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Strong equity focus in Choosing Wisely forum

The programme for the Choosing Wisely forum, Choosing Wisely – Choosing Equity: a focus on equity, sustainability and shared decision-making has strong focus on equity. This includes a panel discussion on Choosing Wisely, equity, and unconscious bias, featuring Dr Matire Harwood, Prof David Tipene-Leach, Dr Kyle Eggleton and Dr John Bonning.

The opening address is from Health Quality & Safety Commission chair and Waitemata District Health Board chief executive Dr Dale Bramley. The first keynote speaker (via video link) is Dr Kaveh Shojania, editor-in-chief of BMJ Quality & Safety, talking about Choosing Wisely and the sustainability of health care.

There is strong consumer input throughout the day, with a consumer panel commenting after each section; and a keynote presentation from Choosing Wisely Australia consumer representative Melissa Fox on shared decision-making.

Other highlights include:

- Health and Disability Commissioner Dr Anthony Hill on Choosing Wisely and medico-legal concerns
- Prof Tipene-Leach and Anna Adcock on their research into Choosing Wisely and shared decision-making for Māori
- Dr Alex Psirides on shared goals of care.

Registrations are open for the forum, with early bird rates available until 1 April.

See the forum event page for more information.

Preventing Overdiagnosis conference focuses on harms of health care
Choosing Wisely champion Dr John Bonning was part of the New Zealand contingent attending the international Preventing Overdiagnosis conference, held in Sydney in December 2019.

Dr Bonning is president of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine and an emergency medicine specialist at Waikato Hospital. He is on the Choosing Wisely New Zealand advisory group and is passionate about the need for clinicians and patients to understand the risks of over-diagnosis and over-treatment. The Choosing Wisely campaign supports reducing unnecessary tests, treatments and procedures in health care.

He says the conference focused on the harm that can be caused by health care.

“Ray Moynihan’s quote that medicine’s much vaunted ability to help the sick and injured is soon to be outstripped by our propensity to harm the healthy, has never been more apt,” he says.

“We need to start thinking about the harm of tests and the harm of treatment in low-risk patients. There is a lot of discussion about things you can’t miss – and that’s very important – but there has also got to be an understanding of an unacceptable risk to a lot of people by over-treating, over-testing and over-diagnosing. A minor ‘just-in-case' test can start a cascade of harm to patients.”
Assessing equity in Choosing Wisely

Researcher Anna Adcock (Ngāti Mutunga) also attended some of the Preventing Overdiagnosis conference. With Choosing Wisely clinical lead Dr Derek Sherwood, Dr John Bonning, and Dr Guylene Theriault from Choosing Wisely Canada, she helped facilitate a workshop focused on Choosing Wisely and equity.

As part of the workshop, she presented on a piece of research she is undertaking for the New Zealand Council of Medical Colleges, which sponsors Choosing Wisely in New Zealand, and Te Ohu Rata o Aotearoa (Te ORA) – the Māori Medical Practitioners Association. The research explores Māori views on Choosing Wisely and shared decision-making. Ms Adcock will make recommendations on how Choosing Wisely could be implemented in a way that better meets the needs of Māori and is more equity focused.

“Choosing Wisely originated in America and was introduced in Aotearoa in 2016 – but there hasn’t been an equity focus,” she says. “The Council of Medical Colleges and Te ORA identified that there was a real need to address this in Aotearoa, where we function under the Treaty of Waitangi. We know that programmes with a ‘one size fits all’ approach don’t work, and can risk increasing inequity.”
Partnering for change report

Choosing Wisely Australia’s report Partnering for change has been released. It showcases work being undertaken across the Australian health sector to reduce unnecessary health care.

To date, almost 200 evidence-based recommendations around health care to question have been developed by Australia’s health professional colleges, societies and associations and published under the initiative.

The report is available on the Choosing Wisely Australia website at the following link: 2019 Choosing Wisely Australia Report: Partnering for change

nzRISK – a pre-operative mortality risk prediction tool

nzRISK is a pre-operative risk-prediction tool providing an estimate for the risk of death at one month, one year, and two years following surgery. It has been developed and validated for patients in New Zealand over the age of 18 undergoing non-cardiac surgery.

The tool uses eight risk factors to estimate mortality and is currently the most accurate risk tool for adults in the New Zealand setting undergoing non-cardiac surgery.
See the website at [www.nzrisk.com](http://www.nzrisk.com) for more information about the tool and to use the calculator. There are also links at [www.nzrisk.com/#about](http://www.nzrisk.com/#about) to a peer-reviewed article in the *British Journal of Surgery* as well as links to videos for medical professionals and patients.

**To do or not to do? – A Netherlands reducing low-value care programme**

The *To do or not to do?* national programme from the Netherlands helps physicians, nurses and patients to make well-informed and shared decisions about whether a specific health care practice is the right choice.

The programme also stimulates and supports projects in which health care professionals reduce low-value care; scales up successful de-implementation interventions; and helps clinicians prioritise which low-value care should be reduced. In the first four years of the project, knowledge has been gained about how health care professionals can reduce low-value care.

**Assessing low-value care practices in the Netherlands**

This recently published study looked at general practice and hospital routinely collected data in order to understand the volume and variation of selected low-value care practices.
The analysis used billing claims from health care providers for 3.5 million Dutch inhabitants.

Three low-value practices were looked at: general practice ordering of imaging for low-back pain in the absence of red flags; hospitals that screened patients over 75 years for colorectal cancer; and hospitals that diagnosed varices with doppler or plethysmography.

The study showed there was a lot of variation in practice between providers. While many providers did not order these low-value tests, a minority ordered a substantial number.

**New approaches needed to advance Choosing Wisely**

Canadian researchers say new approaches are needed to advance the aims of Choosing Wisely and reduce overuse in practice.

Evidence indicates that making lists of recommendations and stimulating awareness are insufficient by themselves to drive practice change. Influencing the established practice of doctors requires much more than a voluntary effort of specialty societies. Complex cultural, systems and structural barriers prevent recommendations being put into practice.

The authors say overuse is a multifactorial problem, at the intersection of clinician habits, behaviours, and training, and compounded by public and patient expectations and demands. A considered and evidence-based approach is therefore needed with robust implementation strategies sensitive to the complexities of different practice environments.

**Need help with resources?**

*Our team has been busy sourcing information and research which will help you on the path to Choosing Wisely.*

**Speakers** - One way to generate interest in your service or area of work is to invite a Choosing Wisely speaker to talk at a meeting or grand round. We have a list of people able to speak on Choosing Wisely at your next event.
As an example, watch Dr Sherwood’s presentation at the 2018 Australian National Meeting.

Presentations – If you’d like to do a presentation on Choosing Wisely we have a wide selection of slides you could use aimed at a variety of audiences (District Health Board staff, consumers, general practitioners, primary health organisations).

Pamphlets and posters - We have two versions of the Choosing Wisely pamphlets – one for health professionals and one for consumers. We also have A2 posters for consumers "More isn't always better", plus A5 handouts of the 4 Questions. Order your supply now!

Want to get connected?
Following the successful Choosing Wisely Forum in May we have been asked by several health professionals about ways they can connect with others in their profession on Choosing Wisely issues and implementation.
The national Choosing Wisely team facilitates a Community of Practice group for those working on Choosing Wisely in DHBs. We meet about every 2-3 months over a lunchtime conference call. Dates and times are set by a consensus, and notes and information is always sent to those who cannot attend – we also have an area on our website where resources are kept – so people can build on other work and not have to reinvent the wheel.

We also have a discussion group for those working in all areas of pharmacy (hospital, community and in pharmacies). Currently a small group of pharmacists are developing a list of Choosing Wisely recommendations for pharmacy, and will soon be consulting with the wider sector.

We have been asked by those working in Allied Health about a group – we are having an initial meeting on 6 September to see if we have enough people to make this a useful forum. We have contacts in speech therapy, physiotherapy, and OTs. Please let us know if you are interested in being part of this group.

Similarly, we have had interest from GPs and those working in PHOs wanting to know of other work in Choosing Wisely - Please let us know if you are interested in being part of this group.

Contact us

Choosing Wisely Literature Synopsis

There is a full synopsis of peer-reviewed articles available for download from the Choosing Wisely resource page. This list is regularly updated to provide you with comprehensive up-to-date reading materials.

Events

Choosing Wisely – Choosing Equity: New Zealand forum

2020 Choosing Wisely Australia national meeting
Empowering consumers to choose wisely
International Convention Centre Sydney
Wednesday 20 May 2020

Choosing Wisely Canada: The unnecessary conference
Choosing Wisely Canada in collaboration with the Canadian Medical Association brings you The Unnecessary conference. To be held on 25 and 26 May in Ottawa, Ontario, this is the fifth annual national meeting. It brings together health professionals, patients, system leaders, and researchers from across the country to discuss and engage in topics related to overuse.