

AuSCR Research Task Group approved projects

Title	Using Short Message Services (SMS) to Collect Patient Reported Outcomes for the Australian Stroke Clinical Registry (AuSCR) 'AuSCR SMS Comparative Effectiveness Project'
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AuSCR role	Recruitment
Approved	10 August 2021
Status	In progress

Summary An important feature of the AuSCR is the collection of patient-reported outcome data (also referred to as follow-up) at 90-180 days post-admission to measure patient recovery following stroke. Currently, patient follow-up is attempted twice via mail (to both the patient and a nominated emergency contact) and then if there is no response a final, third attempt is made via telephone.

With the increase in the number of hospitals using the AuSCR, the current process for obtaining patient reported outcome data is becoming more labour and resource intensive. Currently, the AuSCR is used in seven states and territories. With over 20,000 episodes of care documented annually since 2018, there is an urgent need to find additional cost-effective, feasible and acceptable methods of collecting patient outcome data following stroke. One such mechanism may be the use of a Short Message Service (SMS), including a secure electronic link, to enable patients to complete the follow-up questionnaire electronically. Use of SMS for the collection of patient-reported outcomes has been successfully piloted, and used, in other registries such as the Australian Breast Device Registry.

The primary aim is to determine if patients registered in the AuSCR (registrants) who are randomised to receive the new SMS message and link to the electronic follow-up questionnaire, when compared to controls (registrants randomised to receive the 'current follow-up process') have:

- greater response rates
- more timely completion of the follow-up questionnaire
- fewer missing data
- fewer telephone calls and posted forms
- overall reduced costs incurred by the AuSCR Office per form completed

The secondary aim of this study is to undertake a process evaluation to explore, and gain insight, into the decision-making process that led registrants to choose, or not choose, to complete follow-up via the new SMS method. This evaluation will also determine whether there are any specific demographic, clinical or stroke recovery factors associated with those registrants completing follow-up electronically via SMS versus those completing follow-up via current methods (mail and telephone).

The outcome of this project is to provide evidence for the value of routinely incorporating a new method of registrant electronic follow-up data collection via an SMS link among survivors of stroke after they leave hospital.