months. The indefinite option can commonly be used for patients that have chronic conditions that require ongoing care.

Condition-specific clinical questions

- Condition-specific templates have a small number of specific, mandatory questions with yes/no answers.

Provision of mandatory investigation results

- Some specialties and clinical conditions require investigation results to be attached for them to be processed by secondary care. The mandatory investigations for each condition are included in all the updated templates.



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