

Newsletter

October 2022



Message from our Chair

Welcome to the VicTAG October newsletter.

Since taking on the role of chair for VicTAG it has been a pleasure to see the work of our members and committee continue to support medication safety and quality use of medicines.

Projects funded through VicTAG have produced some great references and resources over time and the updated Safe Handling of Hazardous Medicines is a welcome addition to this list. With further projects nearing completion, we look forward to sharing these with you and also reviewing proposals in line with a new round of funding.

We have also taken your feedback on board and will use this as we review resources and medication safety alerts.

As we continue to enhance the profile of VicTAG, we have been fortunate to start a new collaborative relationship with HealthShare Victoria. This follows on from the work we have done supporting the Medicines Improvement Reference Group through Safer Care Victoria where there have been great successes in Analgesic Stewardship and Medication Safety Education Series. We look forward to supporting this further as it restarts soon.

There have also been many responses to consultations and we have collaborated with SHPA to advocate for a Chief Pharmacist for Victoria.

With the changes to national funding for medication management, we would also like to recognise the longstanding work that NPS Medicines Wise has undertaken. Our committee will continue to work with CATAG during their transition period and review.

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM where some of the great work will be showcased.

Paul Toner

Chair, VicTAG

VicTAG 2022 Project Grants

Applications are now open for the VicTAG 2022 project grants. This year, there are four topic domains. Applicants can submit project proposals within these domains and they will be assessed in one combined pool with the VicTAG Management Committee determining which projects will obtain funding of up to \$15,000. Some suggested themes are listed below:

Domain 1: Medication Safety and Innovation	Domain 2: Stewardships	Domain 3: Medication Dispensing and Distribution	Domain 4: Electronic Medication Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Deprescribing or delabelling- Consumer engagement strategies and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Stewardships, frameworks and tool kits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- S8 and S4D medications management- Automated dispensing cabinets and electronic registers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Clinical decision support tools- Auditing tools

To apply, go the [VicTAG Projects and Research webpage](#) and complete the Research Grant Application Form and Referee Report Form and email submissions to professionalofficer@victag.org.au. Applications close **31st October 2022**.

Newsletter

October 2022

VicTAG 2022 Membership Fees

VicTAG membership fees for 2022 are now due. The fee structure is listed below, with a 10% increase applied to level 1, and a 5% increase to level 2 memberships; level 3 members remain unchanged from last year.

- **Level 1 Multi-campus networks:** \$3,740 per financial year
- **Level 2 Specialist Hospitals and Major Regional centres:** \$1,785 per financial year
- **Level 3 Rural & regional hospitals:** \$850 per financial year

Invoices will be issued to members shortly.

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 VicTAG website.

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

James Dwyer

Treasurer on behalf of the VicTAG Management Committee

Other Project Grants

Collaboration with HealthShare Victoria

Expressions of interest are now sought for a VicTAG Project Officer to work in collaboration with HealthShare Victoria to develop a framework for the evaluation of medications submitted for the tender process. This is an exciting opportunity for VicTAG members, with the framework to be implemented into the review process to identify any potential medication safety concerns before products are decided upon and reach the frontline. More information will soon be available on the [VicTAG Projects and Research webpage](#). Applications close **12th November 2022**.

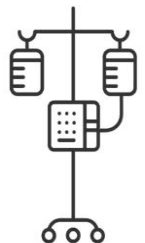
Current Projects Update

Safe Handling of Hazardous Medicines

This VicTAG project, led by **Bishma Jayathilaka** from the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre and a team of contributors from the Parkville Precinct hospitals, has now been completed and published. The project aimed to develop a Victorian Framework for the Safe Handling of Hazardous Medicines. The framework provides definitions for hazardous medicines, a recommended classification and the personal protective equipment required for handling. Click [here](#) to access the framework. A running log of updates will soon also be available on the VicTAG website. If you have any feedback or suggestions, please email professionalofficer@victag.org.au.

Framework to Standardise Smart Infusion Pump Medication Libraries and Guide Integration with Electronic Medication Management Systems (EMMS)

This VicTAG project, led by **Madonna Khreish** from Monash Health with stakeholders from metropolitan and rural health services, is well underway. The framework will include guiding principles to developing, implementing and ongoing review of smart pump medication libraries, as well as provide guidance on aligning and integrating smart pumps with EMMS to allow bi-directional interoperability. The group have also developed a minimum data set with common adult and paediatric infusions.



Framework for Anticoagulants' Clinical Decision Support Tools in Electronic Medication Management Systems

Viviane Khalil from Monash Health is leading this project to improve anticoagulant prescribing and use. Anticoagulant clinical decision support (CDS) build data has been collected from all members of the stakeholder group. These are currently under review and are being mapped to the various steps of the medication management pathway. Feasibility of building new anticoagulant CDS is being explored. Writing of the first draft of the framework is also underway.

Newsletter

October 2022

Emergency and Life Saving Medicines Register

An August 2022 update of the Emergency and Life Saving Medicines (ELSM) Register has been uploaded to the website. As a part of the regular review process, each hospital is requested to please 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 their work on maintaining the register so far.

To ensure sustainability and innovation for the ongoing maintenance of the ELSM Register, expressions of interest are now sought for the stewardship of the register. More information will soon be available on the [VicTAG Projects and Research webpage](#). Applications close **31st October 2022**.

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 and determine practices to improve medication safety. The group meets every 2 months, currently via videoconferencing, and has an active discussion forum.

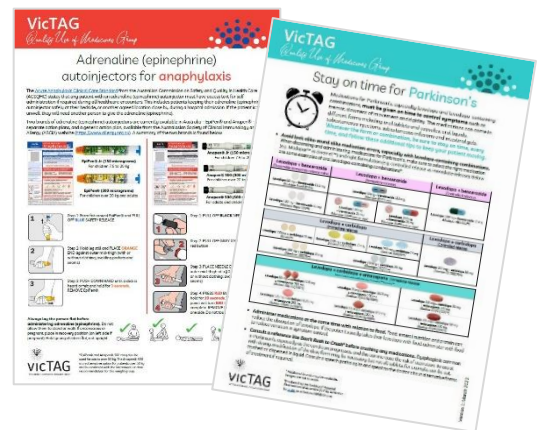
Collated hospital responses on medication safety topics from the group can also be found in the member's area [Quality Use of Medicines](#) page on the VicTAG website.

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

Medication Safety Alerts

The Medication Safety Alerts Program has produced 12 alerts in the last year, covering a broad range of topics including the safe handling of hazardous medicines, adrenaline (epinephrine) autoinjectors for anaphylaxis, summary posters on insulins and medications for Parkinson's, as well as alerts on medication shortages. 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.



Council of Australian Therapeutic Advisory Groups (CATAG) Update

CATAG website and resources

CATAG is undergoing a rebranding with a new logo and website to be available soon. However, all their resources remain available on the current site, including:

- [Navigating high-cost medicines: Guiding principles for the governance of high-cost medicines in Australian hospitals](#). (Version 1 January 2022)
- [Biologics and biosimilars best practice: Guiding principles for the governance of biologics and their biosimilars in Australian hospitals](#) and a [Checklist for governance of biologics and their biosimilars](#). (Version 3, 2021)
- Supporting safe practices for low-dose methotrexate: [Position Statement on the use of low-dose methotrexate](#). (Version 1, 2021)
- Facilitating the translation of evidence into best practice: [Optimising the pharmacological management of inflammatory arthritis](#). (Version 8, 2022)
- Facilitating the translation of evidence into best practice: [Therapeutic drug monitoring in inflammatory bowel disease](#). (Version 1, 2021)

Newsletter

October 2022

NPS MedicineWise Value in Prescribing bDMARDs Program

The Targeted Therapies Alliance, which includes CATAG, have produced a biologics Disease Modifying Anti-Rheumatic Drugs (bDMARDs) showcase video which focusses on the development of the Value in Prescribing bDMARDs Program over the past three years and features all the resources, tools and activities produced to date. The video is available to view here on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/6oydJuVaaxE>. These resources, tools and activities can be found on the [NPS MedicineWise Biologics and other specialised medicines page](#).

Other videos available on YouTube include:

- A new dermatology patient experience video, featuring David's plaque psoriasis journey: https://youtu.be/wXvXvs_L4G0
- A Crohn's disease patient video: <https://youtu.be/P1IEudFmSEo>
- Living with Arthritis roadmap video combining the series of Arthritis Australia videos <https://youtu.be/Xo-dP0zB1qY>
- Living with rheumatoid arthritis video https://youtu.be/Ai8TV_E2aeQ

[Nine consumer resources](#) (including rheumatology, gastroenterology and dermatology) have been translated into three languages - Arabic, Vietnamese and Simplified Chinese (Mandarin).

NPS MedicineWise Biosimilar Medicines

A new biosimilars hub, featuring Targeted Therapies Alliance resources produced as part of the bDMARDs program, has recently been launched at <https://www.nps.org.au/professionals/biosimilar-resource-hub>.

The hub aims to support health professionals and their patients, and includes a range of tools and information about the safe use of biologics and biosimilars in Australia.

Save the Date



VicTAG Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 7th December at 4pm via Microsoft Teams (more details to be announced soon)

NPS MedicineWise to cease operations on December 31

After 24 years of providing national leadership on the quality use of medicines, including the development of medication safety programs and resources for health professionals and consumers, NPS MedicineWise will sadly cease operations at the end of the year. Existing functions will transfer to either the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care or to new contestable funding arrangements. More information can be found on their [website](#).

VicTAG would like to acknowledge and thank NPS MedicineWise for their contributions and endless drive to improve medication safety, which have led to improved health outcomes for all Australians.