



Abstract of parallel session: 3

Title: From Atlases to action: reducing unwarranted variation in New Zealand
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Abstract

The New Zealand Health Quality & Safety Commission published its first Atlas of Healthcare Variation in 2012. There are now over 20 Atlas domains and reducing unwarranted variations in patterns of care is one of the Commission's four strategic priorities for 2017-2021.

It is important to address the question of how atlases can be used to improve the quality of care. While there are examples of change stimulated by the publication of an Atlas domain, certainly in New Zealand these changes have tended to stimulate action in outlier regions. Increasingly, we are interested in how Atlases can shift the whole curve of quality, that is, stimulate system-wide improvement. The role of the health system itself as a driver of variation suggests that addressing variation requires action at a number of levels in the health system.

Following a review of the first five years of the New Zealand Atlas programme, we have developed a model for a systematic approach to address variation. Our proposed model builds on a comprehensive, multi-level approach as described by Ferlie and Shortell.¹

This talk will share this model and our approach for addressing variation at different levels of the system.

¹ Ferlie EB, Shortell SM. Improving the quality of healthcare in the United Kingdom and the United States: a framework for change. *Milbank Quarterly* 2001;79(2):281-315.