Prevention is better then cure, right?

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Overview

• Prevention – what do we mean?
• Prevention – why would we do it?
• What might a global view of prevention tell us?
• Segmentation
• Using primary prevention as an example
• What are some of the challenges?
• The importance of research
Prevention – at what level?

• **Primary prevention**
  – Promotion of health
  – Prevention of disease

• **Secondary prevention**
  – Early detection
  – Prompt intervention to correct departures from good health or treat early signs of disease

• **Tertiary prevention**
  – Reducing impairment and disability
  – Minimising suffering
  – Promoting adjustment to chronic or irremediable conditions
Why a preventive approach?

• Patients
  – Often respond to even brief interventions
  – Have enhanced quality of life, reduced morbidity and mortality from some preventive activities

• GPs
  – Value preventive approaches
  – Are valued by patients when they take this approach
  – Understand that preventive approaches can realise a productivity gain for all stakeholders
Starting with a global view

Results of a re-analysis of the monthly prevalence of illness in the community and the roles of various sources of health care. Each box represents a subgroup of the largest box, which comprises 1000 persons. Data are for persons of all ages.

So … we need to segment

• Segment by
  – Primary prevention
  – Secondary prevention
  – Tertiary prevention

• Segment by
  – Interventions demonstrated in the research evidence to be (cost) effective

• Is this the same thing?
Primary prevention – an example

- RACGP Guidelines for preventive activities in general practice (6th edn)
  - An evidence-based guide to preventive activities for Australian general practice
  - Consultations that are only for primary prevention are (in the main) not covered by the Medicare Benefits Schedule
  - This area is one of opportunity for the private health insurers
So ... what about the challenges?

- We need to know and understand the impact of:
  - The ‘Pay back’ period
    - The period that it takes for a preventive measure to realise a net benefit
  - ‘Hit and run’ behaviour
    - The ‘investment’ in prevention being recouped by another insurer
  - Competition and collaboration
    - To what extent can we collaborate?
  - Economies of scale
    - Where will economies of scope or scale influence our decisions.
General practice – our challenges

• Is general practice?
  – Indispensable
  – Over-burdened
  – Reliable
  – Efficient/productive
We need to research and evaluate

• We need to know
  – What works
  – Why it works, and in what situations
  – How to replicate it
  – How to adapt it?
• Thus, we need to invest in research and evaluation.