Sharpe, Tracey

Hi Felicity
As requested please find below an update on the trial of electronic referral forms by the Central Referral Service (CRS).

The trial commenced in December 2014 following development and testing of electronic GP Referral templates. The trial covers two components; Electronic referral template and secure electronic messaging. Below is a summary of these two elements;

GP Referral Templates

- Electronic templates have been developed for six of the most common GP practice software packages used in WA (Best Practice, Medical Director, Zed Med, Medtech, Communicare and Genie).
- Each software package has had a general adult, paediatric and OBS and gynae template developed.
- All these templates (with the exception of Communicare which is still work in progress) are compliant with Australian standards for secure messaging (HL7).
- The templates can be uploaded into the GP software package to facilitate auto population of some fields from the GP's patient records.
- Once final testing is complete these electronic templates are planned to be released to GPs more widely via the CRS website.
- Work is in progress with other software vendors (Practix, MMeX) to develop electronic templates for the remaining GP software packages.

Secure Electronic Messaging

- A trial commenced late last year for bi-directional secure messaging (incoming and outgoing) to deliver and receive the electronic referral templates.
- The trial is limited to GP practices that use WA Health's contracted secure messaging provider (Healthlink) as their provider.
- CRS is exploring compatibility issues with receiving messages from other 'secure messaging' providers.
- Overall there have been no significant issues so far with secure messaging where the same messaging provider is used. A communication strategy is being developed to promote this form of referral transmission between GPs and CRS to gradually expand its use.
- A satisfaction survey of GPs, as well as operational reporting will be used to evaluate bi-directional secure messaging and the new templates.

I am advised that the final evaluation of the above trial and implementation is expected to be completed in 3 to 4 months.

With respect to PATS, this ground work be CRS is important, particularly working through the issues with the Communicare and MMeX GP software systems, which are packages widely used by country GPs and Aboriginal Medical Services.

I trust that this addresses your query.

Regards

Peter