

Building a five-year vision for clinical analytics in New South Wales using a modified Delphi process

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Background

Widely acknowledged as a powerful mediator of clinical decision making, patient-centred care and organisational learning, clinical analytics requires a well-developed strategic foundation. In complex adaptive systems such as health, the strategy needs to be sufficiently directional to support meaningful change and flexible enough to allow for iteration and responsiveness to context as change occurs. The NSW Clinical Analytics Working Group sought to advise a shared and well informed vision of the future.

Objectives

To develop and articulate a five-year vision for clinical analytics for NSW Health.

Method

A modified Delphi incorporating: a face-to-face workshop, online surveys and feedback. Firstly seeking to elicit the breadth of experts' views of the future; secondly to establish a convergence of opinion of a likely five-year vision. As a secondary outcome, the process also highlighted consistently identified barriers and levers for change.

Results

The six stage process engaged 45 experts - practising clinicians, patients and consumers, managers, policymakers, data scientists and academics - and resulted in the production of 135 ideas that were subsequently synthesised into a one page (478 word) vision narrative. The narrative encompasses three key perspectives (clinicians, patients and managers) and addresses synchronous and asynchronous clinical decision support; the use of new and multiple data sources and communication formats; the role of research and education.

Conclusions

The modified Delphi process resulted in a concise picture of what we expect the NSW clinical analytics landscape to look like in 2024. It also revealed a number of enablers and barriers that will affect the realisation of the vision.