

ADIN Quality Assurance Framework

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1. ADIN Mission Statement

The mission of the Australian Drug Information Network (ADIN) is to provide a central point of access to drug information to the Australian community.

ADIN will do this by:

- establishing and maintaining a Website dedicated to the subject of drugs, with an emphasis on illicit drugs
- marketing the ADIN to professionals working with illicit drug users and their families
- evaluating the usefulness and relevance of the ADIN service and the information it disseminates to its target audiences
- developing and applying quality assurance measures to the ADIN service, with an emphasis on the Website and the information it contains
- adopting a continuous improvement approach to the provision of the ADIN service.

2. Values

The ADIN service is underpinned by a set of core values that guide its development. These are:

- Information can **empower** individuals and communities to address drug issues effectively
- Australians have a **right of equitable access** to quality drug information
- Drug issues affect the whole community. **Participation** of key stakeholders in all areas of ADIN development is encouraged and supported to ensure its **relevance and acceptability** and to take into account a **broad spectrum of needs and issues**
- **Quality** of information and quality of service are essential
- A **continuous improvement** approach will ensure that the community has access to information and service of the **best possible standard**
- ADIN's processes will be **transparent** and **accountability** to key stakeholders will be maintained.

3. Key QA Objective

Establish a QA process that ensures a service that:

- Delivers useful and relevant drug information to its audience in a timely manner
- Involves all identified key stakeholders and/or representatives of key stakeholder groups in its development and evaluation
- Is inclusive of a diverse range of information and information sources to meet the range of community need
- Is accessible to a range audiences
- Clearly identifies and evaluates its content, and
- Has in place measures to maximise the appropriateness of information delivered to its audience

4. QA Principles

4.1 General

The ADIN QA process is governed by the following set of principles:

- The Quality of the ADIN service will be continuously improved.
- Information or advertising will not promote harmful use of substances nor promote the manufacture or supply of illicit or harmful substances.

4.2 QA Principles: ADIN Website

- The ADIN Website will provide users with ease of use and navigability, and shall be clear, concise, up to date and visually attractive
- The ADIN Website will be logically organised and clearly mapped
- The ADIN search facilities will be designed to maximise the relevance to the information returned to the searcher
- The ADIN Website will be appropriate for and accessible to a broad range of users, including the specified target groups
- Confidentiality of personal data and privacy ethics will be applied
- Disclaimers will clearly state ADIN's position and responsibility with respect to any information contained in the site or any information consequently accessed from the ADIN site
- ADIN entry and exit points will be explicitly sign-posted
- Information contained in the site will be supported by clear references to source data and, where possible, have specific HTML links to that data.
- The date when a page was last modified will be clearly displayed
- ADIN will provide contact addresses for visitors seeking further information or support
- The Webmaster will display a contact email address clearly throughout the Website.
- Support for the Website will be clearly identified, including the identities of commercial and non-commercial organisations that have contributed funding, services or material for this site
- Any advertising will be clearly identified and a brief description of the advertising policy adopted by ADIN will be displayed on the site
- Advertising and other promotional material will be presented to viewers in a manner and context that facilitates differentiation between it and the original material created by ADIN.

4.3 Principles: ADIN Website Content

- All content contained in the ADIN Website will be assessed according to a set of ADIN QA standards and criteria
- Assessment of information and other content will be carried out by qualified experts in the alcohol and drug field who have at least 5 years specialist experience and are a member (by employment or other association) of a reputable organisation
- ADIN's QA process aims to ensure inclusion of information that may be useful to its audience
- Any information promoting medical interventions or treatment modalities must adhere to the normal standards (including peer review) applied to information derived from scientific study and/or academic research
- ADIN's QA process will assess information on the basis of merit or usefulness as assessed by qualified experts. The process is one of expert assessment, not censorship.
- ADIN cannot guarantee the accuracy or validity of all the information accessible through the ADIN Website. It will however provide an expert professional opinion about the accuracy or validity of the information or site.
- Information contained in the ADIN Website will be assessed against a set of standards relating to:
 - Purpose
 - Content
 - Authorship and credibility, and
 - Design

5. ADIN Website QA Process

5.1 Functionality

- Develop information accomplices and Thesaurus
- Ongoing testing and improvement

5.2 Design

- Involve all key stakeholders in the design of the ADIN Website
- Provide a feedback facility on the Website for user comments

5.3 Evaluation

- The Webmaster will gather feedback about functionality and design from member services

6. Website Content QA Process

6.1 Process

- Review literature and existing models of QA criteria for health information on the internet
- Consult with key stakeholders
- Develop draft process and assessment criteria
- Select sites for assessment
- Develop criteria for expert reviewers
- Recruit expert reviewers
- Test process and criteria with expert reviewers
- Modify criteria and/or process as required
- Include sites that meet the inclusion assessment criteria
- Ongoing evaluation via feedback from Website users and National Reference Group.

6.2 Site Selection

Prior to inclusion assessment, sites may be identified as potential ADIN sites through any of the following ways:

- Active and ongoing searching for drug-related content on the World Wide Web by the ADIN project
- Submission to ADIN by an individual or organisation to have their site considered for inclusion
- Referral to the ADIN QA Committee of a site by an individual or organisation

Emphasis will be on:

- Australian content
- Content emanating from reputable and legitimate organisations, for example Government Departments or academic institutions
- Current information
- Content provided or produced by organisations with recognised expertise and experience in alcohol and drug issues

6.3 Assessment

- Site/content assessment will be undertaken by alcohol and drug professionals with at least 5 years experience in the field.
- A register of reviewers will identify the credentials of the reviewer, and their particular area of expertise.

- Reviewers will be matched with site content.
- Utilising an assessment proforma reviewers will make a recommendation for site inclusion or exclusion; and write a brief review of the site identifying its particular strengths or weaknesses
- Where a reviewer is unable to make a clear decision for or against inclusion, the site will be referred back to the QA Committee for further consideration.

6.4 Evaluation

The Website content QA process will be evaluated using both quantitative and qualitative methods. These will include:

- Online consumer feedback/evaluation forms
- Feedback from reviewers and the National Reference Group.

The process and criteria will be modified in response to evaluative feedback.

6.5 Criteria

A set of criteria for inclusion of sites in the ADIN Website has been developed. This criteria enables the assessment of the quality of four key areas:

- Purpose
- Content
- Authorship and credibility, and
- Design

The application of the criteria to a site should not be seen merely as a pass/fail exercise, but an assessment exercise. The application of the criteria will enable ADIN to 'tag' a site as being of a particular standard or as being appropriate to a particular audience.

The criteria for exclusion are:

- Obscenity
- Deceit
- Racism
- Sexism
- Incitement to riot or violence
- Promotes the manufacture, supply or use of illicit substances (excluding evidence-based advice aiming to reduce the risk of harm to drug users that meets other inclusion criteria)

Reviewers are provided with Quality Criteria Assessment Guidelines to ensure consistency of the assessment process.

Where reviewers are unable to make a clear decision on site inclusion/exclusion, the site will be referred to the ADIN QA Committee for further consideration.

7. Key Stakeholder Roles

7.1 Consortium Management Committee

- Ensure contractual requirements are met
- Direct and support the QA Committee
- Refer matters to the National Reference Group and receive advice.

7.2 QA Committee

- Develop and monitor the QA Process and Criteria
- Report to the Consortium Management Committee

7.3 Commonwealth

- Advise the Consortium Management Committee of its issues or concerns with respect to QA

7.4 National Reference Group (NRG)

The NRG is the key group representing the range of target audiences and users of the ADIN.

Through this group the broader community has an important and necessary influence on ADIN and the QA process. The key tasks of the NRG in relation to QA are to:

- provide ongoing comment and feedback to the Consortium Management Committee on the QA process
- liaise and discuss ADIN QA issues and concerns with their constituency, or group that they represent, and report any issues or concerns to the ADIN Consortium Management Committee.

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