

Experiences and ideas shared at Choosing Wisely workshop on 2 March 2018

More than 80 health sector participants from throughout the country gathered in Wellington for the *Choosing Wisely – putting theory into practice* workshop.

The workshop, the second since the launch of *Choosing Wisely* 15 months ago, focused on what has been achieved to date and learning from each other's experiences.

Speakers included Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners Medical Director and Wellington GP, **Dr Richard Medicott**, who spoke about the work the College is doing to educate members about *Choosing Wisely*. This included sharing a tip each week through the College publication *ePulse* and measuring readers' engagement with the *Choosing Wisely* segment. The 'most clicked' tips were:

1. avoid prescribing antibiotics for upper respiratory tract infection
2. avoid requesting CT imaging of kidneys, ureters and bladder in otherwise healthy emergency department patients
3. do not prescribe benzodiazepines or other sedative-hypnotics to older adults as first choice for insomnia, agitation or delirium.

Occupational therapist **Harsh Vardhan** spoke about the importance of involving allied health professionals in the introduction of *Choosing Wisely* and overcoming his own questioning in order to convince others of its value.

He told participants we're are living in an era of providing cost effective, individualised care that is valued by the patient and that *Choosing Wisely* differs from a 'lean' approach in that it takes into account sociotechnical aspects of efficiency, such as motivation, stress and resilience and focuses on better health outcomes and quality of life.

Dr Nick Rogers, Capital & Coast Health District Health Board (DHB) consultant anaesthetist, talked about how a widely representative steering group has facilitated the challenge of implementing *Choosing Wisely* across services at the DHB.

The group meets every two weeks and answers directly to the general manager and chief medical officer. Some *Choosing Wisely* projects have come about as a result of audit findings. In some cases, services that are struggling to meet demand have asked the steering group to help them work out where they are not choosing wisely and support them to implement better ways of doing things.

Polypharmacy (a person's concurrent use of multiple medicines) was one of the topics of special interest group discussion. **Sarah Shellard**, hospital palliative clinical nurse specialist, discussed Hutt Valley DHB's programme, which is designed to lead to patients and families feeling more comfortable discussing their medical regimes with their health care team.

The afternoon included presentations on the evidence behind the *Choosing Wisely* guidelines, cognitive bias regarding risks and benefits and measuring *Choosing Wisely*.

Dr Michael Ardagh, Professor of Emergency Medicine and a specialist in the emergency department of Christchurch Hospital, told participants that Health Pathways was a great place to put *Choosing Wisely* messages and to go to for resources to support joint decision making. There are more than 1000 locally developed pathways and pages – including 660 condition-based clinical pathways – and agreements between general practice, community providers, allied health, and hospital services, which receive more than 1000 visits every week day.

Council of Medical Colleges Chair, **Dr Derek Sherwood** says the workshop more than achieved its objective and showed the commitment of the health sector to strengthening *Choosing Wisely*'s work and improving the quality of care for New Zealanders.

A number of the presentations are available on the [Choosing Wisely website](#).