It’s hard to believe that we’ve reached another Christmas! Since our last DataMatters, it’s been business as usual here, with FIM workshops and SNAPshot training being organised and reports on the 2003/2004 financial year being produced. However, we have also launched a new product...

**Did you know???

Two new additions to our website are the sector activity report and the sector demographic report for the 2003/2004 financial year. The format of these reports will be familiar to you, as they’re based on two of our regular biannual reports. However, what’s different in the new sector reports is that you will see public sector data reported next to private sector data. In some tables and graphs, the data are also combined to form the national data. We are thinking that this will be the beginning of a new series of publications. Future articles could include, for example, trends over time or findings relating to a specific impairment group, such as stroke. Let us know what you think of this idea, or if you have any suggestions for articles.

Past editions of DataMatters, Anywhere Hospital and Any Health Fund (AHF) reports for each of the reporting periods, interesting research articles, information about FIM, information about AROC – all this and more can be found on our website. You may like to have a browse from time to time. For example, you may find it helpful to look through past editions of DataMatters, as each edition answers questions and provides tips on different issues.

Another improvement to our website is the addition of a link to some very useful SNAPshot documentation – a SNAPshot V3.6 user manual and the SNAPshot AROC guide. If you have any SNAPshot questions, the answer is bound to be in one or other of these documents.

**Data Bits**

**AROC data set:** By now, you will be collecting and submitting the AROC Version 2 clinical data set. In each edition of DataMatters we will provide you with extra information on one or two of the items in this new data set.

**AROC reports:** We have now completed the 2003/2004 financial year reports. (If you don’t already have yours, it should be arriving any day soon.) These are the last reports to be based on the version 1 data set. We’ve had a few suggestions for changes to the reporting format, but we’ve held these over till the next round of reports, which will incorporate the Version 2 data set.

**Data submission dates:** Table 1 details the data collection period, the submission month and reports to be generated using your data for the next twelve months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month episode ends</th>
<th>Data submission month</th>
<th>Report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct-Dec 2004</td>
<td>end of January 2005</td>
<td>Yes**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan-Mar 2005</td>
<td>end of April 2005</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr-Jun 2005</td>
<td>end of July 2005</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul-Sep 2005</td>
<td>end of October 2005</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Financial year suite of AROC reports generated using this data
** Calendar year suite of AROC reports generated using this data
AROC membership forms: As discussed in the last edition of DataMatters, we have sent a membership form out with the current sets of reports. Please complete the form and return it to us so that we are sure to have accurate and up-to-date information about your facility. Alternatively, the form can be downloaded from the AROC website, or by contacting AROC (aroc@uow.edu.au or 02-4221-4411).

FIM news

With 2005 rapidly approaching it has been an interesting exercise to reflect on the year that was 2004 and consider what has occurred with regards to FIM training. FIM underwent some significant change early on in the year with the implementation of Version 0 of the credentialling exam in January and the replacement of Fiona Jongsma with Carrie Findlay as the FIM Coordinator in February. Carrie hit the ground running for it wasn’t long before workshops were underway all over the country with Queensland leading the way hosting four workshops in the first four months of the year. Overall FIM training has been a great success this year with the number of credentialled clinicians on our records totalling 1719. During the year, 231 were trained by master trainers and of those 44 were trained as facility trainers. This brings the total number of facility trainers in the country to 163.

Late 2004 has also seen the appointment of two new master trainers who come to us and to you with a wealth of experience and knowledge. Ros Eagles from Queensland and Karen Roberts from Victoria will commence training early next year in time for what is traditionally a busy time of year. As a way of introduction Karen Roberts has kindly completed the following profile.

- **What is your clinical background?**
  I have worked as an occupational therapist for over 12 years, originally training in Melbourne at La Trobe University. I have subsequently completed a Master of Occupational Therapy and a Grad Cert in Health Science (OT).
- **What is your experience with the FIM Tool?**
  I was trained to administer the FIM while I was still at University and have been utilizing it in clinical practice for the past 9 years.
- **What is your background in training?**
  I have been a facility trainer for the past few years and run regular training sessions with my colleagues. I have also had experience in education through my role as lecturer within La Trobe University and really enjoy teaching.
- **Where will you be focussing your training?**
  I shall be involved in training people to administer the FIM within Victoria, working alongside Janet Fricke, but may have the privilege of catching up with some of the other readers who are located interstate.
- **Where do you currently work and what is your position?**
  I currently work at Caulfield General Medical Centre and am employed as a Senior Clinician within the Amputee Rehabilitation Unit and Non-traumatic Spinal Rehabilitation Unit.
- **What made you want to be a Master Trainer?**
  I believe that to benefit from the data that is collected through the FIM then it needs to be accurately administered and scored. The best way of achieving this is by receiving training and I hope to assist others to use the FIM accurately through providing facility trainers and facilities with opportunity to share their skills and knowledge and learn more about the FIM.

**Looking Ahead:** 2005 is already shaping up to be another big year with workshops currently being scheduled in Cairns, Darwin, Alice Springs, Tamworth and regional Victoria. We also anticipate the implementation of the FIM online exam in the new year. The team is looking...
forward to the ongoing fine tuning of the FIM process and our continued correspondence with you all.

**Training Resources:** AROC runs FIM on a cost recovery basis. This means that what you pay for workshops and training resources must cover our costs in providing these things for you. We have managed to keep our prices steady since July 2002. However, during this time, costs to us such as printing, catering, travel and accommodation, have been increasing. From 1 January 2005 we will be increasing the prices on some of our products. We are sure that you will understand this is necessary if we are to maintain the quality of the service we provide to you.

**FAQ**

**Q:** I want to read our AROC reports, but there is so much information that I don't know where to start. Can you give me any tips?

**A:** Unless you have a particular interest in something specific (such as outcomes for patients with a spinal injury), a good place to start is the casemix-adjusted length of stay and the casemix-adjusted FIM change. Your "casemix" is the type of patients you treat. If you want to compare your facility with other facilities, the only way to do that fairly is to compare with other patients that are like yours. The casemix-adjusted scores tell you how much your patients differ, on average, from similar patients in the complete database. For example, if your casemix-adjusted length of stay is 1, this means that, on average, your patients stay one day longer than similar patients in the benchmark data.

**Q:** We have patients who become unwell during their rehabilitation and are transferred to acute care. I need to end their rehab episode. How do I code this?

**A:** When a patient undergoing rehab becomes acutely unwell (eg stroke, or fracture), they may need to be transferred to acute care without time to do a FIM assessment. But SNAPshot requires FIM scores to close the episode. In these circumstances, you should code all 1s (Total contact assistance) and the FIM assessment date = episode end date = date of transfer, and enter a comment in the comment field of the AROC dataset screen this will allow you to close the episode. As the patient is going to acute care you should enter the "mode of episode end" appropriately, either 5 (Changed from sub-/non-acute to acute care - different ward) or 6 (Changed from sub-acute/non-acute to acute care - same ward). Under this circumstance it is not necessary to code values for "accommodation post discharge" or "living arrangements at episode end" as it is self evident what the patient's accommodation and living arrangements are, as they are in hospital.

**SNAPshot news**

A new release of SNAPshot (V3.6d) has been distributed. This version corrects a number of software bugs. It replaces all earlier releases of SNAPshot V3.6 and it is recommended that you upgrade at your earliest convenience. The readme.txt file on the CD explaining the software installation process has been revised, and is now (hopefully) easier to follow. A full list of changes is included in the readme.txt file and at the start of the SNAPshot V3.6 manual.

As discussed during training sessions, we have taken this opportunity to reformat the AROC Patient Data Report (#19) – it is hoped that this revised report will assist sites to meet their ACHS clinical indicators reporting obligations. To this end, two new fields have been added to the Rehab/GEM screen to allow for the collection of the date that the initial rehab care plan was established and when the rehab plan prior to discharge was done. The
collection of these two data items is optional, they do not form part of the AROC extract, but they are included in the AROC Patient Data Report.

The other visible change that SNAPshot users will notice, as discussed in training sessions, is the movement of the data item 'Accommodation Post Discharge' from the AROCDataset screen to the Episode Screen. This will support the collection of this data item for all case types, not just Rehab.

The documentation (both the SNAPshot V3.6 user manual and the SNAPshot AROC guide) has been updated to reflect these changes and has been expanded to include information on trouble-shooting commonly encountered problems, including how to resolve grouping errors. Copies of these updated documents are included on the distribution CD and are also available to download from the Centre for Health Service Development (CHSD) web-site (http://www.uow.edu.au/commerce/chsd/snapshot.html) and from the NSW Department of Health intranet site (accessible to NSW Health employees only).

The new version of SNAPshot also provides you with a new way of submitting your data. In the past you submitted a NoNames copy of your full database to AROC, but now you only need to submit the AROC extract. Details of how to produce the AROC extract can be found in both the SNAPshot V3.6 user manual and the SNAPshot AROC guide.

SNAPshot training: We have been very busy running SNAPshot training sessions over the last few months. Sessions have been held in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide and Hobart for private hospitals with over 100 staff attending. We have also recently commenced a series of training sessions for NSW public hospitals that will continue through the early months of 2005. We are working with the NSW Department of Health to coordinate these sessions which have been offered to all NSW Area Health Service. We expect at least a further 100 people will attend training sessions through this process.

For information on training sessions, or for assistance with using SNAPshot please contact Debra Hinton.

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Phone: (02) 4221 3005
Fax: (02) 4221 4679

And last but not least...

The staff at AROC would like to wish you and your families all the very best for the festive season. Our office will be closed from 24 December until 4 January. At all other times, if you need to discuss any matters relating to AROC, we will be happy to hear from you.

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