

WIC Berlin Abstract 2015

Title 1: Find my patients: involving GPs in using the NZ Atlas of health variation

The New Zealand Atlas of healthcare variation shows, for example, a three-fold variation between district health boards (DHBs) in the rate per thousand people dispensed morphine. The polypharmacy Atlas domain shows a nearly two-fold variation between DHBs in the use of antipsychotics in people aged 65 years and over.

These differences in practice should oblige providers to understand and investigate why it varies and what optimum practice might be. Yet, awareness of variation fluctuates around the country both conceptually and in relation to its occurrence. Furthermore, once over the conceptual hump of what variation is and means, and what opportunities reducing variation can provide, the most difficult question remains: what to do about it? In the New Zealand context, in response, the Health Quality & Safety Commission has developed a range of resources, including guides, case studies and 'Find My Patients'. The latter is a knowledge sharing tool that connects the Atlas' findings to general practice patient management systems, allowing general practitioners to generate a list of their patients who may contribute to that variation and benefit from review. 'Find My Patients' connects variation study to practice, allowing general practitioners to start addressing variation at the coalface, patient by patient.