In March 2012, the Emergency Care Improvement and Clinical Network (ECIICN) embarked on its fourth round of evidence-based improvement projects in Emergency Departments (EDs). The aim of these projects is to enhance the use of evidence-based care in EDs to reduce variation in clinical practice and to improve consistency of care.

Latrobe Regional Hospital Emergency Department selected ‘Improving the management of renal colic’ as the topic for improvement. Renal colic is a common condition at ED and causes great distress for patients. The project has presented the ED with the opportunity to improve management for patients suffering renal colic and ensure uniformity in care of these patients.

- Reviewed current practice and outcomes, including pre-data audit
- Researched current best practice
- Assessed and revised current clinical practice guidelines
- Developed Renal Colic pathway shown below (on a double-sided lanyard)
- Created high visibility education board on Renal Colic
- Education involving all staff

1. Non-steroidal agents within 60 minutes of ED presentation increased from 30% to 53% (p=NS)
2. Pain score <2 at 60 minutes after ED presentation was unchanged; 20% to 36% (p=NS)
3. Discharged on course of NSAID (unless have reduced renal function) increased from 14% to 50% (p<0.01)
4. Has documented pain score, temperature measurement, renal function test, white cell count and MSU increased from 53% to 87% (p<0.01)

- Set achievable goals
- Increase the number of project team members
- Frequent repetition and encouragement works
- Education is ongoing due to the frequent turnover of medical and nursing staff

Engage more of the Clinical nurse specialists in the team
Pay more attention to the importance of placement and variation of the educational posters

Our staff have greater recognition of typical Renal Colic presentation
Patients are receiving more appropriate analgesia in a shorter period of time
HMOs and nursing staff are more confident a clear management pathway.