



Divisions of General Practice

Information Management Maturity Framework  
(IMMF)

**Toolkit — Staff IM training and  
support guidelines**



# Information Management Maturity Framework (IMMF)

## Toolkit – Staff IM training and support guidelines

### Purpose

The purpose of the “Staff IM training and support guidelines” is to assist Divisions address the action tasks below.

Action Tasks	Capacity Gap	IMMF Element
Implement standard process and procedures for IM training and support for Divisional staff across all Divisional programs and services	Reactive to Defined	User Perceptions

This task should have been identified from the Information Management Maturity Framework (IMMF) gap analysis and toolkit specification.

This tool is to ensure that staff have the training and support needed to implement information management (IM) processes that are documented, standardised and repeatable. All Divisions need to have a set of training and support programs in place that will give staff a basic awareness of the IMMF and the ILC, plus any Division specific local IM content they need to effectively function as Division staff members.

The IMMF tools – “IMMF checklist”, “Training pack for IM definition and principles” and “Training pack for the information lifecycle (ILC)” are a pre-requisite for the use of this tool. It is also necessary that this tool is used in conjunction with the associated tool for “Sample IM Job Descriptions”, specifically to use the IM competencies identified for General Staff.

### Explanatory notes

In order to ensure that staff can carry out their role in accordance with the Division’s standard processes and procedures for IM, Divisions should have a comprehensive set of training material in place. Effective levels of basic IM training and support ensure that valuable time is not spent correcting errors, and that staff are empowered to do their job with the confidence they are well trained. This leads to higher productivity and staff satisfaction.

IM training and support should encompass all Division staff. The content of training should include the basic principles and concepts of the IMMF and also teach staff about the IM/IT systems and processes used within the Division. The aim is to ensure a common baseline of IM knowledge and skill for all staff in the Division and not to be confined to training for a specific job of a staff member.

IM training and support need to be provided regularly, not just as induction training. The training objectives achieved in induction training should be refreshed at regular intervals by additional training. Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) should link the IM training and support material to the Divisions business plans and the IM outcomes needed to achieve the goals specified in these plans.

In addition to formal training guidelines, this tool provides guidance on how the level of support provided to staff on IM can be defined, documented and made repeatable, for example, the provision of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) information and fact sheets on the Division’s Intranet.

Primary sources for this tool were drawn from within the IMMF and interviews with Division CEOs. Full references are identified in the References section of this tool.



## Instructional design

This tool consists of two parts:

Part 1 – Staff training and support guidelines

Part 2 – Case studies from Divisions IM training and support processes

### Part 1 – Staff training and support guidelines

This Part describes a set of practical steps for identifying IM training topics, developing the training, delivering it and evaluating its effectiveness. It also covers steps for providing support to reinforce knowledge and skills gained during formal training.

CEOs should use this material to identify which topics are to be included in training and support and to specify the content for induction and for ongoing training processes.

### Part 2 – Case Studies from Divisions IM training and support processes

This Part provides some practical examples of training programs and support initiatives that Divisions have developed to support their staff in implementing IM principles.

CEO and senior staff may wish to seek advice on how to implement training and support initiatives from other Divisions and from qualified State Based Organisation (SBO) staff.

### Summary of outcomes and resources

Workstreams	Outcomes	Resources
<b>New processes and procedures to be adopted</b>	<p>Divisions implement standard, topics, for IM training and support for all staff.</p> <p>IM training is delivered at regular intervals from induction of new staff to regular updates for existing staff.</p>	This outcome is self administered.
<b>Culture and change management requirements</b>	Staff training on IM is a regular part of a Division's activities.	



## Part 1: Staff training and support guidelines

### Introduction

Training and support guidelines in IM assist Divisions to provide their staff with a common baseline of IM skills and knowledge. This guidelines document assists CEOs to identify knowledge and skill gaps that can be addressed through training and support programs in IM. The information in this part is under the following headings:

- Why have IM training and support programs?
- How does a Division implement a training program?
- Guidelines for IM Training Topics.
- Guidelines for Training Adults.
- Guidelines for a Division support program.

IM training and support programs should encompass all Division staff and need to be provided regularly, not just as induction training. The IM skills and knowledge to be covered should aim to ensure a common baseline of IM knowledge and skill for all staff in the Division and not be confined to a specific job of a staff member. Division IM training goals will should also be informed through regular feedback from the IM Issues register. CEOs should refer to the Tool “Guidelines for an IM issues and opportunities register”.

### Why have IM training and support programs?

Providing Division staff with a common baseline of IM skill and knowledge will enable them to operate effectively by being able to use the information management resources of the Division to carry out their own specific role and to contribute to the Division’s overall goals. For example, all staff should be able to retrieve information rapidly from Division information systems and all should be able to classify and file correctly any documents they produce.

Training and support programs will help advance the Divisions business plans by developing the IM competencies needed to achieve the goals specified in these plans

### How does a Division implement a training program?

The diagram below is a summary of the learning process outlining the stages required to implement a training program. This material has been sourced from the *NSW TAFE Basic Methods of Instruction*, which is a reference that can be accessed by any CEO wishing further support or information on developing training programs. The learning process is described as a series of six steps:

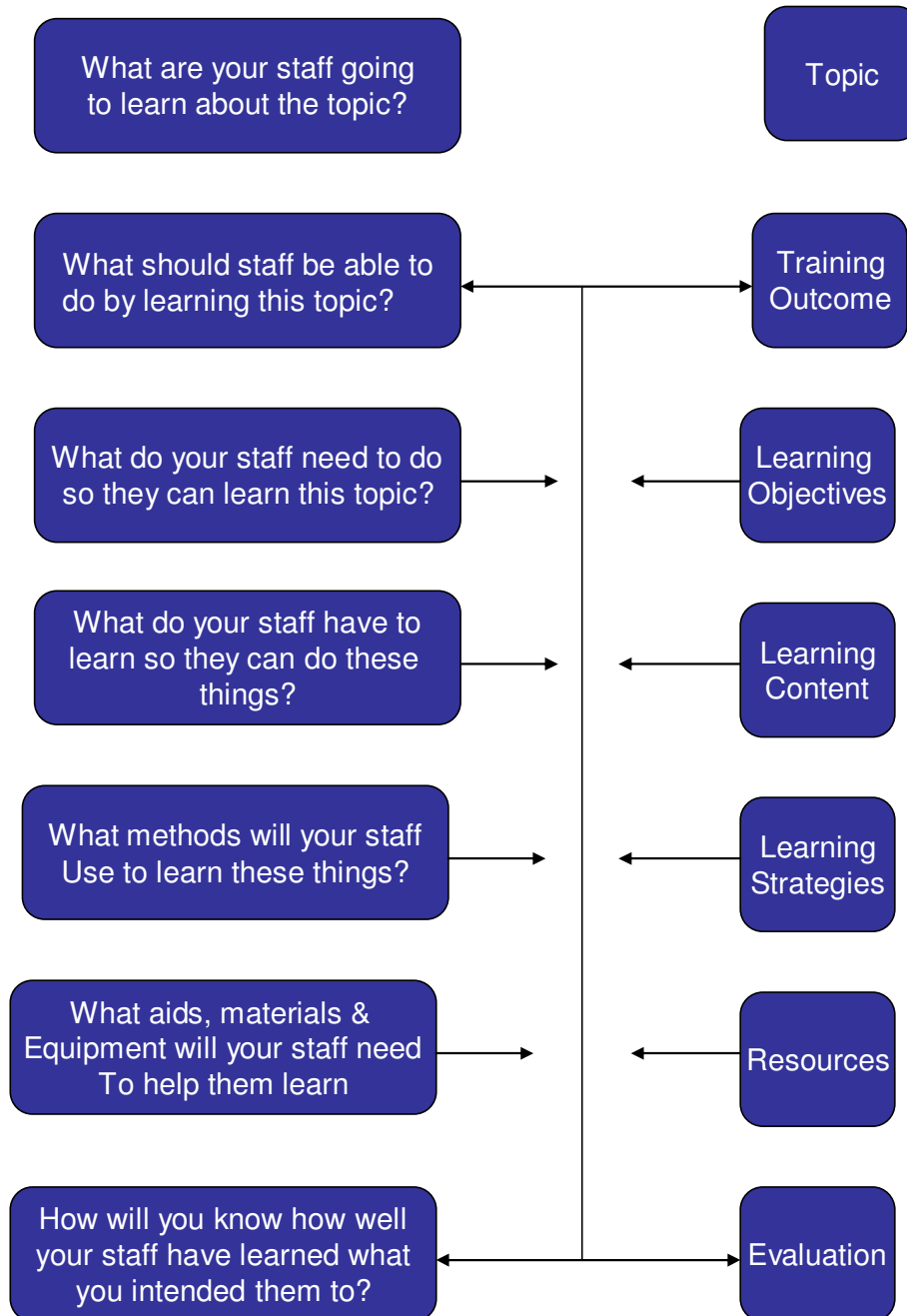
- Learning Outcomes
- Learning Objectives
- Learning Content
- Learning Strategies
- Resources
- Evaluation

This process can be applied to each of the topics listed later in this tool to assist CEOs to develop induction training and regular professional development training in IM.



# The Learning Process

\* Source: NSW TAFE Basic Methods of Instruction 2004



## Guidelines for IM Training Topics

The first priority in selecting IM training topics should be to provide their staff with a common baseline of IM skill and knowledge. The range of topics listed below start with a basic awareness of IM and then progress to develop skill and knowledge in applying it to Division systems and processes. CEOs should assess the priority for training topics against the IM outcomes that are required to achieve the objectives of the Division's business plan.



## Basic awareness of the IMMF

All Division staff should receive IMMF training.

- *IMMF Checklist* – this training package is the starting point to developing Division IM capability. Completion of this training will make Division staff familiar with the IMMF and how it deals with IM in terms of Elements and Criteria. This IMMF Checklist is available to all CEOs and can be facilitated by staff in the SBOs.
- *IM Definitions and Principles* – this PowerPoint training package provides a standard definition of information management and the seven principles of IM. It explains how information management capability is essential to support the everyday work of the Division.
- *Information Life Cycle* – this PowerPoint training package explains the six steps of the ILC and how it can enable the re-use of information. It drives home the point that information is a resource, which costs money and time to acquire and maintain. The training pack is organised around asking the questions: What is the immediate requirement for the information? What reporting or analysis can be anticipated by other users in the Division? and How may the information be needed or used in the future?
- *IM Competencies for General Staff* – The tool “Sample IM job descriptions” provides a list of IM competencies for general staff within a Division. All staff will benefit from additional training in these areas. It is a particularly useful list of topics for ongoing professional development as well as for induction training. The competencies and responsibilities for general staff are:

### Develop and implement an IM plan

- Awareness of the Division’s IM principles, policies and standards to business and program delivery objectives.

### Plan, collect, validate and organise information

- Awareness of the processes and materials utilised for the collection of data sets from internal or external sources.

### Use, disseminate, maintain and dispose of information

- Awareness of processes for extracting information from records management systems to meet internal and external user’s information access requirements.

### Demonstrate personal skills

- Proficiency in using Microsoft Office tools (Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint) for data management and reporting.
- Understand generic staff roles and work practices in general practice and community health service offices.
- Plan and organise time effectively
- Be familiar with the most common software platforms found in general practice

## IM training on the Division’s Systems and processes

This suite of training topics is about applying IM in a practical way to ensure all staff understand and can use the systems within the Division. Training in each topic should include the basic understanding of the system and specific instruction in the local processes and procedures that are employed by the Division for each system. This must also embrace the dividing line between training and support i.e. staff need to know when they should seek assistance and how to do that.



*Division IM/IT Systems.* Division staff need to be capable of using a set of office productivity software applications including customer relationship management (CRM), Division Information Systems (DIS) or other Division applications to do their jobs. These include:

- *Office Productivity Applications.* Most significantly, Microsoft Office applications and other 'off the shelf' IM technology (refer to the tool "Inventory of 'off the shelf' IM technology aligned to stages of the Information Lifecycle (ILC)" for a detailed overview of these software applications). Many computer application training organisations have standard courses on MS Office at a basic, intermediate and advanced level. CEOs should consider liaising with other Divisions to broker bulk discounts for such services.
- *CRM/DIS application* training is also available direct from vendors or other Divisions. The most common CRM application used by Divisions is the Division Information System (DIS), produced by Polymorphic Pty Ltd. This organisation runs a range of courses on DIS. CEOs should consider liaising with other Divisions and their SBO to identify Divisions which run courses or to run combined courses.
- *Email* is also an area where Division staff can benefit from better email management. CEOs should refer to the tool "Guidelines for the collection and distribution of information through email". A presentation on the collection and distribution of information on email is included as part of that tool which is suitable for use in short training sessions.
- *Data analysis/reporting tools.* Depending on your Division's priorities and activities there may be a requirement for general training for data reporting or analysis tools such as Crystal Reports or advanced use of Microsoft applications. Training in these data management applications is available from vendors and some Divisions. CEOs should contact their SBO for more information on training sources for these tools.

### **Training of Divisions Policies and Procedures**

As a result of accreditation, Divisions have developed detailed policies and procedures. In addition, all Divisions need to ensure their staff are trained to comply with privacy and other legislation. There are a range of potential training topics that could be developed to assist Division staff to implement required policies and procedures. These include:

- *Privacy and security requirements.* CEOs should refer to the tool Privacy Guidelines for re-use of information and the Tool Security and Privacy audit template for checklists and other material that could be used for privacy and security training.
- *Data validation procedures* are best communicated through a training course. This could be combined with courses on use of various data management software applications. CEOs should refer to the tool "Guidelines for data validation" to identify suitable training material and topics.
- *Meeting Division obligations* can also be effectively communicated through a training course. This would include key elements in managing relationships with members, for example, "do something useful for them, before you ask them for something", reporting obligations to the Commonwealth and State health authorities.
- *Meeting Division business goals* can be reinforced through training programs. This includes developing a culture of continuous improvement. Plan Do Study Act (PSDA) approaches are ones that can be easily imparted through Division training.
- *Records Management* is a high priority for most Divisions. When staff follow good procedures for naming and storing information resources such as files and paper documents, they will locate these resources much more quickly and easily. Training staff in records management procedures can greatly improve Division productivity.
- *Surveying* is another common activity in Divisions. The success of a survey depends to a great extent on how well the survey is designed. There is a standard body of knowledge on survey design and administration that can be imparted through training.



## Guidelines for training adults

The success of any training program can be greatly influenced by the methods used. The table below identifies some key points in training adults and their implications for designing training programs.

Key Points	Implications for Training
People usually learn better if they are actively involved rather than passively observing.	Provide relevant training activities which can be applied immediately in their work. There are five stages people go through to learn a new skill or knowledge: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be introduced to it.</li> <li>2. Get to know it.</li> <li>3. Try it out.</li> <li>4. Get feedback.</li> <li>5. Apply it.</li> </ol>
Adults like to see the relevance of what they are learning to their work and life.	Inform the learner about why this activity is important to the job.
Adults usually have valuable experience. This should be acknowledged and used in training.	Incorporate the learner's previous skills and knowledge in the training.
Learning is more effective if it is reinforced. This means the trainer should repeat key points and point out their importance.	Tell the learner the specific goals and objectives of the learning activity.
Adults enjoy learning but it can be threatening.	Provide positive feedback and encouragement to the learner.
Adults like to take some control over how they learn.	Give the learner the opportunity to give you feedback on the training activity.

## Guidelines for a Division support program?

While training programs can successfully impart knowledge and skills, staff need to practice new skills in real situations. Some learning may be forgotten or additional detail not covered in a formal training course may be required. To ensure formal training is effective and Division staff can adequately perform the required tasks, Divisions should have in place formal processes to support staff in achieving IM outcomes.

The type and range of formal processes will vary with the size of the Division. Useful formal support processes are listed below.

### *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)*

Many support issues arise again and again. Such examples may include the steps required to take in producing a report using software like Crystal Reports or simple problems like sending a document to a different printer. Dealing with such issues can waste considerable time. One way to deal with this is to produce a set of Frequently Asked Questions and Answers that can be easily made available to staff in the one place such as on a Division Intranet or Share Drive. The Frequently Asked Questions should be periodically updated. One important source of information in the update process should be the Division IM issues register (refer to Tool: Guidelines for an IM issues and opportunities register). This method of support encourages self-help and minimises the use of time of other staff.

### *Fact Sheets*

A fact sheet is a similar way to get the same information across on many different occasions. Unlike a set of FAQs, a Fact Sheet should deal with only one issue or topic (e.g. Immunisation) and should present a brief overview of the topic. This method of support also encourages self-help and minimises the use of time of other staff.



### *“Buddy” Systems*

This is a less formal mentoring process where a new or less experienced staff member is paired up with a “buddy” to whom they can turn to in the first instance, for any information or advice they need to carry out their role.

### *Mentoring*

Mentoring is a process where a more experienced staff person is made available at regular intervals to provide a less experienced staff person with advice and support. It is more formal than a buddy system as the buddy system is only used when a new or less experienced person initiates it. Mentoring is a more formal two-way process, where skills and knowledge required for the job are systematically worked on. Mentoring does not involve a line management – staff to supervisor relationship.

### *Subject Matter Experts*

One common way of providing support for specialist activities is to identify subject matter experts such as, for example, experts in survey design and administration. Sometimes these subject matter experts may be from another Division. A Division can then formally identify the experts and communicate to staff their expertise and availability for consultation on a particular specialty.

### *Supervision*

This is a formal process where a staff person’s performance is regularly reviewed by a supervisor who has direct responsibility for the staff person. While it involves a process where progress on meeting goals is reported on, it frequently involves a two-way process where skills and knowledge required for the job are systematically worked on.

### *Help Desk*

A Help Desk is a specialist support group which usually provide staff assistance in using information systems. However this can extend to other functions. A formal Help Desk is usually only viable in larger Divisions.



## Part 2 – Case studies from Divisions IM training and support processes

### How do Divisions handle internal training of staff?

Given the range of size of Divisions across Australia there are many ways they manage the internal training of staff. This part of the tool describes the different ways training is currently managed by many Divisions.

#### IMMF

Basic training programs in the IMMF, including the checklist and how it should be used to assess IM maturity are run by Divisions with support from SBO staff. The training program is underway and all Divisions will be trained in the IMMF.

Also, some Divisions have run additional training for themselves in IMMF topics including:

- *IM definitions and principles* - Divisions that have received IMMF training from their SBO are now providing follow on training in the IMMF to their staff.
- *Information lifecycle* - this PowerPoint training package explains the six steps of the ILC. The key concept of the ILC is the three horizon planning steps organised around asking the questions: *What is the immediate requirement for the information? What reporting or analysis can be anticipated by other users in the Division? How may the information be needed or used in the future?* Training on the ILC should be attended by all staff. Divisions that have received IMMF training from their SBO are now providing follow on training in the IMMF to their staff.
- *IM competencies for general staff* - These topics are already part of many Divisions induction training. Divisions that have received IMMF training from their SBO are now providing follow on training in the IMMF to their staff.

#### IM to support Division's Systems

- *Office Automation Systems* - Some Division's run training in Microsoft office and other "off the shelf" IM technology. Larger Division's such as GP Partners, ensure all staff get MS Office training to intermediate level. Most Divisions would ensure staff gets access to at least the basic level.
- *CRM* - Many Divisions run CRM training (mostly DIS). Much of this training is done module by module. The training is mostly competency-based where staff are trained in a particular topic (e.g. a DIS module) and are then tested on their capability using that module before they are given access to the next DIS module. This approach is common amongst many Divisions. These Divisions set aside regular times for training on DIS and focus on a particular module of DIS for that session.
- *Policies and Procedures* - Many Divisions structure training on observing policies and procedures around regular weekly sessions that are part of team building initiatives. These can include formal training and information exchange amongst staff members and together with other team building activities. Some Divisions incorporate the Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) cycle into their entire operations. For example, Brisbane South has based its training around applying the PDSA cycle.
- *Induction Training* is commonly offered to all new staff. Typical, this involves accessing and using the Division's information systems, Intranet access, privacy policies and other key policies all staff must be aware of and observe, e.g. security. Some larger Divisions offer comprehensive training in computer applications to all new staff. As some Divisions have considerable staff turnover, these Divisions focus on training, to build an IM culture to retain corporate knowledge.
- *IT training* is frequently repeated by some larger Divisions at regular intervals to ensure all staff have a good knowledge of office automation systems e.g. word processing, spreadsheets.



- *Specific topic* training is widely provided by Divisions. Some Divisions have outsourced their training to other larger Divisions to provide *specific topic* training. As a result there are training modules available on statistics e.g. Scintillating Statistics, finance and other functions. Some Divisions have produced DVDs of training modules. Given the large amount of training materials available, Division CEOs should check with their SBOs to see if there is something already developed by another Division before they commission their own training material.
- *Links to Quality Manual* - most Divisions have clearly established training guidelines in their quality manuals and use formal methods of linking required individual staff skills identified through supervised sessions and written staff personal development plans to develop training goals.



## References

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