An Overview of the Medical Director Clinical Desktop Software Product
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Product Background

Medical Director is used by more than 17,000 clinicians every day, making it Australia’s No. 1 choice for clinicians. Medical Director revolutionised the clinician’s desktop more than 18 years ago and is Australia’s leading clinical software package.

Clinicians can rest assured that through logical workflows our software drives positive health outcomes for patients. Medical Director is used in many clinical settings, including general practice, hospital pre-admission clinics, specialist practices, allied health and multi-disciplinary clinics. Medical Director is the flagship product of Health Communication Network, a company dedicated to Australia’s eHealth strategy, and implementation of those projects that drive positive health outcomes.

Usage Scenarios

Medical Director was first introduced to the Primary Care Physician (General Practitioner) market in Australia. From here, its use spread to all areas of the medical profession. Medical Director is now used by:

- General Practitioners
- Specialists
- Aged Care Facilities
- Hospitals
- Nurse Practitioners
- and many other health professionals ...

Medical Director is used by practitioners in other parts of the world; however it is not customised and does not contain localised drug databases and medicines information.

Links to Accounts Packages

Medical Director is a clinical software package. It provides all the tools that a clinician needs to effectively manage their patients’ consultation and healthcare needs.

Tasks commonly associated with practice management software, generally performed by front of house receptionists or practice managers (e.g. accounting, bookings, etc) are not done by Medical Director directly. Medical Director links to most available practice management software packages, thereby negating the need for dual data entry. HCN has two Practice Management software solutions which directly link with Medical Director, PracSoft and Blue Chip.

Bi-directional links are possible with any vendor’s product and the necessary data transfer protocols for such links are available from the HCN web site or by contacting HCN.

Features

Medical Director is a feature rich product what follows is a brief overview of some of the features. The general layout of the patient screens is as shown below, with a fixed panel at the top pertaining to the patient of interest, and tabbed folders beneath. Generally, a user can navigate from any part of the program to any other part of the program with 1 to 3 mouse clicks.

The Graphic User Interface (GUI) is very intuitive, and with minimum introduction a medical professional can quickly learn how to efficiently run the program.
Clinical Notes

The clinical notes section of the Medical Director software solution allows for data entry by any combination of; typing, voice recognition, hand writing recognition, ‘macro’ style fast auto text key in, where a few key strokes can result in a large amount of text being added, and finally from a series of system specific History and Examination screens (shown above) with check boxes that translate into full text entries into the notes.

All entries from these screens are internally coded allowing for easy searching to find patients meeting specific requirements/presentations.

All clinical notes are stored in an encrypted form on the practice server hard disk drive, thereby preventing unauthorized ‘back door’ access.

Medication Management

Medication Pick List

Medical Director is supplied with an extensive medication pick list. This list contains all compounds currently available in the country of use (currently Australia) and includes all scheduled compounds and the majority of ‘over the counter’ preparations. Products can be selected by either Generic Name or Brand (Trade) Name. Selection can also be achieved by a Class browser, which is a unique combination of both therapeutic and chemical classes. This list is updated periodically via HCN Automatic Update.
Recipes
Medical Director provides a facility for adding User Defined Preparations (Recipes) to the drug database. This is especially useful for extemporaneous preparations and other dermatological ‘cocktails’.

Prescribing
The ability to prescribe a medication is central to the function of the Medical Director package.

Dose Calculator
The built-in Dose Calculator allows clinicians to calculate exact doses where any of the following parameters are known.

- Number of units/kg, the units can be anything
- The patients’ weight
- Number of doses/day

Drug Interactions
Medical Director has one of the most sophisticated drug interaction warning systems of any comparable system world wide. Clinicians’ only see warning messages relevant to the patient they are prescribing for and the clarity of the message allows the doctor to make a quick decision to proceed or cancel. More information is instantly available if desired.

Current interaction checking includes the following:

- Drug - Drug Interaction Checking
- Drug - Disease Interaction Checking
- Drug - Allergy
- Drug - Age of Patient
- Drug - Pregnancy
- Drug - Breast feeding
- Drug - Compliance
- Drug - Abuse
- Drug - Same Generic compound
- Drug - Same Class of compound
- Drug - Previous Deletion reason
- Drug - Gluten Enteropathy
- Drug - Spelling
- Drug - Special Warnings
- Drug - Elite Sport
- Potential Father

Compliance Checking
Whenever a patient’s record is opened Medical Director will automatically process the medication list and check when the last prescription for each item was printed.

If the patient appears to be overdue for a prescription (the number of tablets and repeats supplied is less than that required by the dose and frequency prescribed/dispensed), that drug is highlighted in red in the medication list.

A Compliance Check tool also allows the clinician to see the calculations of the usage of drugs since a patient’s last prescription/dispensing at any time.
Medication Charts
A variety of Medication Chart styles can be printed from within Medical Director. The user can select which of the patient’s current medications to include and the start date and the number of weeks they wish the chart to run. All charts show the Brand and Generic name of the medication, the dose, route of administration and have a patient photo.

Approved Product Information
Medical Director is supplied with a Product Information database containing full approved Product Information (PI) for the majority of drug entries in the MDref database.

Consumer Medicines Information
Consumer Medicines Information (CMI) developed by the various pharmaceutical companies is available for many of the drugs in MDref. This information can be printed as patient handouts, and can be personalised.

Clinical Medical Resources
In addition to the above, a number of standard medication reference text books are available in the MDReference section of the program, accessible from the patient screen. These include Goodman & Gilman’s The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics, and AusDI, both widely acclaimed generic drug information resources.

Physical Activity Prescriptions
The Physical Activity module assists in selecting the most appropriate form of exercise to meet the patient’s lifestyle and health requirements, and then storing and graphing their exercise progress. Physical Activity “Prescriptions” can be generated to help encourage patients who expect a prescription from each attendance.
Investigations (Pathology/Radiology) Ordering & Results

Most investigation tests can be ordered with a couple of key strokes. For Pathology tests, clinicians can create a list of their favorite 10 tests or groupings of tests.

All tests ordered are automatically entered into an “Outstanding Request” file which can be used to track the return of the test result, thereby preventing serious issues if patients fail to have tests completed or labs lose samples, etc.

Test orders can be printed onto supplied stationary, plain paper or for selected labs they can be sent electronically.

Holding File

All investigation test results and other content sent electronically to the Practice appear in the inward holding file. This file can be filtered to show only tests for specific clinicians. From here, the doctor can review the result and act on it accordingly.

Electronic file transfer for results saves an enormous amount of staff time in retrieving and filing paper records.
Results can be imported using a number of lab specific and standard data transfer protocols, including HL7.

Radiology practices have the ability to ‘stream’ DICOM images directly into patient records. Practices using these facilities have no need of radiology film any more. Images are always available from the patient record for clinical review.

Latest technology streaming of high resolution images to Medical Director users from the radiology clinic occurs in real time. This technology also allows reviewing the whole image, or just a fraction of it, matching the native resolution of the original picture. The report is downloaded and stored locally, however the burden of storage of the high-resolution images remains in the radiology practice.

**Immunisations**

Management of patient immunisations in Medical Director differs significantly depending on whether the patient is a child or an adult, with the former being defined as any patient less than 17 years of age. Adult patients will call the standard Medical Director Vaccination Window to record vaccinations, whereas children use the Australian Standard Vaccination Schedule utility.

This tool enables the doctor to see at a glance what immunizations have been given, and what is recommended by the authorities (†) and what is due now (►). Dosing exceptions for ‘catching up’ missed doses are available, as is very detailed information if required.
Clinical Tools & Calculators

Medical Director has a number of built-in clinical tools and calculators. Where possible, they all use existing data to minimize key strokes.

Health Assessments
This is a 9 page wizard style of tool which provides an easy to follow general health assessment for a person >65 years of age. The assessment can be printed out to give to the patient and a copy is stored in their clinical record.

Care Plans
This is a 6 page customizable wizard style of tool which provides an easy to follow general schema to create a personalised Care Plan for the patient. The plan can be printed out to give to the patient and a copy is stored in their clinical record.

Percentile Charts
Users can plot the values for children against their population norms and track progress.
Data included:
- Length 0-3yrs
- Weight 0-3yrs
- Head Circ 0-3yrs
- Height 2-18yrs
- Weight 2-18yrs

Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale
The Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale is available for female patients over the age of 13 years. It is presented as a 10 page wizard style tool.
Mini Mental State Examination
Use this tool to assess the probability of cognitive impairment based on the results of a set of structured questions. The results of the questionnaire are recorded in the patient’s Progress Notes and a score is saved to the patient’s record allowing the information to be graphed over time.

Gestational Calculator
The Gestation Calculator allows the calculation of EDC (Estimated Date of Confinement) from either the LMP (Last Menstrual Period) or the date of an Ultrasound scan.

Gestational Age

CV Risk
This calculator is based on the long term Framingham Study data and presents the percentile risk of cardiac death from coronary artery disease over the next six years. The values are normalized against country specific actuarial data and the results are displayed graphically.

Clinicians can vary any of the input data to highlight to the patient the effect of say ceasing smoking, etc.

Renal Function
The Renal Function Calculator allows you to calculate the patient’s GFR (Glomerular Filtration Rate) based on their weight (kg) and the Creatinine level (mmol/l).

The Renal Function Calculator uses both the Cockcroft-Gault Formula (GFR) and the Abbreviated MDRD Formula (eGFR).

Respiratory Function
Based on the patient’s age, height and sex, standard data sets are used to present predicted normal values, for both before and after broncho dilation.
**Pain Assessment**

The Pain Assessment Tool lets users document locations and descriptions of pain and lets the patient grade the pain from 0 -10.

Values can be collected and compared over time to assess how various treatments are working.

**Geriatric Depression Scale**

The Geriatric Depression Scale helps diagnose and manage depression in elderly patients (50 and above) by indicating the probability of depression based on the results of a set of structured questions.

The results of the questionnaire are recorded in the patient’s Progress Notes and a score is saved to the patient’s record allowing, the information to be graphed over time.

**Metric Conversion Calculator**

With patients presenting from many different backgrounds, the inclusion of this simple two way conversion calculator into Medical Director has made it much easier for clinicians to understand accurately exactly what data is being presented to them.

The doctors can standardise how they document their records.

**NR Tracker**

The INR tracker allows clinicians to accurately follow a patient’s International Normalized Ratio, when they are taking anticoagulants e.g. Warfarin.

Ideal ranges can be set and the graph utility allows easy review over time.

**Weight/BMI**

The weight calculator lets users record and track a patient’s weight over time. The tool automatically calculates the patient’s Body Mass Index (BMI) and both can be graphed over time. Race specific ‘normal ranges’ are also provided.
Preventive Health Prompts

This module provides assistance in identifying and preventing issues and potential problems by making suggestions or recommending actions. The recommendations are based on information currently stored (or absent) from the patient’s record.

The following image is an example of a Preventive Health Prompt that appears upon opening a patient’s record.

Preventive Health Prompts can be customised for each patient.

Antenatal Records

The Obstetrics module is available to female patients.

The module is used to store an obstetric history and details of antenatal visits for each pregnancy. The Obstetrics display is split into two sections, with the upper displaying information about the patient’s pregnancies and the lower a record of the antenatal visits for the selected pregnancy.
Travel Medicine

The Travel Medicine module allows the clinician to enter a destination, duration of stay (relevant for Malaria prophylaxis) and an optional departure date. If a departure date is entered then the tool will calculate the most efficient timing schedule to give the various vaccinations to maximize their effect before departure. The Travel Medicine tool also has links to Web based resources to assist clinicians to provide the most up to date advice.

Recalls and Reminders

Medical Director provides a robust Recall and Reminder system to allow users to perform both of these important tasks on behalf of their patients when necessary. A Recall is a reminder note sent to the patient in hard copy form or by email or SMS to remind them that they are due for a visit.

Recalls are first created, and then sent to the patient in advance of their visit.

Communications

Electronic Prescriptions

Medical Director has a built-in facility to securely send patients prescription details electronically to eRx Script Exchange for retrieval by participating pharmacists. Dispense notifications for consenting patients are returned to Medical Director and stored in the medication history after the medication is dispensed by the pharmacist. As at May 2010, the third party product eRx Script Exchange is fully integrated. Other systems may be introduced over time as they come to market and meet appropriate security and technical standards.

Internal Letter Writer

Medical Director is supplied with a built-in word processor function. This can be used as is or can be used with user defined or supplied Templates Referral Letters. These cover a wide range of functions and all can automatically include almost any data value from within the Medical Director product.

Letters can be printed, faxed or emailed from within the product.

A medical dictionary is supplied to facilitate spell checking.
Secure Clinical Document exchange- MDExchange

MDExchange is a system for the rapid and secure electronic transmission of communications between medical professionals. Our secure clinical document exchange component or MDExchange is free to all Medical Director 3 subscribers and facilitates the flow of discharge summaries, reports and referrals. Medical Director users can access the MDExchange online directory (a directory of other MD3 users using MDExchange) and add them to your own address book.

MDExchange functionality allows doctors to create correspondence using the Medical Director Letter Writer, and send it via Secure Message Transport to other MDExchange users that are identified by searching the MDExchange online directory.

Technical Information:

MDExchange uses two services – HCN MDExchange Service for address book and account management, and HCN Relay Delivery Service for secure message transmission. Both of these services communicate externally (to the MDExchange servers) via SSL. Certificate identity is checked both ways – i.e. the server checks the client’s certificate and the client also validates the server’s certificate.

Within the practice the MDExchange client communicates to these services using named pipes connections. To allow this communication you need Windows File and Printer Sharing ports opened in any firewall (which must be enabled for Medical Director anyway and is open by default in Windows firewall). The named pipe communication is authenticated where possible (within a domain) or is anonymous in a workgroup environment.

Email

If users have MAPI-compliant (Messaging Application Programming Interface) e-mail software installed on their workstation, letters can be sent from and imported to the Letter Writer. It is not Medical Director that actually sends or receives the e-mail. Rather, Medical Director interacts with third-party e-mail software, and it is this software that does the sending and receiving via the users’ e-mail server.

World Wide Web

Medical Director uses the web to access a number of external data repositories. Web connection is not essential to run the program but it is required when using functionality such as MDReference.

HCN Messenger

HCN Messenger is a built-in text-based messaging utility with functionality similar to Microsoft Windows Messenger. It allows users to communicate instantly with all staff members and practitioners on the practice network.

Reference Material

Medical Director is shipped with a large amount of reference material included. All the medication related look-up tables, Product Information and Consumer Medication Information sheets, Independent drug monographs, patient disease information handouts etc are supplied on the CD and updated via the web.

In addition, an extensive library of International Medical Textbooks, Journals and Periodicals together with other material is available to Medical Director users via the Web in the MDReference Section.

This information is updated daily and has a Universal Search Engine over the top to facilitate easy look up of information.

Access to the MDReference material is via the Patient Screen.

Documents Tab

Medical Director provides a facility for importing external documents and third-party files into the database and storing them with a patient’s record. Such ‘documents’ can include spreadsheets, word processor files, text files and images. Essentially, you can import any MS Windows document format you desire, and (provided you have the associated ‘source’ software installed) open these documents via Medical Director.
Medical Director provides a TWAIN-compliant interface for scanning external documents (such as x-rays or patient letters) and importing ECGs created by third-party systems. By using this technology Medical Director can also accept image data from devices other than scanners, such as digital cameras.

**Acupuncture Module**

- Shows a summary of all previous acupuncture consultations together with the acupuncture points used.
- The new acupuncture record commences with the previous points listed. These can be edited or new points easily added from the pick list shown in 3.
- Pick list of all acupuncture points. This list uses a variety of nomenclature.
- This section allows reasons for the consultation to be listed and graded for each attendance to assist practitioners to know if the selected points are helping to reduce the symptoms.

**Links to Clinical Equipment**

HCN has worked very closely with a number of suppliers of specialised medical equipment to enable their products to integrate fully with Medical Director. In a variety of tools and other places, if Medical Director finds certain registry settings (set by the 3rd party products) it will then draw data into Medical Director directly from these products. Current products as at 18/5/10 supported in this way include;

**Blood Glucose:** Abbott Precision Link

**Blood Pressure:** AccuWin Pro, Cardio Perfect, OfficeMedic, Omron, Oscar2.

**Dermatology photographic camera/software:** FotoFinder Dermoscope

**ECG:** CardioLine Delta, Cardio Perfect, CardioView, Macquarie CT200c Realtime, Micro Medical Biolog CV3000, Hihon, Norav, OfficeMedic, Realtime.

**Oximetry:** OfficeMedic

**Respiratory Function:** Cosmed (Kit u, Pony, PonyFX, Quark), Cardio Perfect. Easyone, Fukuda SpiroAnalyser (ST-75, ST-95), MicroMedical (Spida 3, Spida 4, Spida 5), Spirotrac IV, OfficeMedic, Vitalograph, WinspiroPro.
Patient Education Material

A series of educational leaflets are available for printing and distributing to patients. These leaflets cover hundreds of topics of interest to doctors and patients, and the Leaflet Browser interface allows them to be viewed. Customised leaflets, created in-house or sourced from 3rd parties, can be imported. Most leaflets can be printed on a single A4 sheet of paper.

In addition, a separate series of handouts about travel medicine-related topics is available from the travel medicine tool.

Asthma Action Plans are also available. These can be auto generated once the patient’s best Peak Flow value is entered.

Data Searching Capabilities

A comprehensive search utility produces a list of patients matching user-defined search criteria. The resultant list can be printed out for further action, exported as a database file or mail merged to templated letters using the built-in Letter Writer section.

Reports

Medical Director has the following pre-formatted reports available.
Demographic Summary
Current Pregnancies
Prescribing Summary
PAP Tests Summary
Immunisation Summary
Ceased Medications

Other reports are available using the MDStats tool. This is a tool used to access the data in Medical Director and provide specific reports required by external parties.
Surgical Audit Tool

Medical Director has an optional Surgical Audit Tool as part of its offering. This tool was designed specifically to provide a repository for information required for surgical audits, enabling users to automatically generate reports of this information.

The Surgical Audit Tool provides the following key advantages to Medical Director users:

- A consistent method for entering surgical procedure information.
- A reduction of the time consumed entering surgical procedure information and preparing reports.
- The provision of a consistent format for reports.
- The provision of an efficient method for organising and retrieving surgical procedure information.
- A reduction of reporting errors due to misplaced surgical procedure information.

This tool has been passed by the Royal Australian College of Surgeons as meeting their strict internal audit requirements for its members.

Security

Because of the potentially sensitive nature of the data recorded in Medical Director’s patient database, security is implemented using a User Database and access levels, together with encryption on the hard drive of the actual data. Access levels determine what information a user has access to.

Every user of Medical Director must be defined in the user database. Each user’s record includes the user’s name, password and access level. When a user logs on, their password is matched against the user database to determine who they are and what level of access they have.

Progress and Clinical notes are stored on the Medical Director SQL server in an encrypted format.

Automatic screen locking after a user defined period of inactivity is also provided to protect against records being viewed by wandering eyes.

Data Import/Export

Medical Director provides a number of standardised Import and Export routines through its Maintenance Utility to facilitate the transfer of data in and out of the product. Both Patient Demographic data and Patient Clinical data can be transferred.

The Address Book tool in Medical Director can also import and export data in a variety of ways.

Scanning

When Medical Director scans images, it calls the software that was supplied with the clinics’ scanner. It is this third-party software that performs the actual scan.

Scanning can be done from within a patient’s record, or by using the supplied bulk scanning utility in the Maintenance Suite.

Updates

Medical Director comprises the actual program and a lot of supporting static data files. These data files are supplied and updated by HCN to all registered users. They contain information such as medication pick lists, Product Information Sheets, drug interaction data sets and independent drug monographs. HCN updates these files on a monthly basis. These updates are provided via the web. All registered users are notified (usually by email) when updates are available. Program updates are supplied on an ‘as needs’ basis to all registered users, and are distributed on CD and/or via HAU (HCN Automatic Update), a means by which you can quickly and easily update HCN software applications via your network’s active Internet connection.
Backup

Medical Director is supplied with the HCN Backup and Restore utilities. These will backup and restore all Medical Director 3 data and settings.

These modules provide options for backing up data to any device which can be referenced by a logical drive letter (e.g. C:), including hard drives, floppy drives, ZIP, JAZ, USB drives and additionally CD-R/CD-RW/DVD-R/DVD-RW if the drive manufacturers direct-write software (e.g. Nero, InCD, Roxio, DirectCD) is installed and the device is mapped to a logical drive letter. The utility also offers the convenience of industry standard ZIP format.

There are a range of options available for customising the backup to suit various requirements and feedback on the process of applications is provided to the user during the backup process.

Product Support & Help Files

The Medical Director software package has a number of ways that users can gain help or support.

Quick Start Guides are available via the HCN website, to get users going. Easy to read and understand, it is all that most need to get underway. [http://www.hcn.com.au/Support+%26+Downloads/Training](http://www.hcn.com.au/Support+%26+Downloads/Training)

A detailed on-line Help Manual, including graphics of all important screens, provides information on all aspects of the program. Users can search by topic, or read it like a book. The help files can be read directly, or desired sections can be printed out. Pressing F1 anywhere in the program will take users directly to context sensitive help files.

Call our Technical Support Team on 1300 788 802. Telephone support lines are open, Monday to Friday Australian Eastern Standard Time from 8am- 8pm (weekdays) and 9am-5pm (weekends), except National Holidays.

Visit the HCN Web Site for program information, data and program updates and talk to other users via the MD Forum [www.hcn.com.au](http://www.hcn.com.au)

Classroom Training Sessions are available, for more information please call 1300 300 161.

Coding
surg.abdo@adhe@lapas

Clinical terms used in the Medical Director software package are internally coded using the Docle coding system. The Docle codes are mapped to ICD-9, ICD-10AM and ICPC2+. Conversions to Snomed CT are currently underway.

Medications used in the Medical Director software package have a proprietary internal code and this is mapped to the Australian Pharmaceutical Benefits Schedule codes, ATC Codes, and the Phoenix Medical Publishing internal codes. The medication data file is also classified to a proprietary internal class code. When the Snomed CT Medication codes are declared by the Australian authorities, the medication data set will be mapped to this as well.

The General Practice Research Network (GPRN)

The General Practice Research Network (GPRN) is Australia’s largest observational cohort on general practice activity. It is an electronic research network of a proactively enrolled representative sample of GP Medical Director users, contributing their prescribing data (linked to indications) since 2000, allowing for longitudinal analysis of de-identified doctor/patient records in Australia.

This data can be used extensively by government, the pharmaceutical industry and medical researchers to do both retrospective and prospective analyses looking at prescribing trends, disease incidence and prevalence, and how clinicians are managing specific health issues.

The GPRN also tracks the use of the Medical Director software – feature by feature, and this facilitates intelligent user interactions to provide feedback and enhancements.

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About Health Communication Network (HCN)

Health Communication Network (HCN) is the leading provider of clinical and practice management software for Australian clinicians. HCN’s head office is located in Sydney, with satellite offices in most major metropolitan cities.

HCN focuses on improving patient outcomes by providing evidence based software tools to health care professionals at the point of care. Over 17,000 general practitioners and more than 1,400 Specialists, use HCN’s Medical Director software to care for their patients during the consultation process. Our practice management solutions, Pracsoft and Blue Chip, are used in close to 4,140 medical practices Australiawide.

The company has a staff complement of 131, employing the industry’s largest software development and customer service teams. These teams are dedicated to the delivery and support of new and enhanced products for the Australian health care sector. Annual turnover for HCN is approximately $36-million AUD and the company is a subsidiary of Primary Health Care Limited.

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Disclaimer:
All of the provided information is based on the Australian version of the Medical Director™ product as at the time of publication. Actual product versions vary with upgrades or product customisation. Product features and specifications are subject to change without notice. Please contact HCN for the latest information.