Stronger Together: Health Information Systems and Strategic Purchasing

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Health information systems are important to all aspects of health financing, and to broader health system strengthening:
‘There is no strategic purchasing without information’
Growing Strategic Purchasing and Information Systems together: It's an evolutionary process
And also: ‘...Financing can work to strengthen data and information systems.’

There is **mutual benefit** between strategic purchasing and health information systems:

- Strategic purchasing puts emphasis on collecting data at a high level of quality to be used by payment systems
- There is a benefit for health information systems since these data can be used for a wide range of health system needs
What type of data is systematically needed?

- **Individual Data (patient information)** – routinely and consistently recorded in facilities, and across facilities and programs for all activities.

- **Service / Program Data** – collected from patient and other information, including utilization, volume, quality

- **Broader Health Information** - population health data, population risk factors, health system indicators and coverage, projections and targets
Health Information System:

• Population Health Status:
  → Fertility
  → Mortality
  → Morbidity
  → Incidence
  → Prevalence...

• Population risk factors
• Equity Considerations
• Service coverage
• Health Systems information: Quality and safety, access, workforce, security ....

Service/Program Data:

• Service utilization, access, availability
• Episodes of care
• Quality and safety

Individual data:

• Diagnoses
• Treatments
• Procedures...

Improving individual records – Content, standards, collection

Data Sharing, Linkage and Technology

Conceptually ..... What might it look like?
Australian Example
Complex Financing System

Figure 1.1: The structure of the Australian health care system and its flow of funds

Health expenditure Australia 2011–12
Using data, in part from the purchasing system, to understand service and financing composition.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2015
At a systems level... Use of costs per patient...
Data and financing systems working together can be Information Rich...
‘How to move to a more strategic system?’
What are the data challenges?
What are the challenges?

- **Entry Points:** where to start? How to evolve health information and financing systems together?
- **Unifying Systems:** How to overcome fragmentation and incorporate existing parallel or vertical systems in an evolutionary system?
- **Sustainability:** How to ensure mutual benefit between purchasing and information systems for long term gain?
- **Accountability:** How can data be used to encourage accountability? Can recipients be held responsible for delivering the activities for which funds were received?
- **Capacity in data and purchasing systems** – how to develop, how to maintain
Open Questions:

• **Analysis**: What baseline analysis is needed? How can this be developed? What capacity exists to analyse data for strategic purchasing and health financing generally?

• **Equity and Quality**: How can health information systems and strategic purchasing be used together to address equity aims and quality concerns?

• **Private Sector Providers**: How can this be systematically incorporated into health information systems? Is strategic purchasing the incentive to collect private market data? What data should be collected?
How to evolve to a coherent, strategic system?

What is the way forward?
**Design**: What is the right framework to suit strategic purchasing needs and health information needs, accounting for the need for systems to evolve?

Including:

- **Entry points and scaling** approaches
- **Classification and grouping systems** to support strategic purchasing systems, and entry points
- How to **address equity and quality** challenges
- **Unique patient identifiers** – linking all patient information including services to each patient record
- **Models for data linkage, sharing, and system interoperability**, respecting patient confidentiality and the need for data security
- **Integration** of vertical or stand-alone program systems
‘Thank you!’