
Statewide Retcam Network

Initiative Type

Service Improvement

Status

Sustained

Added

07 July 2021

Last updated

10 May 2023

URL

<https://test.clinicalexcellence.qld.gov.au/improvement-exchange/statewide-retcam-network>

Summary

Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) is a treatable, sight-threatening disease of the eye that affects over 300 prematurely born babies in Queensland each year. The Statewide Retcam Network allows clinicians to seek diagnosis for this condition from a paediatric ophthalmologist in a safe and timely manner.

Key dates

May 2021

Jul 2021

Implementation sites

Queensland Children's Hospital (QCH), Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH), Mt Isa, Rockhampton, Cairns and Townsville Hospitals.

Partnerships

Clinical Excellence Queensland and Children's Hospital Queensland

Key Contacts

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Aim

To make it quicker and easier for clinicians to receive a diagnosis of Retinopathy Of Prematurity for their patient.

Benefits

- makes it quicker and easier for clinicians to receive a diagnosis of Retinopathy Of Prematurity for their patient
- reimburses clinicians for their time
- strengthens data retention and retrieval practices and reduces risk of patient misidentification

Background

Paediatric wide field fundus imaging devices (commonly known as Retcams) are needed to diagnose ROP. These devices are located in Cairns, Rockhampton, Gold Coast, Mackay, Mater, Royal Brisbane and Women's, Mt Isa, Townsville University and Sunshine Coast University Hospitals. These devices are typically not placed on the network and if a second opinion from a paediatric ophthalmologist is required, images are often copied to USB drives and posted to the Queensland Children's Hospital for review. Dr Shuan Dai's team at QCH have begun working with RBWH, Mt Isa, Rockhampton, Cairns and Townsville initially to place these devices on the network and allow large image files to be transferred in an ROP eConsult model, which commenced in May.

Solutions Implemented

Since the hospitals have been enabled to share large image files on the network this model received 25 referrals in the first month (May 2021) and a further 51 were received in June 2021.

Evaluation and Results

Evaluation of time savings to clinicians and patients compared to traditional referral processes later in 2021.

Lessons Learnt

- It can sometimes be easier to develop in-house technical solutions to problems than navigate the complex process of assessing, purchasing and implementing purpose-built, commercially available ICT solutions.
- There may be many more eConsult models of care throughout Queensland that could benefit from being formalised.

References

Dr Dai has implemented a similar model in his previous role with the New Zealand National Eye Centre and Auckland District Health Board, New Zealand.

Auckland regional telemedicine retinopathy of prematurity screening network: A 10?year review - Simkin - 2019 - Clinical & Experimental Ophthalmology - Wiley Online Library

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