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Introduction

In November 2023, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) received funding from the Commonwealth Department of Health (DoH) to maintain operation of the General Practice Mental Health Standards Collaboration (GPMHSC) until 30 June 2026.

The Standard Funding Agreement (SFA) between DoH and the RACGP was executed on 1 January 2024. The GPMHSC agreed to undertake activities to promote the use of the Initial Assessment and Referral Decision Support Tool and this is outlined in the Activity Work Plan for the period 1 January 2024. This proposal outlines the suggested promotional activities the GPMHC will undertake in order to meet this deliverable.

Objectives

The key objective of the activities being undertaken is to promote the IAR-DST to GPs in order to increase uptake.

The objectives of this plan are to:

* **inform GPs** about the IAR-DST, including what it is and why it is helpful for them
* **clarify the intention of** the IAR-DST
* **encourage GPs** to determine if the IAR-DST is useful to assist them in determining the level of MH support needed for their patient

Target audience

All GPs with a focus on:

* GPs in training/registrars/early career GPs
* GPs practicing in Rural and remote locations (Modified Monash Model (MMM) 3–7)

Stakeholders

* GPs working in general practice
* All RACGP Faculties, including RACGP Psychological Medicine Specific Interest Group (SIG), RACGP Rural and GPs in Training (GPiT)
* ACRRM
* Rural Doctors Association (RDA) – RDA NSW, RDAQ, RDASA, RDA Tasmania, RDAV and RDAWA
* Rural Workforce Agencies (RWA)
* Remote Vocational Training Scheme (RVTS)
* Primary Health Networks (PHNs)
* Registered Training Organisations (RTOs).

Key messages

**What is the IAR-DST?**

The IAR-DST is a tool designed to assist GPs in assessing mental health needs to support more accurate patient referrals. It is a tool that the mental health referral units of the PHNs will use to simplify the process of evaluating patients, standardise decision-making, and enhance referral outcomes by ensuring patients receive the right level of care for their mental health needs. The IAR-DST is not an outcome tool, but a decision support tool.

It will be important for GPs to understand what their patients will be asked as they enter PHN mental health networks.

**Why is it helpful to GPs?**

* **Improved Patient Outcomes:** The IAR-DST may help GPs match patients with the most suitable mental health services, promoting more effective care and improving long-term outcomes.
* **Streamlined Workflow:** By providing a clear framework for assessment and referral, the IAR-DST may save time, reduce uncertainty, and minimise the administrative burden on GPs.
* **Alignment with Best Practice:** The IAR-DST can support GPs to deliver consistent, high-quality care.
* **Addressing Systemic Gaps:** With its support for diverse populations and varying levels of mental health need, the IAR-DST can play a crucial role in closing care gaps, especially in underserved communities.

Communication activities and budget

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Communication channels** | **Activity/action** | **Frequency** | **Dates** |
| GPMHSC website | Set up a specific IAR page with IAR resources and videos developed by DoHAC | On-going | January 2024 – June 2025 |
| Social media | IAR-DST promotional tiles posted via RACGP social channels | Multiple | February 2025 – June 2025 (TBC with RACGP) |
| Electronic digital mail (eDMs) | Draft standalone content and send to email subscribers | 2 EDMs | March, August 2025 |
| RACGP website | Ad on RACGP website | Once-off | TBC |
| GPMHSC eNews | Short article with link to the GPMHSC website | On-going for 12 months / 4 GPMHSC newsletters | February, May, August, November 2025 |
| *InPractice (InPractice is a subsidiary of newsGP, and highlights clinical and professional resources that have been specifically tailored for GPs)* | Draft content and send to Media & Comms | Monthly | Until June 2025 |
| Australian Journal of General Practice (AJGP) | Promotional notice advertised in AJGP | Once-off | Early 2025 |
| RACGP *check* | Promotional notice advertised in *check* |  | Mid 2025? |
| *newsGP* | Sponsored article to be included in RACGP’s newsGP platform | Once-off | 2025 |
| RACGP State Faculties, RACGP Faculties, RACGP Specific Interest Groups | Draft e-newsletter content or MREC advertisement  Draft content for Facebook group post | Twice in 2025 | TBC |
| ACRRM PDP Team | Draft short article with link to IAR landing page of GPMHSC website | One-off | Once IAR page has been launched – June 2025 |
| ACRRM Country Watch | Two article submissions to ACRRM newsletter | Multiple | Once IAR page has been launched – June 2025 |
| ACRRM social media | Request to promote via Facebook and Twitter | Multiple | Once IAR page has been launched – June 2025 |
| Training Providers | Send email to training providers | One-off | Once IAR page has been launched – June 2025 |
| PHNs | Newsletter submission request to PHN contact list | Multiple | Until June 2025 |
| RDA, RWA, RVTS | Draft and send content for newsletters | Multiple | Once IAR page has been launched – June 2025 |
| **Total cost** | | | |