

The RCPA Manual for the Use and Interpretation Of Pathology Tests –Pathology requesting and decision support systems.

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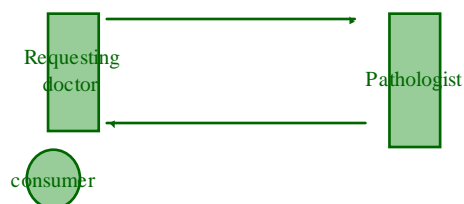


Decision Support Systems and pathology

- What types of DSS are relevant to pathology ?
- Who are the users of this information?
- What is the RCPA doing to address this?
- What are the features of the next version of the Manual for the use and interpretation of pathology tests?
- What about integration with medical software?
- What other features are needed?



What types of DSS are relevant to pathology ?



Who are the users of this information?

The target audience for the RCPA Manual web site and PDA Channels is seen as:

- Australian General Practitioners.
- Australian hospital based medical practitioners.
- Health consumers who want to find out more about Pathology including specific clinical problems and their tests.



•What is the RCPA doing to address this?

•Manual for the Use and Interpretation of Pathology Tests was created. The Manual has been through several generations and the present version is a series of documents with html links. It is available via the RCPA website, and as a CD rom.

•In keeping with the Federal and State Health Departments move to electronic health records, the growing use of medical desktop software and a recognition of the need for evidence based medicine and decision support systems the Manual is being updated to a format more in keeping with these developments.



What are the features of the next version of the Manual for the use and interpretation of pathology tests?

The Manual information has now been constructed within a content management system (CMS) and is housed in a SQL server. Having the Manual contained in a CMS with the presentation technology separate allows for continued updating of both the content and the technology. This is using a standard approach to CMS and website construction.

The information in the Manual is supervised and edited by an editorial committee that includes pathologists from all disciplines.

The Australian Request Code Set (ARCS) is connected to the pathology tests in the manual using tables in a database structure with a join table to connect the ARCS to the Manual tests.

It will use a many-to-many relationship so that where necessary one code can be connected to many test or many to one. There is also scope for inclusion of additional fields.



About the Manual

This uses a multiple article list page to display sub-sections under "about the Manual". Each sub-section is highlighted with a short description and an internal link to more information on that topic.



•What about integration with medical software?

As yet no integration capabilities exist for the Manual.

No method for integration has been decided upon or detailed. This has been put off till specific integration requirements become apparent or until a group such as this one agrees upon standards.



What features are needed?

Information needs to be presented in a format

- To help you make a decision
- for Interpretation of results
- that aids Patient Management
- that provides Information about testing

Several algorithms for clinical problems are being developed presently. The first algorithms being developed are for osteopenia, lipids and chronic fatigue.

