

TARGET-D

Mental health care can be complex and time consuming, Target D is an approach in which patients complete an online assessment and receive a treatment recommendation matched their predicted risk of future mental health problems.

Why Target-D?

An estimated 20% of Australians (3.2 million people) have experienced a mental disorder in the last 12 months. Of these, anxiety disorders were the most common, followed by affective disorders such as depression. Only 35% of Australians with anxiety and depression access treatment.

Most people seeking help for depressive symptoms seek that help in primary care.

This is a mixed group spanning mild symptoms which may spontaneously remit, to severe symptoms needing many resources. There is no systematic approach or tool to assist GPs to target their management of mental health problems to the individual.

The Target-D approach

The Target D approach has been developed based upon 15 years of research and investigation, by the University of Melbourne. The approach has considered GP, practice staff, and patient perspectives of how general practice provides mental health care, and seeks to enhance the capacity of general practice to meet the needs of the people that seek their care.

What is the Target D Clinical Prediction Tool?

Core to the Target-D approach to depression care is a clinical prediction tool (CPT) that uses clinical and psychosocial information to predict future depression severity.¹ This a web based tool takes two minutes to complete, and can be delivered to patients in the waiting room or in the GP consulting room. Individuals are provided with feedback reflecting their responses, an opportunity to set priorities and reflect on motivation to change. They are then presented with evidence-based treatment options matched to their predicted depression severity. The tool aims to systematise depression care and guide GP management, while respecting clinical judgment and patient autonomy.

For further information about implementing the Target D tool in your General Practice:

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¹ Chondros, P., Davidson, S., Wolfe, R., Gilchrist, G., Dowrick, C., Griffiths, F., Hegarty, K., Herrman, H., Gunn, J., Development of a prognostic model for predicting depression severity in adult primary patients with depressive symptoms using the *diamond* longitudinal study. *Journal of Affective Disorders*. 227, (2018) 854 -860.