

Newsletter

September 2023



A message from our Chair

Welcome to the latest VicTAG newsletter.

With the Medicines Roundtable for 2023 just around the corner, it will be great to see as many of our members as possible at this event, especially since this is the first for a number of years. In partnership with Safer Care Victoria (SCV), we are anticipating some great discussion on various topics throughout the day. If you haven't already registered, please do!

The projects supported by VicTAG are continuing, including the framework for automated dispensing cabinets and an update on the management of Schedule 9, 8 and 4D medications. Both will benefit our members, and we will continue to support other projects in the future. We

are also looking forward to commencing a collaborative project with Health Share Victoria for assessing pharmaceutical products. Expressions of interest close soon.

We have been busy with a number of consultations and responses on behalf of VicTAG members. We have also had meetings with the Department of Health and SCV to promote the roles of our members across the hospital sector and increase visibility on the amazing work that everyone does each day.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the Roundtable.

Paul Toner

Victorian Medicines Roundtable 2023

Join us at the Victorian Medicines Roundtable 2023!

The Medicines Roundtable, to be jointly hosted by VicTAG and Safer Care Victoria (SCV), will bring together clinicians with an interest in medication governance from health services across metropolitan, rural and regional Victoria for an inperson learning and strategic workshop event that will be facilitated by experienced health communicator Dr Sally Cockburn.

The Roundtable is intended to highlight key medication access, sustainability, safety and quality priorities and challenges, and participants will be tasked with developing workable statewide solutions to address these. The Roundtable outcomes will inform work underway by VicTAG and SCV.

Sessions will cover anticoagulant safety and stewardship, management of ongoing critical medication shortages, medication risks at transitions of care, and equitable and sustainable access to high-cost medicines.

Invited speakers for the event include:



Dr Sally Cockburn
Facilitator



Prof Michael Dooley
Director of Pharmacy
Alfred Health



Lanii Birks
Manager Patient
Safety, Experience
and Response, SCV



Bayan Hosseini
Clinical Response
and Governance
CEC, NSW



Kate Warren
Director Supply
Chain Surety, HSV



Dr David Liew
Vice Chair VicTAG &
Medicines
Optimisation Service,
Austin Health



Date and time

Thursday 5th October 2023
9.30am to 4.30pm
(Please arrive at 9am)

Location

Level 5
2 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne, VIC 3004

Registration

Tickets available via Humanitix:
<https://events.humanitix.com/victorian-medicines-roundtable>

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VicTAG 2023 Project Grants

Applications are now closed for the VicTAG 2023 project grants.

There were two project streams in the grant round this year, with all submissions assessed by the VicTAG Management Committee to determine which projects were to obtain funding of up to \$16,000 per project.

We are very pleased to announce that **Cynthia Donarelli**, Quality and Medication Safety Pharmacist at Northern Health, is the successful applicant of the targeted project on developing the Victorian Framework for the Management of Schedule 9, Schedule 8 and Schedule 4D Medications.

This project will develop a framework and implementation tools to facilitate the management of Schedule 9, Schedule 8 and Schedule 4D medications that is consistent with legislation and best practice. The framework will include guidance on storage, auditing, incident management, recording of transactions, destruction and disposal, as well as a suite of easy to use implementation tools. The use of technologies available to facilitate management of processes will also be included. The framework will be developed in consultation with hospital representatives from across the State, Department of Health Victoria, Medicines and Poisons Regulation Unit and input from vendors of software and equipment relating to the management of these medications. We look forward to the framework that Cynthia and her team will develop.

The successful applicant for the freestyle project will be announced in the next newsletter.

Framework for the Implementation and Integration of Automated Dispensing Cabinets (ADCs) with Electronic Medication Management Systems

Julie Ngo from Monash Health is leading this project, which will provide guidance on the use and implementation of ADCs with electronic medication management systems (EMMS) such as Cerner and Epic.

The preliminary survey has been completed and the results will be on display as a poster at Medicines Management 2023. Julie is now pooling together the contents of the framework.

Framework for Medication Safety Assessment of Pharmaceutical Products

An exciting opportunity has re-opened to lead a VicTAG and Health Share Victoria (HSV) partner project. HSV, who are responsible for the statewide procurement of pharmaceutical projects, is seeking to work collaboratively with VicTAG to develop a framework to standardise the medication safety, acceptability and suitability evaluation of pharmaceutical products submitted for the tender process. The position is part time (24 hours per week) for a fixed term until June 30, 2024. Expressions of interest are to be submitted to professionalofficer@victag.org.au by Sunday 8th October. Further information about the position can be found [here](#).

VicTAG 2023 Membership Fees

VicTAG membership fees for 2023 are now due. The VicTAG Management Committee met in August 2023 and approved a 3% fee increase on all memberships for this year. This was after weighing of a 2% salaries increase in pharmacist EBA along with a more general annual CPI of 6%. The fee structure is listed below.

- **Level 1 Multi-campus networks:** \$3,850 per financial year
- **Level 2 Specialist Hospitals and Major Regional centres:** \$1,835 per financial year
- **Level 3 Rural & regional hospitals:** \$875 per financial year

Invoices will be issued to members shortly.

VicTAG membership is open to all Victorian and Tasmanian hospitals. Members are hospital pharmacists and medical specialists from Victorian and Tasmanian public hospitals. Members can only be elected if their hospital is currently financial with VicTAG.

Membership entitles representatives of your institution to attend meetings, vote on relevant issues, contribute to discussions and view the members section of VicTAG website.

For more information on membership, email professionalofficer@victag.org.au

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Emergency and Life Saving Medicines (ELSM) Register

As a reminder, each hospital is requested to regularly conduct a check of your hospital's stock levels against the list on the [ELSM Register](#) and email any changes or queries to vpic@austin.org.au. Most recently, we requested hospitals to contact us about their stock levels of andexanet alfa, a specific reversal agent for Factor Xa inhibitors. Please let us know if you do or will be keeping this medicine. Many thanks to the Victorian Poisons Information Centre at Austin Health for maintaining the register.

Medication Safety Alerts

The Medication Safety Alerts Program continues, covering a broad range of topics. The latest alerts focus on allergies and adverse drug reactions, including kidney damage with oral anticoagulants, and chlorhexidine allergy. The alerts are available to members on the [Medication Safety Alerts](#) page.

If you have any ideas for new alerts or suggestions for the program, or require word versions of the alerts for co-branding, please email connie.yin@victag.org.au.



VicTAG QUM Group

The VicTAG QUM group provides a support network for VicTAG member hospitals to identify issues which increase the risk of medication error, determine practices to improve medication safety and discuss the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards. The group meets every 2 months, currently via Microsoft Teams. Collated hospital responses on medication safety topics from the group can also be found in the [Quality Use of Medicines](#) page on the VicTAG website. Recent topics include implementation of the VicTAG Hazardous Medicines Framework, provision of take home naloxone, insulin management plans and refrigerator monitoring. If you are interested in joining, please email Wendy Ewing, VicTAG QUM chair, via wendy.ewing@monashhealth.org.

More VicTAG activities

VicTAG is advocating for members on the following medication safety issues and consultation papers:

- Letter to request the review of requirements for manual monitoring of medication fridges containing vaccines and other temperature sensitive medications in the setting of continuous automated temperature monitoring systems (Department of Health/Department of Health and Aged Care Australia)
- Targeted consultation on priorities for future improvements to TGO 91 and TGO 92 requirements (TGA)

Council of Australian Therapeutic Advisory Groups (CATAG) Update

CATAG is developing a Position Statement on andexanet alfa, which will provide a consensus framework for its use in Australian hospitals to assist good governance and decision-making by health care professionals and consumers in their evaluation, approval and use of this medicine.

Expressions of interest are now open for individuals to join the expert advisory group. Membership for this group should include representatives from haematology, gastroenterology, neurology, toxicology, emergency medicine, clinical epidemiology, medicines governance, health economics, procurement/finance and consumers. Contact professionalofficer@victag.org.au for more information.

CATAG is also seeking a part-time QUM Project Officer. For more information, visit: <https://www.seek.com.au/job/70331840>

Upcoming events



Victorian Medicines Roundtable 2023

Refer to page 1



VicTAG 2023 AGM

Details to be announced soon.