

## CLINICAL USES: PCOC AND AUDIT (CNIN JUNE 2010)

- Your service has joined the Palliative Care Outcomes Collaboration (PCOC).
- You want to find out more about using the data you are collecting and the role of audit.

Not all services or practitioners understand how the various methods of data collection can be used to achieve service improvements or improvements in patient outcomes. [PCOC](#) is a project funded under the umbrella of the National Palliative Care Program, funded until 2013. It is based on a model that emphasises outcomes measurement as a routine part of clinical practice, so identifying areas for clinical practice change can be easily facilitated. Palliative care service providers from public and private health sectors; rural and metropolitan areas and inpatient and ambulatory settings are involved.

CareSearch has information within the '[Clinical Practice](#)' pages that cover service issues, one of which is '[Audit](#)'. Clinical audit is a quality improvement strategy.

Clinical audit selects aspects of patient care and evaluates the performance of a service against an agreed set of criteria or standards to answer the following questions:

- What is happening now? (baseline)
- What should be happening? (according to evidence, best practice, other agreed standards)
- How can we improve?
- Have our improvements resulted in a change? (the audit cycle).



Services collecting the PCOC dataset are perfectly situated to [undertake audit](#) with the data that is collected routinely, and the [Symptom Assessment Scale](#) is one patient rated tool that is used. Services can identify a range of issues that they can audit with opportunities than to drive Continuous Quality Improvement.

There are also avenues to more detailed information on audit and quality improvement in the Finding Evidence section of the website including:

- [Audit PubMed Topic Search](#)
- Review Collection topics for [Quality Process](#) and for [Outcome Measures](#)

CareSearch is an online resource funded by the Department of Health and Ageing to help clinicians and consumers find relevant evidence about palliative care. Available now at [CareSearch, palliative care knowledge network](#)