Clinical Assessment

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Background

Clinicians routinely perform clinical assessment to determine what problem(s) may affect the patient and before planning the treatments or management strategies that are best to manage a patient's condition.

From a "problem-oriented" medical record structure perspective, the clinical assessment represents the "A" of the SOAP components.

This collaborative project is initiated to:
- determine the boundary and scope of "clinical assessment" and;
- develop a FHIR resource/profile to support the capturing and exchange of clinical assessment information.

Leadership

Project co-leads:
- Dr Stephen Chu
- Dr Russ Leftwich
- Elaine Ayres

FHIR leads:
- Lloyd McKenzie
- David Hay

Domain Experts:
- Stephen Chu
- Russ Leftwich
- Laura Heermann Langford
- Emma Jones
- Rob Hausam
- Elaine Ayres
- Kevin Coonan

Stakeholder Groups:
- Patient Care Workgroup
- Orders & Observation
- Clinical Decision Support
- FHIR

Definitions

Dictionary Definition:
- Clinical assessment is "an evaluation of a patient's physical condition and prognosis based on information gathered from physical and laboratory examinations and the patient's medical history".
  

Definition (as discussed at 2014-10-09 conference call)

Clinical assessment is defined as the "Process to arrive at the status (including the clinical impression of health risk or prognosis) of a patient constrained by their health concerns"

The process includes
The use of observation findings/results as determined by relevant systemic (e.g. CVS, respiratory, neurological) examination of the patient
- Measurement or observation results from use of prescribed set of standardised assessment protocols/instruments (e.g. APGAR, Glasgow Coma Scale, Mini-Mental State Examination)
  - it is important to note that "assessment protocol/instrument" is part of the clinical assessment process and not the clinical assessment itself
- The actual observations represent the "S" and "O" of the SOAP documentation
- The "A" in the SOAP is the documentation of the clinical analysis and reasoning or thought process based on the "S" and "O" findings of the patient's status
- The assessment reflects the conclusion of the reasoning process (which also identifies how the conclusion was reached)

Clinical Assessment Tool:
- A clinical assessment tool is an instrument or a set of measurements designed to evaluate a patient's clinical condition and/or to predict the risk(s) or prognosis.
- The measurement parameters/variables may be organised/presented as questionnaire, checklist, or scale.
- Examples:
  - Fracture Risk Assessment Tool (developed by the World Health Organisation Taskforce)
  - Standardized Mini Mental State Examination (SMMSE)
  - Barthel Index - International Resident Assessment Instrument (InterRAI)

Clinical Assessment Tool:
- C-CDA Assessment Scale Template
- SDC - Structure Data Capture (SCD FHIR IG)
- FHIR Clinical Guidelines - Library Resources
  - E.g. Opioid Prescribing Guidelines
- IHE Assessment Curation and Data Collection (ACDC - new profile in progress) - Assessment instruments curation and management

Storyboards / Use Cases

Contributors
- Stephen Chu
- Elaine Ayres
- Russ Leftwich

Storyboards:
Progress and Related Work

- Work on Clinical Assessment is continued as the FHIR ClinicalImpression Resource development

Relevant Links and Documents

Assessment Instruments and Guidelines:

- Australia-Royal Children Hospital Cervical Spine Assessment Algorithm (description and flowchart)
- Australia-Queensland Ambulance Service Clinical Assessment Procedures
- Alcohol Withdrawal Assessment Scale

Clinical Assessment FHIR Resource/Profile Proposal is available through this link:

- S&I Structured Data Capture Initiative is actively investigating representation of questionnaire content.