



# Using IT: Audit in Practice

Dr Conor O'Shea  
GPIT Co-ordinator

# Why Audit?

Part 11 of The Medical Practitioners Act 2007 is the foundation of the new professional competence system which places a legal duty on doctors to maintain their professional competence by following requirements set by the Medical Council.

This comes into effect in May 2011 and as a result it is now obligatory for every practicing GP to conduct at least one audit per year, in order to comply with the requirements of competence assurance.

# Components of Audit


Clinical audit has three elements:

- **1.** Measurement – measuring a specific element of clinical practice
- **2.** Comparison – comparing results with the recognized standard/guideline
- **3.** Evaluation – reflecting on outcome of audit and where indicated, changing practice accordingly.

# Keys to success

- Keeping your audit projects relevant to your practice, short, simple and easily manageable is the key to success.
- Choosing a topic is the first step and there should be agreement within the practice that the chosen topic for audit is a worthwhile area to study.

# ICGP Audit Resources



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## Scheme Framework

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## Clinical Audit

*1 audit per year minimum*

In terms of clinical audit the following is a simple guide and the ICGP shall provide more specific guidance and tools for clinical audit in general practice. Audit activities should be focused on the practice of the practitioner and not on the processes. Examples of types of activities can include:



Measurement of individual compliance with guidelines/protocols (one per year).	Skills analysis.
Department/practice audit.	Directly observed procedures.
Individual practice review.	Evaluation of individual risk incidents/complaints.
Patient satisfaction.	Medication processes/error.
Peer review.	

### Clinical Audit Toolkit

2 Guides on clinical audit are available to download below:

1. ICGP Short Guide to Audit
2. ICGP Audit Toolkit

### Documents

-  [ICGP Short Guide to Audit](#) (*ICGP\_Audit\_short\_guide\_May\_2011.pdf* | 156 KB)
-  [ICGP Audit Toolkit](#) (*ICGP\_Audit\_Toolkit\_May\_2011.pdf* | 482 KB)

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# How to carry out an audit

The steps involved are

- 1. Choose your topic
- 2. Define your Aims and Objectives
- 3. Choose your Guidelines, state your Criteria and set your Standard *[Note the criteria are elements of care or activity, which can be measured; your standard (sometimes known as your target) is your desired level of performance and is usually stated as a percentage].*
- 4. Collect your data
- 5. Analyze and interpret your data
- 6. Decide on what changes need to be made and implement them
- 7. Re-audit your practice.

# 1. Choose Your Topic

- Dr. C. (your regular locum) sees a patient on thyroxine who hasn't had a thyroid function test performed for many years
- Drs A + B (the partners) agree that while they try to keep an eye on this, they have no system in place
- This could be an interesting topic to audit!

## 2. Aims & Objectives

- Drs. A, B + C feel that collectively they should perform an audit to see if their monitoring of their patients with hypothyroidism is as good as it should be
- They hope by the end of the cycle to be using “best practice”



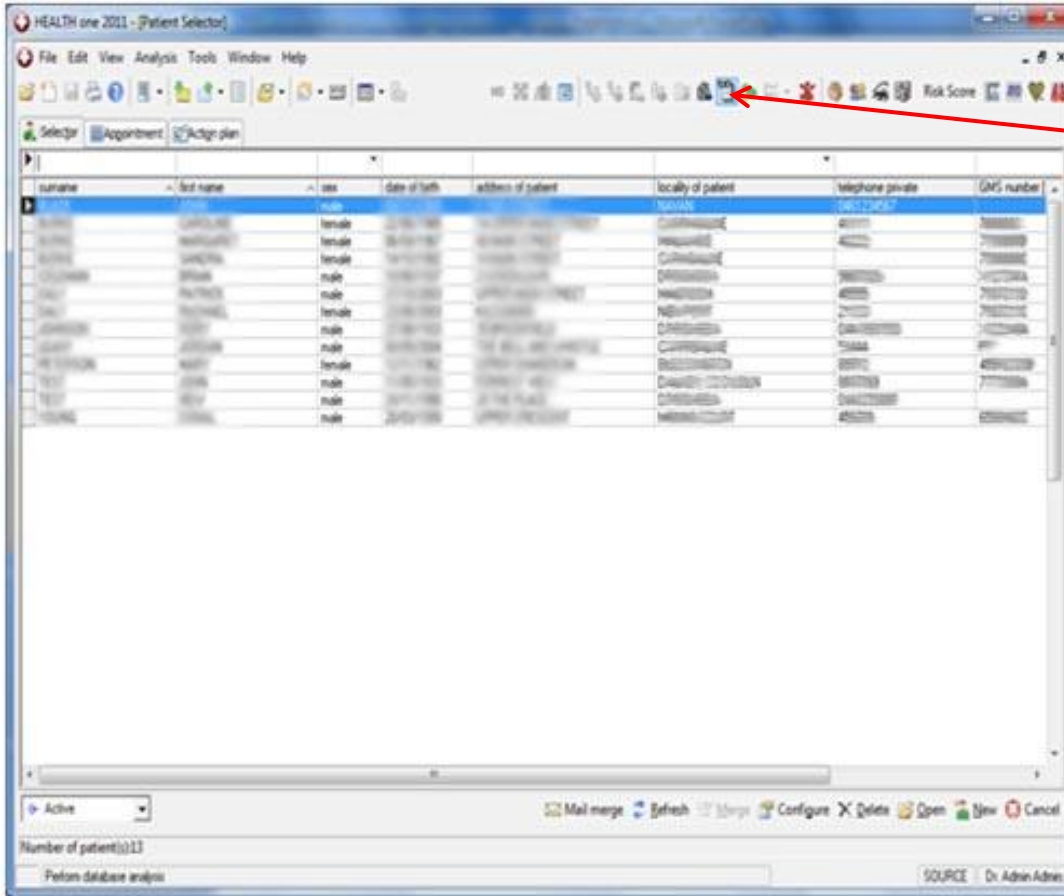
# 3. Guidelines, Criteria & Standards

- Dr. C. Searches the web and quickly finds guidelines on this topic from the Association of Clinical Biochemists  
[www.acb.org.uk/docs/TFTguidelinefinal.pdf](http://www.acb.org.uk/docs/TFTguidelinefinal.pdf)
- This recommends that all patients receiving thyroxine should have a blood test (TFT) at least annually
- Their agreed standard is 100% !!

## 4. First Data Collection

- The next slide will show how HealthOne can be used to identify our patient group
- If the medical history or problem list is up to date with systematically entered diagnosis, then that can be searched
- If not, don't panic! A search can be performed of repeat prescriptions to identify patients receiving thyroid replacement therapy

# Analysis in HealthOne 1



- Click Alt + F7 or click on database analysis icon
- Select “New” on the right hand side of the new screen which then appears

# Analysis in HealthOne 2

Analysis population criteria

Analysis  
Analysis name: Hypothyroidism  
Group: Audits  
Execution:

**Patient criteria**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Age	All
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sex	All
<input type="checkbox"/>	Display	surname, first name, sex, date of birth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Status	active
<input type="checkbox"/>	Test	All

**Transaction criteria**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Chapter	All
<input type="checkbox"/>	Date	All
<input type="checkbox"/>	Name	All
<input type="checkbox"/>	Speciality	All
<input type="checkbox"/>	Responsible	

**Item inclusion criteria**  or  and

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	medical history	Content	Contains	hypothyroid; myxoedema
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	problem	Content	Contains	hypothyroid; myxoedema
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	repeat prescription	Content	Contains	thyroxine; eltroxin

**Item exclusion criteria**  or  and

<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/>				

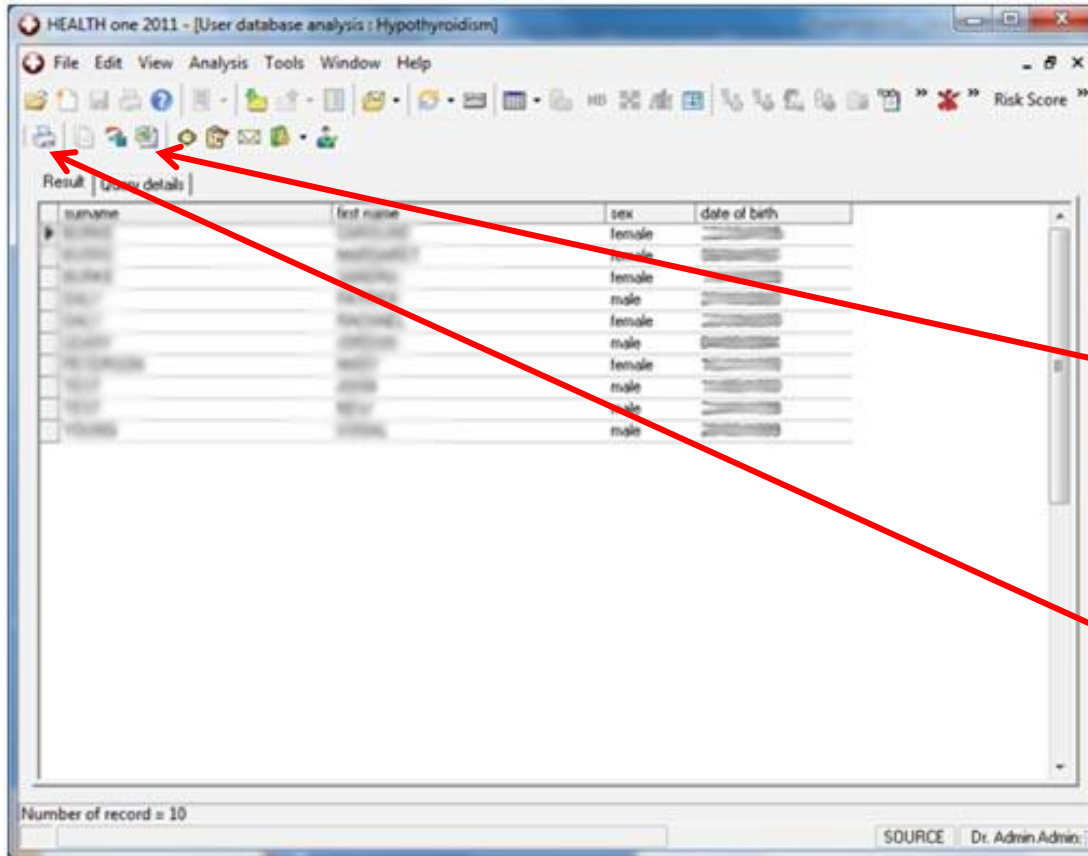
Restrict to another analysis  Restrict to prevention  
Include

Criteria

Test OK Cancel

- Analysis Type in analysis name e.g “hypothyroidism” and group name “Audits”
- Patient criteria Select which patients you want to search. It defaults to all, but you can sort by age +/- or sex
- Transaction Criteria Again defaults to all but you can restrict for example by date range or doctor
- Item inclusion criteria  
In this example we search all patients who might have the text “hypothyroid” or “myxoedema” in the item “medical history” or “problem”.  
We also search for repeat prescriptions which contain “thyroxine” or “eltroxin”  
When 2 items are being searched for, they must be separated by a semi-colon ;  
HealthOne searches text, so spelling must match
- Click on “OK” to save the analysis

# Analysis in HealthOne 3



- Running the analysis will generate a list of patients
- This could be exported to an excel sheet for saving and further analysis
- Alternatively this may be printed off

# Analysis in HealthOne 4

- Having found the list of hypothyroid patients, Drs A, B & C need to determine when they last had their thyroid blood test performed
- They might find it simple to record this on their excel sheet or print-out by going into the individual patient charts.
- They might also use HealthOne to help them find out. (This is a little trickier and the paper option might suit the less confident)

# Analysis in HealthOne 5

Analysis population criteria

Analysis  
Analysis name: [TFT] Group: [Audits] Execution: [ ]

**Patient criteria**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Age	All
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sex	All
<input type="checkbox"/>	Display	surname, first name, sex, date of birth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Status	active
<input type="checkbox"/>	Test	All

**Transaction criteria**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Chapter	All
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Date	Greater than Date-1Y
<input type="checkbox"/>	Name	All
<input type="checkbox"/>	Speciality	All
<input type="checkbox"/>	Responsible	

**Item inclusion criteria**  or  and

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	TSH	Content	Contains
<input type="checkbox"/>			
<input type="checkbox"/>			
<input type="checkbox"/>			

**Item exclusion criteria**  or  and

<input type="checkbox"/>			
<input type="checkbox"/>			
<input type="checkbox"/>			
<input type="checkbox"/>			

Restrict to another analysis  Restrict to prevention

Include [Hypothyroidism]

Criteria

Test OK Cancel

- This is similar to the previous analysis
- Analysis Type in analysis name e.g “TFTs” and group name “Audits”
- Patient criteria Again all patients
- Transaction Criteria In this case, we could search for the last year only by choosing a date “greater than” “Date-1Y”, however to see all TFTs in the target population, then “All” should be selected in the Date box. Tick to the left to see the dates when the search is run
- Item inclusion criteria In this example we search all patients who have the term “TSH” in their records (in the last year)
- Restrict to another analysis Finally we only want to search our “hypothyroid” group
- Click on “OK” to save the analysis
- Run as before

## 5. Interpret your data

- Drs. A & B are disappointed to find that only 50% of their hypothyroid patients have had TFTs performed in the last year
- They note that their medical history and problem lists are quite incomplete when recording “hypothyroidism”



# 6. Change & Implementation

- Drs. A, B & C meet to discuss useful changes
- All patients in this group should have the term “hypothyroidism” in their medical history
- Each time a prescription request for thyroxine is received, date of last TFT will be checked, and patient asked to have blood test if due
- Consideration is given to using “plan of action” to recall for annual bloods

# 7. Re-audit

- In 6 months time Drs. A, B & C will repeat the same analysis
- They hope to be much nearer the 100%
- They will discuss the re-audit and prepare a short report, which will fulfil their audit requirement for Professional Competence Scheme, which may be uploaded to the ICGP e-Portfolio page

# Audit Report

The report from your audit may be anything from two pages in length but should contain the following information

1. Reason for the audit
2. Criterion or criteria to be measured
3. Standard(s) set
4. Description of the preparation and planning
5. Results of the initial data collection
6. Description of change(s) implemented
7. Results of the data collection post changes
8. Conclusions.