



2018-19 Annual Review

improvement foundation



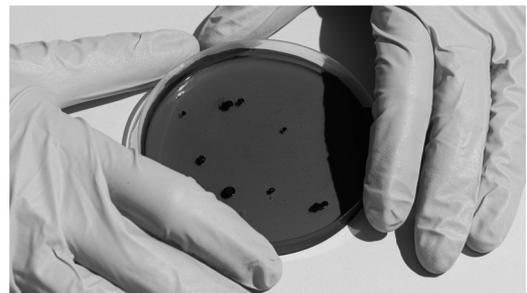
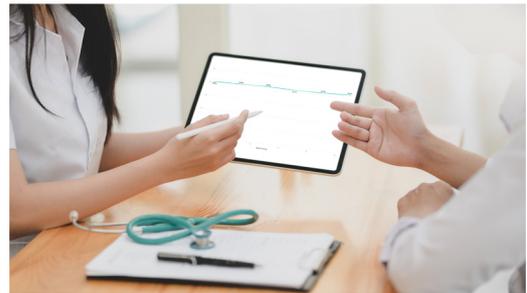


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From the Chair and CEO

The past year continued to be an ongoing environment of uncertainty and change within the primary health care sector. Despite the challenges inherent in such an environment, the Improvement Foundation has continued to find opportunities to provide ongoing support to our expanding client base.

Our small team has grown in skills and expertise, offering a broad range of services, particularly around consultation and training. Our Improvement Consultants engaged with Primary Health Networks, non-government organisations and peak bodies across the country, providing training in quality improvement (QI), the Collaborative model and supporting delivery of local Collaborative programs.

The challenge ahead for many organisations in the health sector is to move from measuring structure and process to that of measuring outcomes. It is our desire to assist organisations in this transition, which is driven by an interest in the needs of patients and communities. News from the Department of Health on the introduction of a Practice Incentive Payment for quality improvement activities in general practice is welcomed. The Improvement Foundation is well placed to help Primary Health Networks and general practices implement outcomes focused continuous quality improvement. Considerable resources remain available from the Australian Primary Care Collaboratives Program which can help Primary Health Networks develop quality improvement material for local use.

Amongst our expanding skills, IF continues to design and support quality activities that produce measurable results; design new measurement for improvement initiatives; and film, edit and produce video productions to support learning and change.

As always, our organisation would be nothing without the dedication and drive of our experienced Board members and Advisors, our Finance, Audit and Risk Management committee and our highly motivated and committed team.



David Wright,
CHAIR



Colin Frick
CEO





"The challenge ahead for many organisations in the health sector is to move from measuring structure and process to that of measuring outcomes."

Peer Review Publications

BMJ Article

In March 2019, Improvement Foundation Clinical Advisor, Dr Andrew Knight, together with Julie Johnson and IF staff Mia Dhillon and Cati Smith submitted an article to the BMJ. The article, 'A quality improvement collaborative to build improvement capacity in regional primary care support organisations', analysed a series of QI programs that were delivered to [then] Medicare Locals by IF, under the Australian Primary Care Collaboratives Program.

The article discusses:

- how improving QI capacity in primary care support organisations can improve primary care and health systems
- the Breakthrough Collaborative approach
- improvement measures in QI confidence (self-measured) and QI competence (Quality Improvement Knowledge Assessment Tool)
- how using learnings in repeated cycles can improve outcomes and increase competence across the measures.



It was published to *BMJ Open Quality* in early July 2019 and can be accessed using the following link.

<https://bmjopenquality.bmj.com/content/8/3/e000684.info>



Collaborative Programs

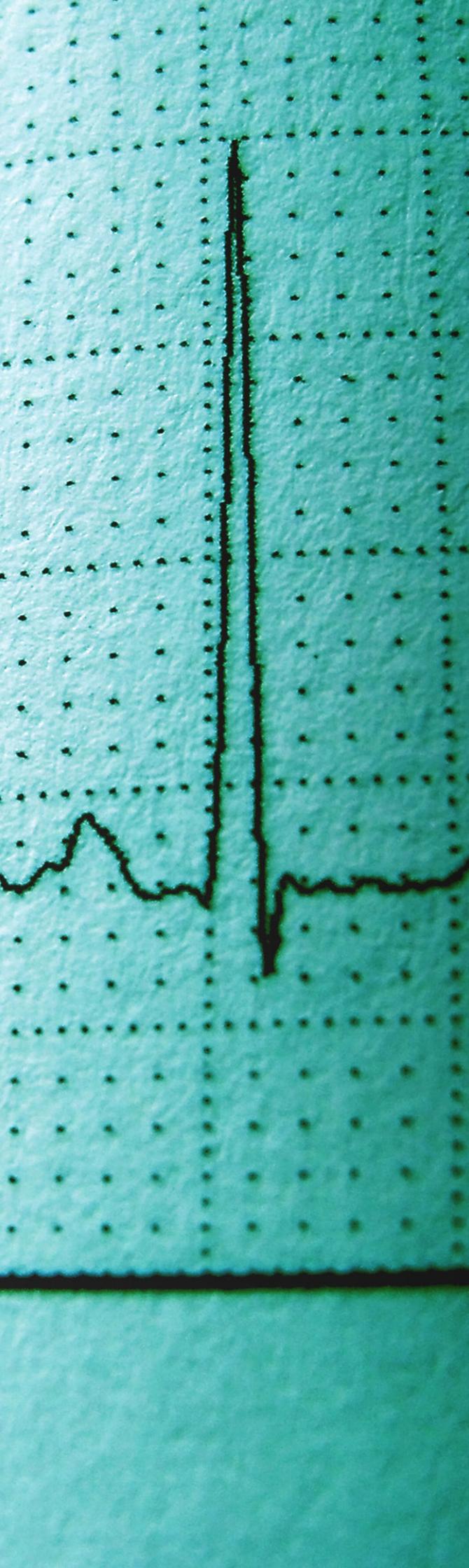
Enhancing Preventative Healthcare Collaborative

IF was engaged by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) to deliver The Enhancing Preventative Healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Collaborative, in partnership with the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation.

The Collaborative program was one component of a wider initiative to embed the use of the National guide to a preventive health assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – Third edition (National Guide), and support culturally responsive health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Collaborative involved 24 health services (15 general practices, two Aboriginal Medical Services, and seven Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services) for the duration of the program. These services delivered the following notable achievements:

- creation of a welcoming environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients through the use of appropriate signage and Aboriginal artwork
- increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients who self-identify through the use of culturally safe practices
- improving data quality and recording of preventive health activities to enable more proactive care
- reducing rates of unannounced failure to attend amongst booked clients
- engaging with the local Aboriginal communities and health teams to support with enhancing the provision of culturally sensitive care
- assessing and improving levels of cultural safety among staff teams
- development of brochures and other materials to encourage and support patients to undertake 715 health assessments and follow-ups
- utilising a variety of mediums to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, including social media and in-house newsletters.



Heart Disease Collaborative

IF has been contracted by the University of Sydney to deliver the intervention arm of the QUEL Study (Quality improvement in primary care to improve effectiveness and efficiency of care for people living with heart disease), which is funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

The QUEL study contains three elements: a cluster randomised control trial (Heart Disease Collaborative); cost effectiveness and process evaluations; and the development of policy recommendations with a national implementation plan.

General practices involved in the study are randomly allocated to either the control arm or the intervention arm. Practices in the control arm are only required to submit data at regular intervals.

The intervention arm of the study involves the delivery of a Heart Disease Collaborative, in which general practices are involved in a 12-month Collaborative program aimed at improving the management and secondary prevention of patients with coronary heart disease. The Collaborative kicks off with the first workshop to be held in Sydney on 2 November 2019.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Collaborative Wave 2

IF provided support to Nepean Blue Mountains PHN with the implementation of a second Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Collaborative. This Collaborative aimed to assist general practices to improve the quality of life for patients with COPD by enhancing diagnostic processes and better using the systems and pathways of health care within the Nepean Blue Mountains region.

The COPD Collaborative Wave 2 supported eight general practices to learn from each other, while gaining and utilising knowledge from leading experts and practitioners via an orientation webinar and a series of three face-to-face learning workshops. The participants implemented the learnings from these workshops during activity periods in which change ideas were tested to their local systems, and the success of these tests was reviewed through analysis of monthly improvement data.

The participants increased the rates of spirometry being performed within participating practices from 4.9% at baseline to 25% at the conclusion of the Collaborative. They made smaller improvements to the recorded rates of smoking status, from 90% to 98%, and the completion and/or reviews of GP Management Plans, from 40% to 44%. In addition, this Collaborative supported participants to develop COPD action plans in partnership with their COPD diagnosed patients.



Cancer Screening Collaborative

IF was engaged by Gippsland PHN to provide expert advice and support for a Cancer Screening Collaborative to be implemented in the Latrobe Valley region. This Collaborative has a specific focus on improving the rates of screening for breast, bowel and cervical cancers. This Collaborative is one component of a wider initiative focusing on improving the rates of cancer screening across the Gippsland PHN region.

IF worked with the implementation team to develop the Collaborative including:

- development of the project plan and learning workshop curriculum
- design and development of an online portal for the submission of program measures and Model for Improvement cycles, as well as a library of resources
- the Collaborative handbook and user guides for participants
- sourcing of expert speakers for the learning workshop series
- presenting the orientation sessions and involvement in first and second learning workshops.

Four general practices are participating in the 15 month program, which is due to conclude at the end of February 2020. IF will continue to provide support to the implementation team at Gippsland PHN for the duration of the program.

To date, the participating general practices have received training by experts in the fields of cervical cancer screening and bowel cancer screening, as well as training in QI methodologies and tools. In addition, they have submitted regular Models for Improvement cycles to detail the change ideas being tested within their local systems, and improvement measures relating to cancer screening in the three topic areas.



Lighthouse Project

IF continued to support the Heart Foundation to implement the Lighthouse Hospital Project. The Lighthouse Hospital Project aims to improve health and care outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with coronary heart disease. The project's focus is the implementation of quality activities that improve care and outcomes for patients with coronary heart disease.

IF worked with the Heart Foundation to identify and define a small set of indicators that could be used to provide feedback to participating hospitals and facilitated the evaluation of the Project. Ongoing submission of data post June 2019 enabled hospitals to complete their submissions, and evaluation is now underway.

Winter Strategy 2019

IF was contracted to provide support in the development and operation of a Winter Strategy Program in the Nepean Blue Mountains PHN region. A winter strategy program is designed to better respond to health care demands over the peak winter months, when patients are most vulnerable. The strategy aimed to support health services with providing enhanced care to patients with chronic and complex needs and to reduce the likelihood of them being hospitalised.

IF facilitated a planning workshop for local stakeholders to develop a list of possible interventions and to identify the main aims for this program. IF also delivered a QI workshop to the four participating general practices and provided ongoing support to the PHN team delivering this program. IF will complete an evaluation following the program's conclusion in October 2019.

Innovation Workshop

Gippsland PHN engaged IF to conduct Innovation Workshops (youth and adult) to engage community leaders and stakeholders and consider what can be done to reduce smoking incidence. The workshops were well-attended, and participants were engaged and willing to help.

Workshop participants initially considered the problems associated with smoking and smoking cessation. They then considered what could be done to reduce smoking incidence through cessation and prevention. Using Hot Potato (a creative brainstorming tool), a wealth of ideas (130) was generated. These ideas were then reviewed using an Affinity exercise, resulting in 79 unique ideas grouped into 13 themes. Participants of the adult workshop were also invited to rate ideas and themes using an online form.

Following the workshops, IF developed a report containing a set of observations on the workshops, a thematic analysis of the ideas generated, and a series of recommendations to guide future improvement work. The recommendations were based grouped under themes including the provision of smoking cessation support by health professionals, prevention and increasing the number of smoke free areas.

PIP QI Program

Gippsland PHN also contracted IF to design, develop and deliver a series of four one-hour webinars aimed at supporting general practices following the introduction of the PIP QI. The webinar series took general practice teams through a step-by-step approach to meet the PIP QI requirements and provided participants with a broader understanding of QI, the important role of data in QI, and the power of engaging practice teams early in planning and implementing improvements. A total of 137 individuals attended the webinars, which were well received.

Cancer Screening QI Toolkit

A consortium of three PHNs: Murray Primary Health Network, Northern Western Melbourne Primary Health Network and Western Victoria Primary Health Network, contracted IF to develop a Cancer Screening Quality Improvement Toolkit for use in general practices participating in a community-led cancer screening program. This program aims to increase early detection of bowel, cervical and breast cancers by strengthening workforce capacity within primary care settings and the provision of targeted community-led interventions. This program



commenced in 2018 and concludes in 2020.

The toolkit covers a range of topics, including:

- an introduction to QI and continuous quality improvement
- planning for QI
- the Model for Improvement
- collection of data to measure improvement
- using a team approach to improve cancer screening
- approaches to improve participation in breast, bowel and cervical cancer screenings.

The toolkit was made available in soft and hard copy versions. Following the completion of the Cancer Screening QI Toolkit, Murray PHN contracted IF to develop a user guide

to assist general practices to navigate the toolkit. This user guide summarised the main components of the toolkit and individual sections of the toolkit were included with appropriate preamble and references.

Fitness Australia

IF continues to work with Fitness Australia on their national accreditation program. In December 2018 IF identified improvements to the Accreditation process based on lessons learned from the Pilot Phase. A number of these improvements have been implemented in agreement with Fitness Australia, resulting in the accreditation process being streamlined for both registered businesses and IF. There have been 18 businesses accredited over the period, 10 of which used the new processes.

Quality Improvement Training

Darling Downs

IF provided the first of a series of live webinars to general practices in the Darling Downs West Moreton PHN. The webinar aimed at upskilling practice staff in QI, with a focus on the PIP QI, and was very well received.

Central Queensland, Wide Bay and Sunshine Coast Primary Health Network

Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN contracted IF for a range of QI consultancy services. The PHN sought to provide an opportunity for all practices to upskill their staff in QI, whilst also recognising that some practices require a greater amount of support and guidance to enhance their practical knowledge and skill-set.

IF designed and delivered a full day professional development workshop on QI for the PHN Practice Support Officer team, aimed at increasing their QI knowledge and skills for coaching general practices. The workshop was attended by all members of the Practice Support Officer team and received overall evaluation scores of between 80% and 100%.

IF also designed and delivered a series of one-hour training webinars on QI topics for general practice staff (medical and non-medical staff), including an introduction to QI, the Model for Improvement and measuring for improvement. This series was followed up with a 2.5-hour face-to-face workshop for GPs and practice staff.



QI PIP Announcement

The Department of Health announced the new Practice Incentive Payment Quality Improvement (PIP QI) to commence in August 2019. The PIP QI is a payment to general practices that participate in QI activities to improve patient outcomes and deliver best practice care.

IF has worked with a number of PHNs to deliver education to practices in their regions to enhance knowledge of QI. This knowledge will be instrumental for practices to effectively meet the requirements of the PIP QI. IF's strong history of training on QI enables us to efficiently deliver this training in a timely, cost-effective manner.

IF has also supported PHNs to engage their practices in structured QI activity, incorporating the development of QI Plans. Use of a structured approach supports general practices with achieving their goals through the use of planned and meaningful activities that are informed by data and supported by timely feedback.



qiCommunity

qiCommunity is where health care professionals come together to share ideas on how to implement and sustain QI activities that work. It's our ongoing commitment to supporting and providing health service professionals with the latest QI resources and knowledge.

Established in 2012, qiCommunity is supported by a Faculty who meet to identify ways to encourage QI activities. The Faculty consists of a dedicated group of clinicians who are passionate about using QI to improve health care systems and patient outcomes. The Faculty is chaired by Dr Tony Lembke, GP and former Clinical Director of the Australian Primary Care Collaboratives Program. Members consist of experts who were previously involved in our Collaborative programs as Clinical Leaders or Expert Reference Panel Chairs.

qiCommunity has continually grown with more health professionals joining to collaborate and share knowledge. Now Australia's largest dedicated network for QI, qiCommunity comprises more than 3,000 members, including doctors, specialists, practice nurses and practice managers. These members come from a range of primary health care organisations, including general practices, Aboriginal Medical Services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, as well as their support organisations.

Key to encouraging the sharing of ideas and generating discussion about QI is the series of free qiCommunity webinars held throughout the year. Guest presenters range from international QI experts through to Australian health professionals including Dr Larry Baker of Flinders University and Dr Charlotte Hesse. Topics covered were wide ranging including New Atrial Fibrillation Guidelines, Kidney Health and End of Life Essentials. Six webinars were held in the 2018/19 financial year with over 200 people in attendance.

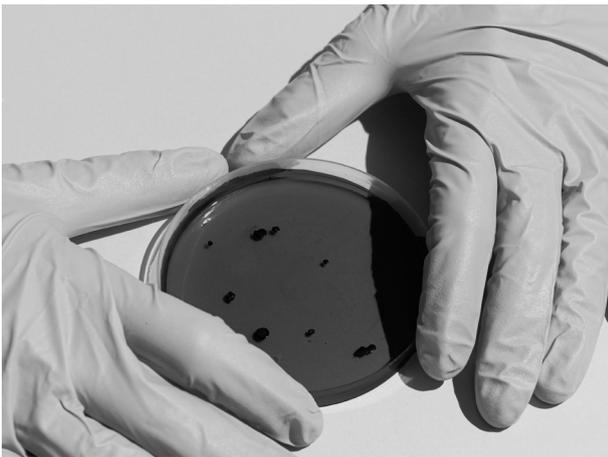


These qiCommunity webinars and other videos are available via the Improvement Foundation YouTube site

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiVC62hj8vKXgo2xL-X0s7w/feed?activity_view=1



ICT Solutions and Videography



National Alert System for Critical Antimicrobial Resistances

The Australian Commission for Safety and Quality in Health Care contracted IF to develop and maintain a national online alert system for the reporting of Critical Antimicrobial Resistances by confirming laboratories. Known as CARAlert, the web-based interface allows laboratory end users to efficiently enter confirmed Critical Antimicrobial Resistance records and permits authorised users to view submitted records in real time, allowing for quicker alert and response times.



Outreach Management System

In late 2018 the Outreach Management System functionality was redeveloped using Microsoft Dynamics 365 online and renamed simply as "OMS". This move was undertaken due to the previous infrastructure and software coming to an end of life.

The new platform, being software as a service (SaaS), has OMS better placed to continue operating into the future as previously large-scale upgrades to the system (arising from on-premise software coming to its end of life) will be replaced with smaller, incremental changes over time. OMS is also now infinitely scalable, and not limited by the host hardware.



Migration to Office 365

Looking for ways to maintain collaboration across multiple locations and enable staff to easily communicate while travelling, IF made the decision to move its phone, email and storage systems to Microsoft's Office 365 online services.

Staff now have access all their files and emails, as well as dedicated 'landline' numbers that will follow them wherever they have an internet connection. This 'mobile office' approach will allow IF to shape its IT requirements at the click of a button, and removes any reliance on dedicated hardware and premises.



Video production

IF has continued to produce high-quality digital video media to assist and empower our clients in their QI work. During the past year we have developed media covering a range of topics including quality improvement & the PIP QI, continuous quality improvement, the Model for Improvement, practice coaching and the power of data.

We have also produced digital media on the following programs:

- the Heart Health Collaborative
- the Cancer Screening Collaborative
- the Enhancing Preventive Healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaborative
- Outreach Management System
- qiCommunity
- the Lighthouse Project.

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