Practice Incentive Payment (PIP)

## Practice Incentive Program eHealth Incentive (ePIP)

Requirement 3 - Data Records and Clinical Coding

Practices must ensure that where clinically relevant, they are working towards recording the majority of diagnoses for active patients electronically, using a medical vocabulary that can be mapped against a nationally recognised disease classification or terminology system. Practices must provide a written policy to this effect to all GPs within the practice.

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) has developed a range of draft policy templates for general practices to adapt to their individual practice needs when registering and complying with the requirements for the Practice Incentive Program eHealth Incentive (ePIP).

The policy templates cover:

* secure messaging capability
* data records and clinical coding terminologies
* electronic transfer of prescriptions
* participating in My Health Record.

These policies are to be used as a guide and must be individualised to suit your organisation’s particular needs. The RACGP advises not to implement these policies without first considering the specific needs of your practice.

The policy templates have been developed with current knowledge as of May 2019. The RACGP recommends that these policies be reviewed regularly.

[insert practice name]  *Practice policy on data records and clinical coding*

Current as of: [insert date of last revision]

Version No: [insert version number]

Our practice ensures that important elements of our patients’ health information is recorded in their health record consistently, regardless of the provider they see. The clinical terminologies used are based on agreement by our practice and/or the practice team.

**Background and rationale**

Using consistent clinical coding terminologies will support better utilisation of searchable chronic disease registers and avoid confusion that can result from ‘free text’ descriptions in the health record. Best practice is the use of medical vocabulary that can be mapped against a nationally recognised disease classification or terminology system.

**Practice procedure**

Our practice:

* discourages the use of free-text coding for the recording of all important diagnoses and current and past clinical history in patients’ health records
* is working towards consistent recording by encouraging the use of agreed clinical coding terminologies by using, for example, a ‘pick list’ or ‘drop down box’ function in the clinical desktop system
* uses clinical coding terminologies, at a minimum, for all ‘active patients’ of the practice[[1]](#footnote-1)
* provides practice-based education and skills-based training to all healthcare providers and staff to ensure compliance with the policy and competency in the use of the technology.

**Software requirements**

The clinical desktop system used in our practice is:

 [List clinical software]

The medical vocabulary used in the clinical desktop system is:

[List medical vocabulary]

**Staff responsibility**

It is the responsibility of all healthcare providers in our practice, where clinically relevant, to use the ‘pick list’ or ‘drop-down box’ capability and reduce the unnecessary and/or inappropriate use of ‘free text’.

It is the responsibility of all administrative staff to support the use of clinical coding terminologies by undertaking any administration tasks involved in the maintenance or use of the clinical desktop system. When any problems arise with the clinical desktop system software within our practice, the appropriate software vendor and/or the company providing IT support for the practice will be contacted to assist in resolving the problem in a timely manner.

**Related resources**

RACGP *Standards for general practices* *(5th edition)*

<https://www.racgp.org.au/running-a-practice/practice-standards/standards-5th-edition/standards-for-general-practices-5th-ed>

RACGP *Information security in general practice*

<https://www.racgp.org.au/running-a-practice/security/protecting-your-practice-information/information-security-in-general-practice>

Conformant clinical software products

<https://www.myhealthrecord.gov.au/for-healthcare-professionals/conformant-clinical-software-products>

Disclaimer

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1. The definition of an ‘active’ patient is a patient who has attended the practice three (3) or more times in the past two (2) years. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)