



Building a library for clinical measures

The Patients First programme (formerly known as qi4GP) supports the New Zealand primary health care sector in improving quality of patient outcomes by obtaining a clearer focus on information.¹

One of the key initiatives currently underway is to develop an integrated library of primary health care clinical measures in close collaboration with a group of sector representatives. The launch is planned for the end of March this year.

The approach is similar in concept to work undertaken by the Information Centre of the English NHS – they have published a searchable resource of definitions for some 3000 measures currently in use in health and social care in England.² Our project work involves building a library framework tailored to the New Zealand environment, enabled by a web-based repository and with an agreed standardised format for definition and presentation of clinical measures. Work also involves determining the appropriate governance arrangements to provide stewardship and support for the future direction of the library and oversight of agreed protocols for review, selection and development of new measures.

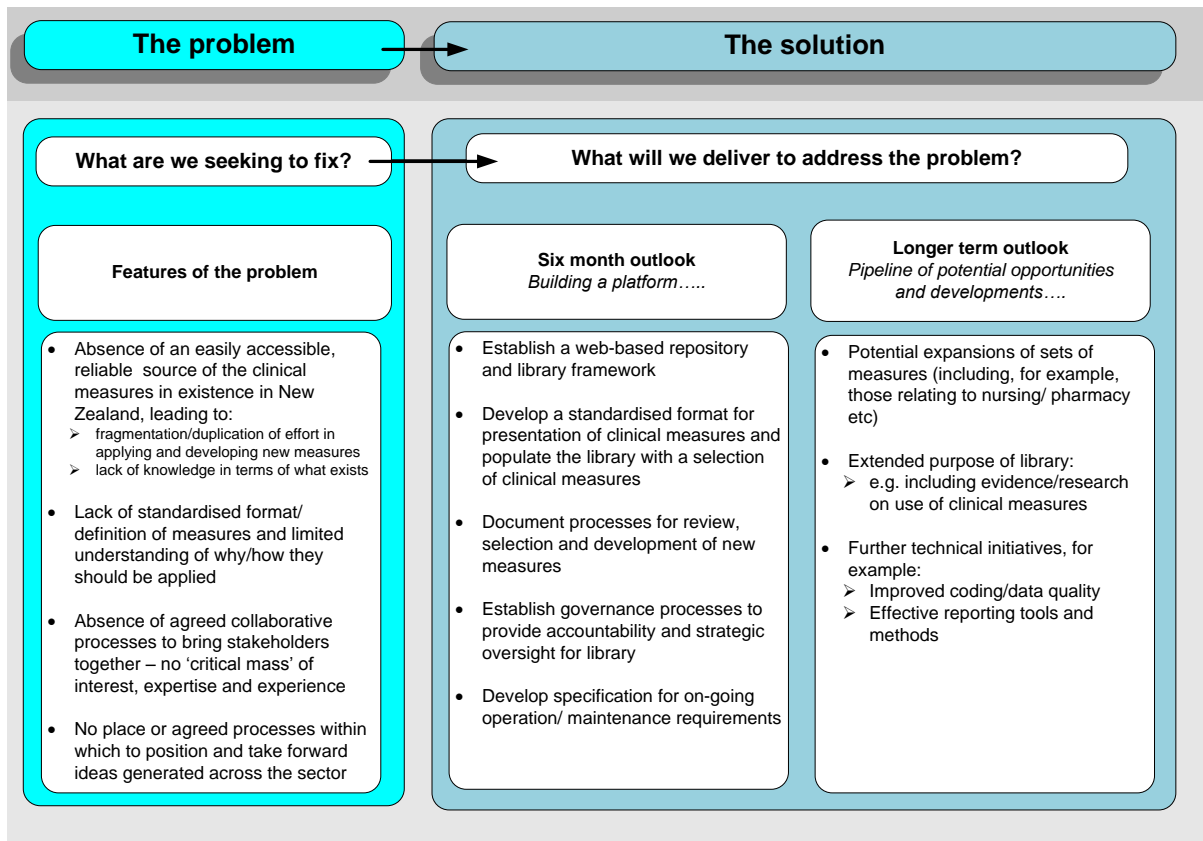
Operational project sponsor, Andrew Stenson, says “Within New Zealand there is no easily accessible, reliable source of clinical measures that can be applied within primary health care. The lack of a standardised way of defining measures and the limited understanding of why and how they should be applied, leads to duplication of effort and lack of clarity about whether users are comparing ‘apples with apples, pears or oranges’.

“Also, in bringing together stakeholders on a project with a strong practical focus, we seek to develop a critical mass of interest, expertise and experience and to provide a place from which to position and take forward ideas generated across the sector.”

As illustrated in the diagram below, the establishment of the library is viewed as an opportunity to build a platform upon which to position future initiatives.

¹ The Patients First programme (formerly known as qi4GP) is co-sponsored by RNZCGP and General Practice New Zealand (GPNZ). It is funded via a primary health IT grant approved by the National Health IT Board. For further information about the Programme and its constituent projects, contact the Programme Manager, Andrew Terris at andrew.terris@patientsfirst.org.nz.

² <http://www.ic.nhs.uk/services/in-development/indicator-library>



In the first instance, the library will be populated with a small selection of existing clinical measures (for example, the current PHO Performance Programme indicators and a set of new measures developed by the College in conjunction with the Wellington School of Medicine of the University of Otago).

Over time we seek to expand the range and volume of information provided, and potentially to consider options for extending the purpose of the library, for example to include discussion forums or evidence/research on the use of clinical measures.

If you have any questions regarding this project, or would like to receive updates on progress, please contact Julie Artus, ICML Project Manager on jartus@srghealth.com.