Newsletter

June 2026

VICTAG
VICTORIAN THERAPEUTICS ADVISORY GROUP
Registration no. A0051620G

A message from our Chair

Since the start of the year, there has been a great deal happening at VicTAG as we continue to support all our members.

To ensure we are set up and continue to take VicTAG forward, we have been very pleased to welcome Elizabeth (Liz) Su to the VicTAG Professional Officer role. Liz will support Cynthia, our Professional Manager, and is a great addition to VicTAG.

With a new management committee this year, we have welcomed the experience of:

- **A. Prof/ Dr. Rachel Cheong**, Director Medical Services, Barwon Health
- **Kerryn Griffett**, Acting Director of Pharmacy, Royal Melbourne Hospital
- **Lisa Ciabotti**, Quality Use of Medicines Director, Alfred Health

There have been a number of focus areas for our management committee, including:

- An ongoing collaboration with HealthShare Victoria (HSV) to support pharmaceutical medicine review
- Two funded projects focused on Cold Chain Medicine Storage and Environmental & Sustainable Medicine Waste
- Support for publication of the VicTAG Anticoagulation Framework
- Advocacy for change, most recently temperature monitoring in the 'Strive for 5' guideline
- Support to CATAG and their recent publications

A number of our management committee are also actively involved in the Victorian Medicines Formulary Feedback Group supporting decisions on its design and development.

VicTAG have also provided feedback to the following:

- Consultation on the DPCS Regulations 2017
- Consultation on TGA Labelling Changes to therapeutic good orders 91 and 92

We're also planning for:

- An AdPha Vic Branch VicTAG education session (July 2026 TBC)
- The VicTAG Website redevelopment project is underway
- Updating our hazardous medicines framework

Thanks for your ongoing support!

Paul Toner

Treasurer's Update

The Management Committee has completed its annual review of membership subscriptions.

To keep pace with inflation and ensure ongoing support for advocacy initiatives and member-led projects, the Committee agreed at its April 2026 meeting to apply a 4% increase, in line with CPI, to subscriptions for the 2026/2027 period.

Annual subscriptions

Tier 1	Increase from $4,360 to $4,520
Tier 2	Increase from $2,080 to $2,170
Tier 3	Increase from $990 to $1,030

As transitions from individual hospitals to Local Hospital Networks occur over the next twelve months, the Committee will review the fee structure accordingly and keep members informed throughout this process.

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VicTAG QUM Group

The VicTAG QUM group provides a support network for VicTAG member hospitals to identify issues that increase risk of medication error, to determine practices to improve medication safety, and to discuss the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards. The group meets every 2 months via Microsoft Teams.

VicTAG QUM group convened in February and April 2026 to discuss the

- Consultation on proposed medication labelling changes
- Consultation to the DPCS Regulations 2017
- Rescheduling updates to intravenous potassium salts
- Consultation on the look-alike packaging of IV opioids post HSV contract changes

Collated hospital responses discussed this quarter included: ACHS indicator reporting; measurement of PPMC success/performance; repacking oxycodone and intranasal fentanyl; tiotropium HSV contract changes; and Actrapid discontinuation. All medication safety topics from the group can also be found on the Quality Use of Medicines page on the VicTAG website.

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

VicTAG Projects Update

Victorian Guidance for Cold Chain Medicine Management

This project is being led by **Mark Sheppard** from **Monash Health**. The framework aims to provide health service organisations with guidance relevant to all temperature sensitive medicines (including vaccines) with guidance covering topics such as best practice methods for the management of temperature sensitive medicines, principles for safe medicine storage in refrigerators and freezers, recommendations of required refrigerators, freezers and coolers, temperature monitoring systems, cold chain breach management and audit and self-assessment tools.

Victorian Guidance for Environmental and Sustainable Solutions in Managing Medicine Consumable Waste

This project is being led by **Lisa Ho** from **Austin Health**. The framework aims to provide health service organisations best practice principles for implementing innovative and sustainable practices to reduce the environmental impact of medicine consumables waste within the healthcare environment, spanning topics including inhaler devices, blister packs, rotating IV to oral medicines, single use plastic and single patient use of medicines.

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New VicTAG Funded Projects 2026

Update to the VicTAG Handling of Hazardous Medicines Framework 2021

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) have released an updated medicine list of hazardous medicines in healthcare setting. This project aims to use the current VicTAG Handling of Hazardous Medicines Framework 2021 to review and assess new medicines for suitability to include in the framework.

Expression of interest is open for a Project Lead. To submit your expression of interest, please provide information on:

- Why you and your health service would be best suitable to lead the project
- A brief project timeline and proposed budget, including possible commencement dates
- A statement of support from the Director of Pharmacy (or department manager) at your health service.

Submit your Expression of Interest via email to professionalofficer@victag.org.au.

New VicTAG Website is coming!

The VicTAG website is planned to undergo extensive redevelopment in 2026. The updated website will be designed to better serve the needs of our members and enhance user experience.

If you have suggestions or ideas for improving our existing website, please email professionalofficer@victag.org.au.

Medication Safety Assessment for Pharmaceutical Products

In May 2026, HealthShare Victoria (HSV) in collaboration with VicTAG successfully conducted a supplementary tender review for ferric carboxymaltose, isavuconazole and tocilizumab.

The Medication Safety Assessment Tool for Pharmaceutical Product Packaging was used to complete the assessments. The comprehensive tool enables healthcare professionals and procurement staff to identify product packaging and labelling issues through a medication safety lens. The tool supports selection of products that are clinically appropriate and safe to use in practice.

Thank you to Rowena Treseder (Alfred Health) and Tess Rivers (Monash Health) for completing the assessment.

Emergency and Life Saving Medicines (ELSM) Register

The current version of the ELSM Register (June 2026) is available on the VicTAG website.

Please send any update requests to the professionalofficer@victag.org.au.

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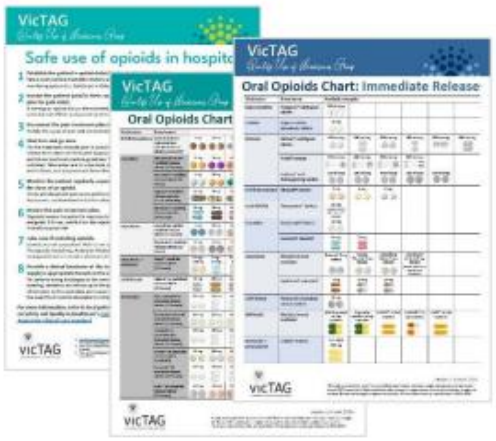
Medication Safety Alerts



The Medication Safety Alerts Program covers a broad range of topics focused on strategies to improve medication safety. Medication Safety Alerts are available to members on the Medication Safety Alerts page on 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 professionalofficer@victag.org.au

The program will be restarted in late 2026.

Council of Australian Therapeutic Advisory Groups (CATAG) Resources

CATAG in Action

CATAG provides vital leadership in advancing medicines governance and quality use of medicines across Australia's hospitals. This interactive report highlights CATAG's recent major achievements, including consumer-focused resources, medicines stewardship initiatives, national guidance for Medicines and Therapeutics Committees and collaborative policy work.

Making a medicine: Testing to treatment

This guide is designed to give readers a clear understanding of how new medicines are created and delivered within Australia's healthcare system.

GLP-1 Decision Making Framework

CATAG developed this national decision-making framework to support the appropriate, equitable, and sustainable use of GLP-1 therapies for obesity in the public hospital sector.

The framework supports Medicines and Therapeutics Committees and health services to review formulary and individual patient applications, particularly where use falls outside current Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme criteria. It promotes consistent decision-making and helps services navigate the complex clinical, ethical, and economic considerations.

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Become a VicTAG Member

VicTAG membership is open to all Victorian hospitals. Members are hospital pharmacists and medical specialists from Victorian 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 this website.

Membership categories:

- **Member**: Clinician representing the Medicine and Therapeutics Committee (or equivalent) from a public hospital or public healthcare institution in Victoria
- **Associate member:** An employee representing the Medicine and Therapeutics Committee (or equivalent) from a private hospital or private healthcare institution in Victoria
- **Associate member:** An employee involved in Quality Use of Medicines (QUM) from a public or private hospital or healthcare institution in Victoria
- **Associate member:** An employee from a public or private hospital outside of Victoria representing the Medicine and Therapeutics Committee (or equivalent) or involved in the quality use of medicines

VicTAG is seeking medical clinicians to join the membership

VicTAG is looking for medical clinicians with specialist expertise who share an interest in the quality use of medicines. If you know someone who would enjoy connecting, collaborating, and making a difference, please invite them to join us.

To become a VicTAG member, please download and complete the Membership Form and email it to professionalofficer@victag.org.au