



Divisions of General Practice

Information Management Maturity Framework  
(IMMF)

**Toolkit – Inventory of IM  
Communities and Societies.**



# Information Management Maturity Framework Toolkit – Inventory of IM communities, societies.

## Purpose

The purpose of the “Inventory of IM Communities and Societies.” is to assist Divisions to address the action tasks below

Action Tasks	Capacity Task	Element of IM
To raise awareness of appropriate IM Communities and Societies relevant to Division and staff.	Unaware to Reactive	Processes and procedures.

This task should have been identified from the IMMF gap analysis and toolkit specification.

This tool provides the CEO with a simple explanation and overview of the range of Information Management communities and societies that are relevant to a Division and its staff.

## Explanatory notes

Communities and societies of interest and practice are important information sources as well as catalysts for the development of awareness and knowledge of current good practice within IM.

The development of professional links by staff within and across the Divisions also enhances the development of a culture of reflective practice and review within the Division IM to continuously improve procedures and practices.

Communities and societies within IM tend to be predicated on common areas of interests or the development of professional bodies of knowledge. Interest and appropriateness of staff or the Division priorities will assist in the determination of which group or professional body that best meet a Division’s needs.

## Instructional Design

This tool consists of;

### Part 1 - Communities and Societies.

The CEO should review the different communities and societies listed below. In doing so they should be mindful of the areas of interest or communities of practice these bodies represent. To assist in this determination, the communities and societies are listed in three different clusters which reflect their functional orientation as well as a small list of generic information providers.

The three broad areas where the IM communities or societies are of potential interest to Divisions could be loosely defined as those that specialise in:

- Collation, storage and retrieval of Information, with specific emphasis on knowledge creation, management and dissemination.
- Applied use of technology (both software and hardware); and
- The collation, collection and manipulation of data as part of an information management process with a focus on the health sector.

Communities and societies within IM tend to be predicated upon common areas of interests or the development of professional bodies of knowledge. Given the broad scope of IM practice, there is significant overlap between the groups and their areas of interest and specialisations.



In reviewing the list, the CEO should be mindful of the different types of functional clusters. Once reviewed, the CEO should identify with staff which of these groups best meets the Divisions and the staffs needs, to effectively support the Divisions IM strategy and if required, the Division should join selected communities with nominated individuals responsible to review and distribute information arising from such membership to the Division.

### Summary of Outcomes and Resources

<b>Workstreams</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Policies and procedures	Division identifies most appropriate IM Community or Society.	State based office staff may also be available for facilitation and support for new policies and / or procedures Listing of IM Societies and Communities.
Policies and procedures	The Division join selected communities with nominated individuals responsible to review and distribute information arising from such membership.	Listing of IM Societies and Communities.



## Communities and Societies.

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Importantly these areas also reflect significant stages and elements of the information life cycle within the Division.

### Generic Group

There are however, a small group of predominantly online organisations and communities both within Australia and Internationally, whose primary task is to provide a broad range of general information, support and knowledge to small to medium sized Non Government Organisations (NGOs) or Not For Profit (NFP) Organisations on technology and information management issues.

Many of the NGOs or NFPs, have similar roles and models to the Divisions. Consequently, Divisions will find many similarities between the issues they face and those of the other groups using the sites. Generally, these sites are excellent starting points for exploring and finding answers to common IM and technology problems. These sites are generally free to use but will seek a small annual membership.

The sites chosen provide excellent training materials, policy advice and reviews of hardware and software and are well laid out and intuitive to use and cater for a wide range of groups with different technical skills and competencies.

These groups include;

[TechSoup](#) – This non-profit organisation is by far the largest IT / IM support group in the world for NGOs and NFPs. It is an excellent resource, based in the United States of America. It has strong links to similar group in Australia. This is an excellent starting point.

[Community Information Strategies Australia Inc](#) – This is the Australian equivalent to TechSoup. Based in South Australia they however have a national focus. They have a good range of resources on ITC via CommunityIT group.

### Cluster 1 – Groups that identify as expert in the collation, storage and retrieval of information, with specific emphasis on knowledge creation, management and dissemination.

Librarians have traditionally seen themselves operating within information management domain, and have promulgated knowledge and literature within this domain. The principal body of this group within Australia is the '[The Australian Library and Information Association](#) [ALIA]'. This is primarily a professional practice body.

The Library Association of Australia defines one of the key roles of librarians as;

“Managing the storage, organisation, access, retrieval, dissemination, preservation and use of information” (The library and information sector: core knowledge, skills and attitude; [Http://www.alia.org.au/policies/core.knowledge.html](http://www.alia.org.au/policies/core.knowledge.html))



Journal articles and papers from this group often deal with classification of data and its organisation at a general community level, as well working with groups or individuals to determine their information needs for specific purpose.

In relation to Divisions, these groups are often involved in the provision of primary health care information, dissemination of information at a local level and the development of local information directories. In doing so they have being involved in the development of national data models including AS ISO 15489 Records Management.

Archivists are similar to librarians yet specialised. The principal professional body of this group within Australia is the '[Australian Society of Archivists](http://www.archivists.org.au/)'. The role of an archivist they state, is to;

“ ensure that records which have value as authentic evidence of administrative, corporate, cultural and intellectual activity are made, kept and used.” (<http://www.archivists.org.au/> )

While a highly specialised area, its importance has grown with the Privacy Act (1988) and the recognition that the appropriate storage and disposal of information is an important element with in information life cycle.

Records management is the generic field that covers this whole area. 'The professional body of this group within Australia is, '[Records Management Association of Australia](http://www.rmaa.com.au/index.cfm)'. This group defines record management;

“as the management of records from their creation to either ultimate destruction or retention as an archive. Records are born out of business forms, correspondence, notes and reports. Increasingly, they are the product of electronic communications.” (<http://www.rmaa.com.au/index.cfm> )

Similar to archivists, the development of this group and its importance to Divisions has grown with the Privacy Act (1988) and the recognition that the appropriate storage and disposal of information is an important element within the information life cycle.

Within the broader Information management area the [Institute for Information Management](http://www.informationmanagement.org.au/) describes itself as aiming “to become the definitive Australasian industry source on the information management industry”.

## **Cluster 2 – Groups that identify as expert in the applied use in technology (both software and hardware).**

This is a very large field and has many specialists and large professional bodies. In relation to the specific needs of Divisions, there are very few specialist groups or bodies. Often situated within larger Professional bodies, workers have formed Special Interest Groups (SIGs) to meet their specialised needs and interests.

The self-described professional body covering ICT within Australia is [The Australian Computer Society](http://www.acs.org.au/). This group describes itself as ;

“The Australian Computer Society (ACS) is the recognised association for Information & Communications Technology (ICT) professionals” (<http://www.acs.org.au/index.cfm>)

This body has a wide range of interests that are potentially of interest to technical staff of the Division and the implementation of IM process and procedures. This includes security, Internet, database design and application etc. ACS also convenes a special interest group (SIG), Health Informatics Group made up of practitioners and academics.

An international site is [MedicalComputing.org](http://www.medicalcomputing.org/). This site is included because it publishes the *Medical Computing Review*. This publication includes medical computing articles and software reviews for practising physicians at all levels of computer competency. This site takes a wide ranging view of technology and its application and is published with an open access framework and has an international editorial committee.



Within Australia and the international sphere, there are two widely recognised industry / professional bodies. They both produce a range of academic and industry based journals and resources. These two groups both have local chapters. These are;

- Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, or better known as [IEEE](#).
- Association for Computing Machinery, or better know as [ACM](#)

The level of information and knowledge generally contained within their journals is beyond the layperson, however they are important resources for IT professionals.

### **Cluster 3 – Groups that identify as expert in the collation, collection and manipulation of data as part of an information management process (Health).**

Health Informatics groups and similar groups define themselves and their activities in relation to a particular industry or area of work, in this case Healthcare. For example, the American Health Informatics association describes Health Informatics as;

“Health informatics has to do with all aspects of understanding and promoting the effective organization, analysis, management, and use of information in health care”.  
(<http://www.amia.org/informatics/> )

The Health Information Management Association of Australia is the peak national professional association representing health information managers. [The Health Information Management Association of Australia](#). While the peak group in Europe is

[The European Federation for Medical Informatics \(EFMI\)](#) and the United States of America it is the [American Medical Informatics Association](#).

These sites provide information on the information within the health system, in particular the acute care system. Importantly they consider information as part of a process and this is consistent with the IMMF and issues of interoperability across health care system.

HL7, is a data transmission standard, language and descriptor of an organisational aim. The name HL7 refers to layer 7 (the application layer) of the Open Software Interconnection stack with a specific application to health. [HL7 Australia](#), the peak body in Australia, describes HL7 aim as;

To provide (global) standards for the exchange, management and integration of data that supports clinical patient care and the management, delivery and evaluation of healthcare services. Specifically, to create flexible, cost effective approaches, standards, guidelines, methodologies and enable healthcare information system interoperability and sharing of electronic health records." (<http://www.hl7.com.au>)

The importance of HL7 is its wide application in acute care and its growing spread into chronic and primary care. When considering interoperability within the health care system HL7 must be considered as State and Territory Health Departments have adopted HL7 as a standard and are seeking to make all of their health information systems HL7 compliant.

National E- Health Transition Authority ([NeHTA](#)) is a Limited, not-for-profit company established by the Australian, State and Territory governments to develop better ways of electronically collecting and securely exchanging health information. This group must be considered when working on data definitions, standards or any issues of interoperability within a Division, given the importance and scope of its work.

National organisations or groups that define data elements including meta data elements, national data dictionaries, standards used within Australia are of potential or mandated use by Divisions. They include:

- The [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#), which has a wide range of National Data elements and standards and can be readily searched online.
- International Health Terminology Standards Development Organisation. This group is now responsible for [Systematized Nomenclature of Medicine-Clinical Terms](#) or SNOMED. This provides the core general terminology for the electronic health records.



- The [National Archives of Australia](#) website records management section has an excellent overview on Australian Standards and records management.
- [Standards Australia](#) is recognised by the Government as Australia's peak Standards body.

### Summary

The sites listed should be viewed as a starting point when Divisions are seeking out additional information and knowledge to implement or review their IMMF. Most of these sites have links to other sites and a broad range of International resource.

It is important to note that new sites will also be published in the future and current sites may not be kept up to date. For this reason Divisions are encouraged to share information on sites they find pertinent to their needs.

The key to successful adoption of new ways of working within a Division is engagement, consultation and education of all its members

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