

FACT SHEET

Medical Record Audits

- Clinical Quality Registries such as the AuSCR rely on high quality data to ensure that the reported outcomes are accurate, meaningful and comparable.
- Data from the AuSCR are used to determine hospitals' adherence to processes of care, define benchmarks, inform quality improvement activities and examine patient outcomes. Data are also available for further research.
- The AuSCR undertakes a number of quality assurance practices to inform and improve hospital's data quality including data cleaning, data quality reports, case ascertainment and medical record audits.
- Medical record audits compare the accuracy of the data entered into the AuSCR with data from the medical record.
- Audits are standard practice for clinical registries and are included as part of our ethics approved protocol and participation agreement.

When will my hospital be audited?

- The AuSCR Office will perform Medical Record Audits following entry of the first 50-100 cases at each site, and then every two years thereafter, or as required, for example where there are data exceptions (dependent on funding availability).
- When your hospital is due for an audit, your AuSCR State Coordinator will contact you to arrange a mutually suitable day to visit.

Why do AuSCR records need to be audited?

- Data collected in the AuSCR are a valuable asset to your hospital and the broader community. The value and utility of the data relies on accurate and complete entries.
- Audits are one of the processes we complete to ensure the AuSCR data is of a high quality.
- Audits can identify missing data, data entry errors, and most importantly, where the variable definitions have been misunderstood.
- Feedback from audits can improve your hospital's data and ensure consistency and comparability between sites.
- Audits are valuable for AuSCR staff to identify which variables may require clarification in the data dictionary or require additional site training.

How many records will be audited?

- Generally, between 5 to 15 records will be audited.

Which records will be audited?

- Cases for audit will be randomly selected in the most recent time-period (generally within the past 12 months) to reflect current data quality issues.

How do I need to prepare?

- Once we have confirmed a suitable date and time, the AuSCR Office will generate the list of randomly selected records and provide it to your hospital in a secure manner. This will enable you to organise access to the records (either electronic or paper-based) ahead of time.
- The AuSCR staff will require access to a desk, computer and to medical records for the selected patients for the day of the audit.
- Access to electronic medical records - which may be restricted access to view only the required patients – may need to be arranged prior to the audit. Where not all variables required for AuSCR are stored within the same system, please arrange access for each system. Let your State Coordinator know if there are any data access forms that require completion before the day.

What is the process on the day of the audit?

- Your AuSCR State Coordinator will usually perform the audit, and may be accompanied by another AuSCR Office staff member.
- On the day, the AuSCR staff will first meet with the AuSCR Hospital Coordinator to review hospital AuSCR processes and identify where to find relevant details in the hospital medical record. The auditor will then spend approximately four to five hours reviewing medical records and comparing these to the data captured in AuSCR. Time permitting, AuSCR staff will meet with the hospital coordinator at the end of the day to discuss their findings.

What will happen following the audit?

- Following the audit, we will provide you with a written report of the findings, and recommendations.
- Importantly, if we identify any misunderstanding in relation to the definition or meaning of variables, we will provide additional training. This is to ensure the data in the registry are standardised between hospitals and are reliable. Where variables are often misunderstood, we will seek to amend the AuSCR data dictionary for clarity.
- Data quality parameters are also reported in the annual report.

***For further information, please contact your State Coordinator, or email
admin@auscr.com.au***

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