Archiving
Helpful Information and Resources

To ensure high quality data, it is essential to maintain your patient database with archiving practices designed to keep health records accurate and current.

Benefits of archiving

Archiving inactive patients will improve the quality of practice data by ensuring that data is accurate and up to date. Having up to date data is beneficial in general practice because:

- It ensures better quality data analysis and reporting.
- Maintaining your patient data base can improve patient health outcomes and business potential.
- Accurate data is an accreditation standard under the RACGP (Royal Australian College of General Practitioners) 5th edition standards for General Practice.

Things to consider

When planning an archiving activity, there are a few things to consider, such as:

- Consider contacting your software provider directly, they can provide support and help you through the process. Your software provider will also be also to provide advice about reactivation of inactive patients and what to do if you make a mistake.
- Archiving of inactive patients is a great Quality Improvement activity, consider reaching out to your area's Quality Improvement coach for support on how to complete a PDSA.

How to archive in your practice

Remember that archiving and data cleansing activities should be implemented as an ongoing process that works with the systems that your practice has in place. Archiving processes need to work for your individual practice. Consider the following:

- How do the services you provide impact on your active/inactive patient data? e.g., Urgent Care, Skin checks, Immunisations. This could impact on how you decide to archive in your practice i.e., when to archive patients, and how often archiving is conducted.
- Are the staff in your practice aware of how to archive? Could this be used as a training opportunity or could archiving be included as part of your onboarding process for new staff?

Continuous Quality Improvement

It is important to review your practice archiving process to ensure that the system you have in place is achieving the desired outcomes. To assist you in the review process you can refer to your practice data reports, following an archive or data cleansing activity, you should see a change in the percentage of active patients on your next report.

For further support with this important data-driven quality improvement (QI) activity contact Practice Assist and one of WAPHA's practice support team members will be in touch as soon as possible.
You can also refer to the Practice Assist **Quality Improvement toolkit** for helpful information on QI in your practice.

Resources and helpful links

Archiving patients – Best Practice software   **Reactivating patients – Best practice software**
Archiving patients – Medical Director software   **Reactivating patients – Medical Director software**
PDSA template   **RACGP Standards for general practice**