



Media release

24 September 2012

eReferral system hits 80,000 milestone

The electronic referral system developed in Canterbury, and set to be rolled out across the South Island, reached a notable milestone in August when it passed 80,000 referrals.

The electronic referral system replaces paper based letters when referring patients between health practitioners, for example, when a GP refers a patient to see a hospital specialist. The South Island Alliance is working to expand eReferrals to all DHBs in the region. Some private healthcare providers have also opted into the system.

South Island Alliance Information Services Service Level Alliance chairman Dr Andrew Bowers said the development of the system was clinician driven and there is good support for it among health practitioners. "A large number of South Islands GPs are already using eReferrals and the feedback we are getting has been very positive. We are receiving nearly 8000 referrals each month using the system and are looking forward to bringing more DHBs and GPs on board. "The new system means referrals reach DHBs or private providers faster and more reliably than when letters in the post were used. We can easily track where referrals have been sent. The DHB is then better able to assess how quickly the patient needs to see a specialist, as eReferrals use a set template, ensuring all the patient's relevant health information is available."

"Once the eReferrals process is fully implemented, it will also provide the DHBs with important data, to better plan and manage their resources to match the health needs of the community."

The Information Services Service Level Alliance is one of six service level alliances operating under the umbrella of the South Island Alliance, a partnership between the five South Island district health boards working to support a sustainable South Island health system.

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