

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Who is involved in ACT and Southern NSW HealthPathways?

ACT and Southern NSW **HealthPathways** is a collaborative program supported through a partnership arrangement between Capital Health Network and COORDINARE (the new PHNs for ACT and SENSU), ACT Health and Southern NSW Local Health District.

### What is HealthPathways?

**HealthPathways** is an online health information website designed to be used primarily by general practitioners and health care teams at the point of care to guide best practice assessment and management of medical conditions, including when and where to refer patients to local specialists and services.

**HealthPathways** is based on an initiative of Canterbury District Health Board, Christchurch, New Zealand where it has contributed to significant improvements in the way hospitals and general practice share the care and management of patients. **HealthPathways** is dynamic – with new pathways constantly under development and existing pathways regularly reviewed.

### What are health pathways?

Health pathways are the referral lines or 'pathways' which connect patients to the right care, at the right place, and with the right health care provider. Individual health pathways are set up to provide guidance on the assessment and management of a particular health condition. Each localised pathway contains clinical information and referral information for local health services.

### Who can use the HealthPathways online health information website?

It is primarily designed for GPs and their staff but is also available for medical specialists and other registered health professionals for use within their scope of practice. If you would like to gain access to the **HealthPathways** website, please visit our home page at: <https://actsnsw.healthpathways.org.au> and click on **Register HERE**

### How will HealthPathways benefit general practice?

**HealthPathways** is designed to be efficient, simple and quick to use. You will have access to up to date, locally relevant, high quality patient assessment, management and referral information which can be trusted, at the point of care when the patient is sitting in front of you. **HealthPathways** allows you to enhance the good patient care you are already providing and will save you time in consultations involving complex health care issues.

### How are health pathways developed?

Health pathways can be developed in two ways: by localising existing pathways from another region or developing a new pathway where one does not already exist. The format of a pathway is standard to allow ease of use every time. GP Clinical Editors oversee the pathway localisation process along with the **HealthPathways** team and local subject matter experts (SMEs). GP Clinical Editors are experienced, local practising GPs and

SMEs are often individual specialists from a hospital department or in private practice. Once a draft pathway is created and localised, other health practitioners and relevant stakeholders are invited to provide feedback. Pathways can be rapidly updated and this is assisted through a built-in feedback button available from anywhere in the **HealthPathways** website allowing any practitioner using the system to provide comments and suggestions.

### Why should practitioners use the HealthPathways system?

Effectively managing a medical condition not only requires detailed clinical knowledge, but also information about the local health infrastructure. Each pathway contains information and guidance developed specifically for the local region. By providing condition-specific advice, pathways can give guidance where a condition is unfamiliar and assist practitioners in preparing pre-referral work-ups. Pathways are also valuable to practitioners who encounter uncommon conditions, as well as those who are new to a region.

### Localised versus unlocalised pathways?

Pathways are localised for the ACT and Southern NSW to provide up to date and locally relevant information and are shown on a white background. Unlocalised pathways are still accessible and contain useful condition management information, however, use your judgement as to the appropriateness of this information for your region. Unlocalised pathways are identified by an orange background with a caution symbol at the top of the page.

### How can I get involved?

If you have an interest or specialisation and would like to contribute to pathway development, please contact the **HealthPathways** team:

#### ACT:

Phone: (02) 6287 8099

Email: [healthpathways@chnact.org.au](mailto:healthpathways@chnact.org.au)

#### Southern NSW:

Phone: (02) 4474 8421

Email: [healthpathways.sns@coordinare.org.au](mailto:healthpathways.sns@coordinare.org.au)

New pathways will be developed based on suggestions and feedback from health care providers and other health care stakeholders.

### Can health professionals suggest topics for new pathways?

Yes. The **HealthPathways** team is keen to hear suggestions for pathway development from GPs, specialists, nurses, allied health and other health professionals. You can provide feedback by emailing the team directly with your suggestions or by using the 'Send Feedback' button on the **HealthPathways** website.