

Newsletter

April 2024



A message from our Chair

Welcome to our first VicTAG newsletter for 2024.

As we start the year, it feels like 2024 will be the year of projects. We have new publications on our website, a number of projects underway and expressions of interest for new projects about to be released! Following the Medicines Roundtable last year, we want to make sure there are outcomes from the key discussions and that your valuable contributions allow us to drive and advocate for change. The next round of projects will support this and allow VicTAG to play a key role in medicines management, governance and safety.

There has been an increase in requests for VicTAG to contribute to reviews, consultations and initiatives for improving healthcare, which has been keeping the Committee rather busy. This has been great to see in the role that VicTAG plays and the feedback we receive from our members to support these has been amazing.

Our VicTAG QUM group is very active and continue to work hard in supporting VicTAG, each other and improving standards in medication management. I would like to recognise the great work that they do and the value this brings to everyone. The Management Committee will continue to strive for the needs of all of our members and the wider VicTAG community. I look forward to seeing these evolve in the coming months.

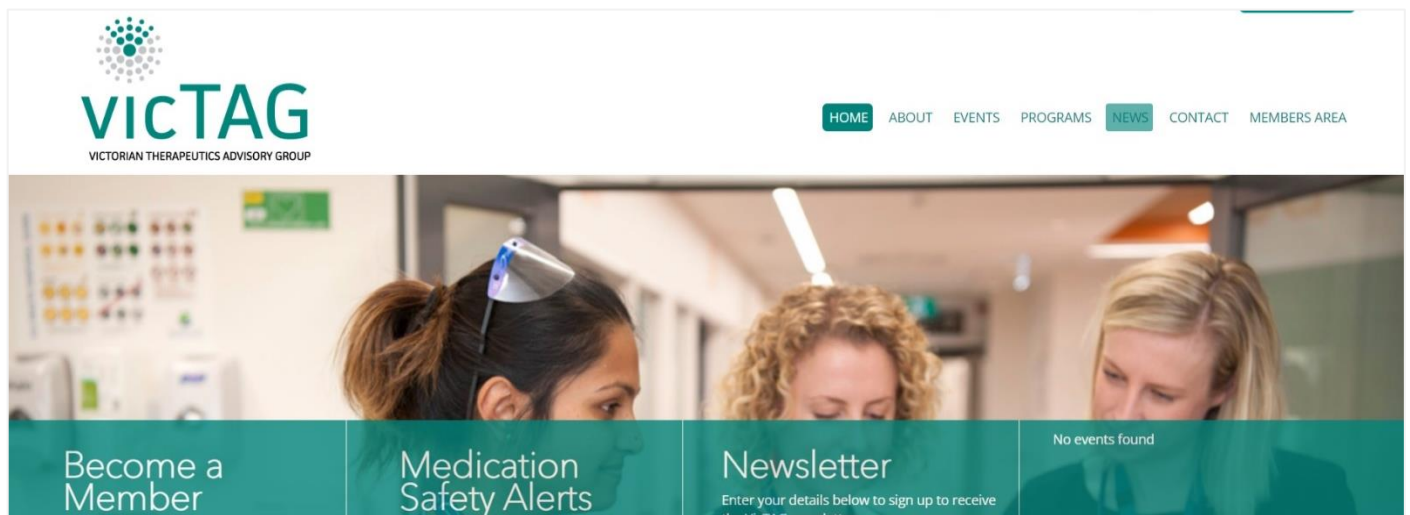
Finally, I would like to acknowledge the contributions of Dr Geoff Matthews, our friend, colleague and mentor. Geoff held Executive positions and other leadership roles at VicTAG and other medication safety committees for extensive periods of time. He was a true leader in medication safety who made many positive changes to benefit the medical profession and consumers. We are deeply saddened by his passing and would like to send our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends.

Paul Toner

Are you the face of medication safety?

VicTAG is seeking new photos from a broad range of health services to be featured on the VicTAG website. The photos must be of professional quality and be approved for use by the individual/s in the photos and the health service from which it was taken from. No patients are to be in the photos.

Email professionalofficer@victag.org.au if you have any questions or other suggestions for improvement to the website. Photos are required by **May 31, 2024**.



The screenshot shows the VicTAG website homepage. At the top left is the VicTAG logo. To the right is a navigation menu with links for HOME, ABOUT, EVENTS, PROGRAMS, NEWS, CONTACT, and MEMBERS AREA. Below the navigation is a large banner image showing three people in a professional setting. At the bottom of the banner are four teal-colored buttons: 'Become a Member', 'Medication Safety Alerts', 'Newsletter' (with a subtext 'Enter your details below to sign up to receive the VicTAG newsletter'), and 'No events found'.

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VicTAG Projects Update

Victorian Framework for the Safe Implementation of Automated Dispensing Cabinets

The new framework, led by project officer **Julie Ngo**, will be available on the VicTAG website in May. Many thanks to the expert advisory group and the VicTAG QUM group for assisting with the development and review of the framework.

Victorian Guidance for Anticoagulation Stewardship Programs AND Insights into High-Cost Medicines in Victoria: Equity of Access and Sustainability – NEW!

Expressions of interest will soon be sought for two project managers to lead two new exciting projects stemming from the discussions at the Medicines Roundtable 2023.

At last year's event, our members expressed a keen interest in developing some guidance around the strategic development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of anticoagulant stewardship programs in Victoria. There were also robust discussions and some great ideas about how Victoria should manage high-cost medicines and ensure equity of access for all patients.

VicTAG will now be progressing this work with more details available soon.

Other projects in progress:

- Victorian Framework for Medication Safety Product Evaluation – led by **Rowena Treseder** (rowena.treseder@victag.org.au)
- Victorian Framework for the Management of Schedule 9, Schedule 8 and Schedule 4D Medications – led by **Cynthia Donarelli** (cynthia.donarelli@nh.org.au)

Previous projects:

- Victorian Framework for Handling and Disposal of Pharmaceutical Waste

The framework has now been updated with new images of the Pharmasmart P22 and P64 pharmaceutical waste bins and is available on the VicTAG website (member's only section). Thank you to Cleanaway Daniels for their help with the updated images.

Victorian Framework for handling and disposal of Pharmaceutical Waste

	Pharmasmart P22	Pharmasmart P64	20 L Pails	Drug Waste Bin for liquids ^a	Drug Waste Bin for tablets and capsules	Pharma-Care I Pharma-Care II	Pharma-Care III Pharma-Care IV
Company	Cleanaway Daniels	Cleanaway Daniels	Cleanaway Daniels	Drug Waste International	Drug Waste International	Veolia	Veolia
Image of Bin							
Coloured and labelled in accordance to Australian Standard AS23199	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓
				1L and 2L Enviro Bin 500mL Plastic 2L Plastic			
				14.8 cm (H) x 15 cm (W)	8 cm (H) without		

Emergency and Life Saving Medicines (ELSM) Register



Emergency and Life Saving Medicines Register

VicTAG Victorian Emergency and Life Saving Medicines (ELSM) Register

Last updated March 2024

[Click here](#) for the Victorian Emergency and Life Saving Medicines (ELSM) Register

The current version of the ELSM Register (March 2024) is available on the [VicTAG website](#).

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. Many thanks to the Victorian Poisons Information Centre at Austin Health for maintaining the register.

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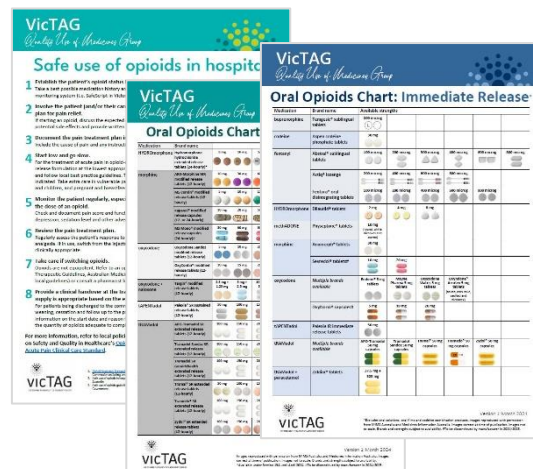


VICTORIAN THERAPEUTICS ADVISORY GROUP
Registration no. A0051620G

Medication Safety Alerts

The Medication Safety Alerts Program continues, covering a broad range of topics. The latest alerts to be released soon focus on opioid safety, with useful tips on managing opioids and wall charts to assist with identification of immediate and controlled released formulations. Medication Safety Alerts are available to members on the [Medication Safety Alerts](#) page of the VicTAG website.

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 via Microsoft Teams.

Collated hospital responses on medication safety topics from the group can also be found on the [Quality Use of Medicines](#) page on the VicTAG website. Recent topics include *managing medicinal cannabis*, *high dose insulin verification*, *single nurse administration*, *direct ward supply of medicines and fluids* and *hydromorphone safety*.

If you are interested in joining, please email Wendy Ewing, VicTAG QUM chair, via wendy.ewing@monashhealth.org.

Other VicTAG updates

- The Terms of Reference for the VicTAG QUM Committee is now available on the [VicTAG website](#) under Position Statements & Consultation Documents in the member's only section.
- Thank you to all the VicTAG members who provided feedback on the TGA Consultation on Medicine Shortages. A collated response has been sent to the TGA.
- Missed the education seminar after the 2023 VicTAG AGM? The presentations are now also available on the [VicTAG website](#).

Council of Australian Therapeutic Advisory Groups (CATAG) Update

CATAG has launched the Medicines Advice Initiative Australia (MAIA) and Collaborating with Consumers project resources.



The [MAIA Cumulative Medicines Toolkit](#) is for Medicines and Therapeutics Advisory Committees and hospitals to assist in identifying people at hidden risk of cumulative medicines toxicity. This will support implementation of local medicines stewardship programs and promote safe and appropriate deprescribing.



The [Understanding medicines access programs counselling tool](#) helps healthcare professionals to explain the complex area of Medicine Access Programs (MAPs) to consumers.

For more information, refer to the flyer on the next page.

CATAG has also finalised its position statement on andexanet alfa. To view the document, visit the website [here](#).

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NEW RELEASES

April 2024

MAIA

Medicines Advice Initiative Australia (MAIA) is a consortium including the University of South Australia, University of Adelaide, AMH, DATIS, NACCHO, PSA, and CATAG. MAIA provides high quality, data-driven educational materials for health professionals, to aid them in solving pressing current issues around medicine use.

Cumulative Medicines Toolkit

- **Practice tool**

A practice companion to affect behaviour change at a medicines governance level by sharing tools to identify people at “hidden risk” of cumulative medicines toxicity, implement local medicines stewardship programs, and promote safe and appropriate deprescribing.

- **Teaching tool**

For use by clinical educators to demonstrate the use of different tools to facilitate risk assessment and encourage deprescribing in hospitals.

COMING SOON.... PERSISTENT PAIN TOOLKIT

NEXT STEPS

Please disseminate these tools to your Medicines and Therapeutics Advisory Committees and across your Medicines Stewardship networks.

Any questions or feedback, please contact:

MAIA

catag.qum1@outlook.com

Collaborating with consumers

catag.qum2@outlook.com



Council of Australian Therapeutic Advisory Groups

www.catag.org.au

PROJECT BACKGROUND

CATAG has received funding for two Quality Use of Medicines projects:

MAIA and Collaborating with Consumers.

Their aim is to deliver resources for Medicines and Therapeutics Advisory Committees and consumers, respectively. Each program is expected to deliver resources quarterly.

COLLABORATING WITH CONSUMERS

The **Collaborating with Consumers** project was launched late last year to develop resources that assist hospital clinicians in explaining medicines governance processes around high-cost and specialised medicines.

Understanding Medicines Access Programs (MAPs)

This can be accessed here:

<https://catag.org.au/resource/consumer-resource-map/>

This resource builds upon on the *Managing Medicines Access Programs Guiding Principles* and is an additional resource that supports hospital-based health professionals when counselling people whose treatment requires a MAP medicine. It is written in plain English to suit a wide audience and explains important information consumers need to know about the governance process around MAPs.

COMING SOON.... OFF-LABEL MEDICINES