

Fact sheet

# SA Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD) Register

For health professionals

## Background of the RHD register

- > The most effective approach to controlling rheumatic heart disease (RHD) is through regular injections with long acting benzathine penicillin G (BPG), known as secondary prophylaxis, for all people with a history of acute rheumatic fever (ARF) or RHD.
- > Registers of people with a history of ARF or RHD are an important element of control programs aiming to increase the delivery of secondary prophylaxis. The RHD register can assist individual health services and health professionals in the management and follow up of local patients with ARF and RHD, as well as provide important epidemiological data for SA.
- > The SA RHD register records cases of ARF (definite, probable and possible initial and recurrent episodes) and RHD (definite and borderline [ $\leq 20$  yrs]) based on the case definitions outlined in 2020 Australian guideline for prevention, diagnosis and management of acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease (3rd edition).
- > Patients are automatically enrolled on the register. Patient education about ARF and RHD is an important part of this process; RHD register staff can assist with the provision of resources or further education if required.

## How is data collected?

- > Data is collected according to national standards.
- > Initial data comes from the notification form at time of diagnosis.
- > Information on this episode or subsequent reviews may then be obtained (with the patients consent) by SA RHD register staff. Subsequent information may be provided to the SA RHD Program via copies of echocardiography reports, information retrieved from OACIS/Sunrise, being copied into correspondence letters from specialists or directly requesting information by phone/letter to specialists' rooms.
- > Health professionals involved in the direct care of patients with ARF/RHD provide information to the register about secondary prophylaxis by entering it straight onto the register or sending information from their patient management system in to the register.

## Who has access to information on the register?

- > SA RHD Program staff (within Communicable Disease Control Branch, SA Dept of Health)
- > Health providers who are involved in the direct care of patients on the register, including:
  - > Primary health care staff and Aboriginal health workers
  - > Cardiologists, paediatricians, physicians, obstetricians and other medical specialists
  - > Relevant dental practices
- > If a patient moves or travel to Northern Territory, Queensland or Western Australia, their information is passed on to the RHD Register in these states for continuity of care.



## How do I get access to the register?

- > The RHD register is accessible via the SA Health intranet. It is only accessible to health professionals who work within SA Health.
- > Non-SA Health staff will need to communicate with the SA RHD Program to seek information from or provide information to the register. Please email us at [rhd@sa.gov.au](mailto:rhd@sa.gov.au)
- > Access to the register includes the ability to read patient information and also the ability to enter data and/or comments relating to the delivery of secondary prophylaxis in their clinic.
- > Access is granted by completing the 'SA RHD register access' application form. Only those staff who have read and signed the form can have access to the register.

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## For more information

**SA Rheumatic Heart Disease Control Program**  
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