

Are you among 3.7 million Australians who suffer lower back pain?

December 5 2017, by Candy Gibson



Credit: University of South Australia

Researchers from the University of South Australia have established a new interactive website to provide people with evidence-based advice about healthcare.

The project, funded by a National Health and Medical Research Council Program Grant, will focus on a range of common medical conditions, starting with lower back pain (LBP).

It is estimated that one in six Australians (approximately 3.7 million people) experience LBP, with most (80%) reporting it limits their daily activity. Several countries, such as the United Kingdom, USA and Denmark have produced [clinical practice guidelines](#) (CPGs) to help guide the management of LBP. Australian guidelines also exist, although

they are several years out of date.

Despite the availability of these CPGs, the healthcare people receive for LBP is often not evidence-based, researchers say.

UniSA School of Health Sciences Professor William Runciman, Chief Investigator of the STANDING Collaboration study, says: "The first step towards people receiving better healthcare is to get agreement at a national level on what constitutes appropriate advice for important conditions, such as low back pain. This information then needs to be embedded in clinical standards, and for groups of experts to ensure that these standards are kept up to date."

The STANDING Collaboration will use a process that is different to how current CPGs are developed.

"The process of developing these standards must be a dynamic and transparent process that takes into account different indicators in different contexts and at different stages of life – which is why it is so important that members of the public, including clinicians, researchers, policy-makers and consumers have their say about what aspects of healthcare are important to them," says Professor Runciman.

The STANDING Collaboration uses a wiki which is an online tool that allows people to review proposed indicators, provide feedback, and make edits in real-time, with transparency on how users' feedback has been incorporated into the final set of indicators.

"We think the beauty of our study lies in the fact that each indicator is written in plain English, covers one concept at a time and can be tracked from its initial draft form to the final version. In this way we hope that our wiki tool can be a credible resource for both clinicians and consumers which they can use together to make decisions about

evidence-based [healthcare](#) that is tailored to individuals."

Draft clinical indicators for low back pain have been developed and reviewed by an expert panel and are now available on the STANDING Collaboration for public review. If you wish to have your say on [low back pain](#), please visit the wiki website and register to provide your feedback: <https://standingcollaboration.org/>

Provided by University of South Australia

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