

Point-of-Care Testing for Sexually Transmissible Infections: Translating a Trial into Routine Practice



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On behalf of the TTANGO2 Collaborators and Investigators

Background

The TTANGO (Test, Treat ANd GO) randomised controlled trial (2013-2015) evaluated whether use of a molecular point-of-care (POC) test for chlamydia (CT) and gonorrhoea (NG) could improve the timeliness of treatment in 12 remote Aboriginal communities in Western Australia, Far North Queensland and South Australia.

Results showed that use of POC tests by Aboriginal primary care staff substantially reduced the time to treatment compared with standard laboratory testing. The POC tests had very high sensitivity and specificity and were found to be highly acceptable to patients and health service staff.

Objectives

The second phase, called 'TTANGO2' aims to translate POC testing for CT and NG on the GeneXpert into a routine program, which will be implemented in 30 Aboriginal primary care services.

Additionally, the program will integrate POC testing into sexual health continuous quality improvement (CQI) activities. This poster outlines the strategies employed to ensure the uptake and long-term sustainability of the program as it transitions from the trial phase.



Methods

A translation framework for TTANGO2 was established based on; (i) community engagement and consultation, (ii) POC testing, training and quality management, and (iii) STI CQI activities.

A transition workshop was held with health services in November 2015, giving TTANGO trial participants the opportunity to provide feedback on POC training models, operational aspects and STI testing and management processes. The findings from the workshop, along with accessibility research from the trial, informed the second phase.



In developing the translation framework, several key factors to building a sustainable program were identified, some of which are outlined in the Outcomes and Results section.



A report summarising the findings of the Transition Workshop was distributed to all TTANGO participants.

Main Outcomes and Results

Program expansion began by engaging a wide network of health services and stakeholders, providing them with opportunities for input into the program implementation. To date, 27 health services across 4 states (WA QLD, SA and NT) have been recruited for TTANGO2, including those who participated in the TTANGO Trial.



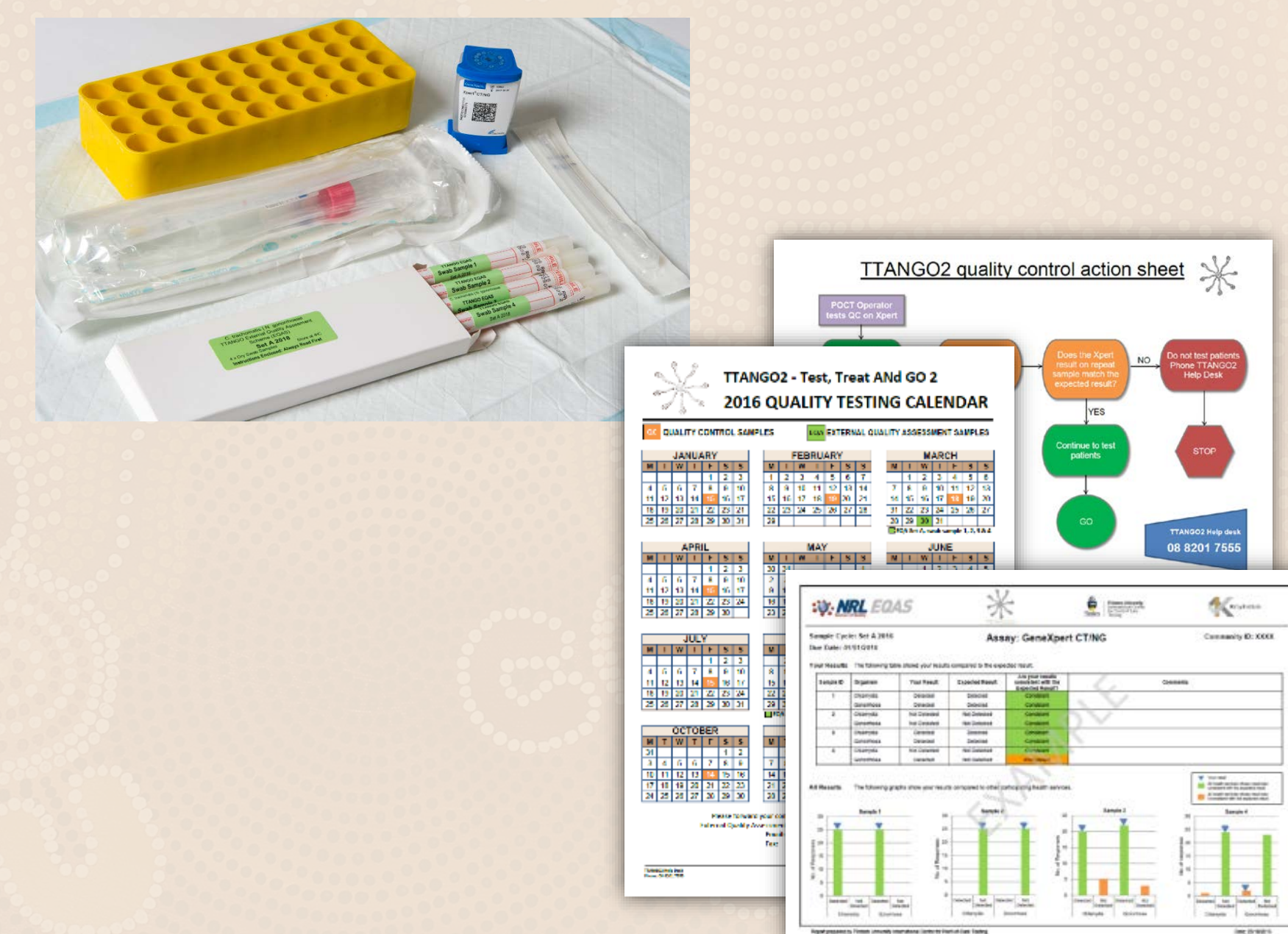
Map showing general location of services recruited.

A comprehensive, flexible and accessible training system was developed based on existing successful POC testing training models in rural and remote Australia. This was designed recognising there is high staff turnover rates in remote areas.

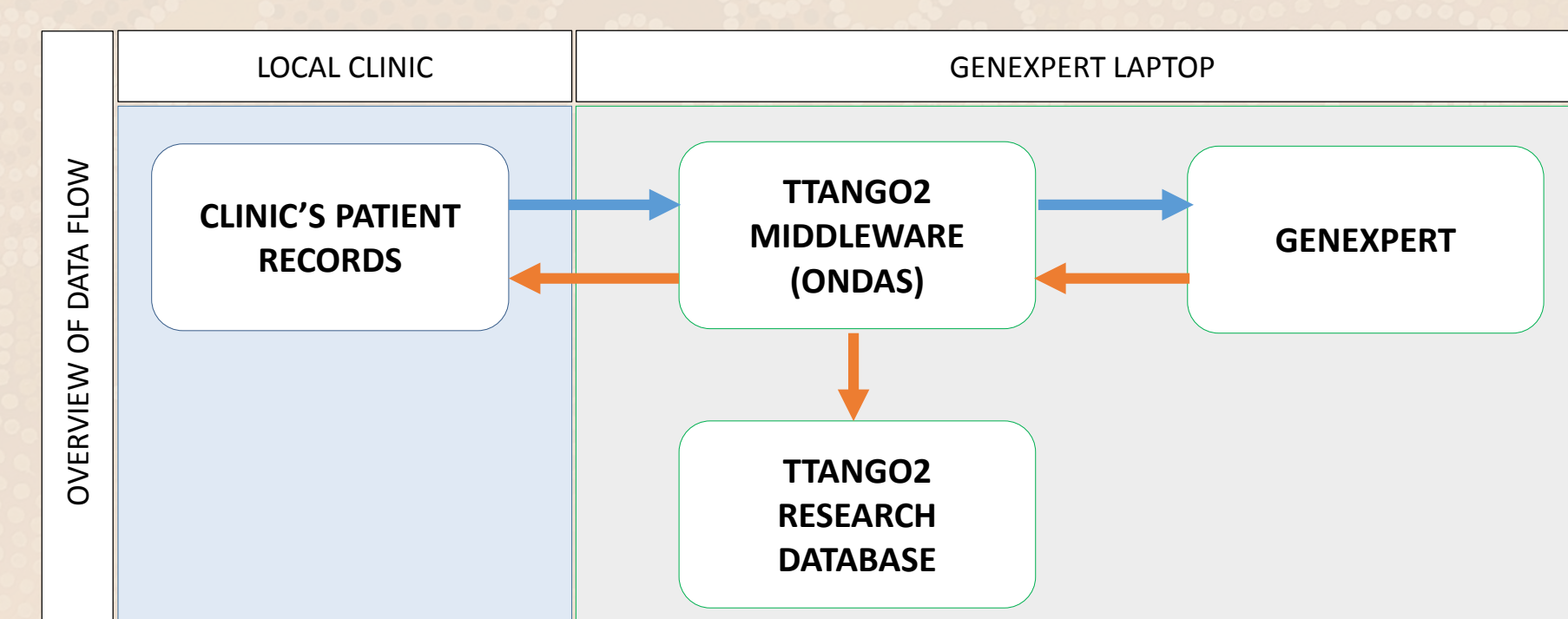


A flexible training system has been developed, including resources such as training manuals, quick reference posters, instructional videos and a 'Participant Only' TTANGO2 webpage.

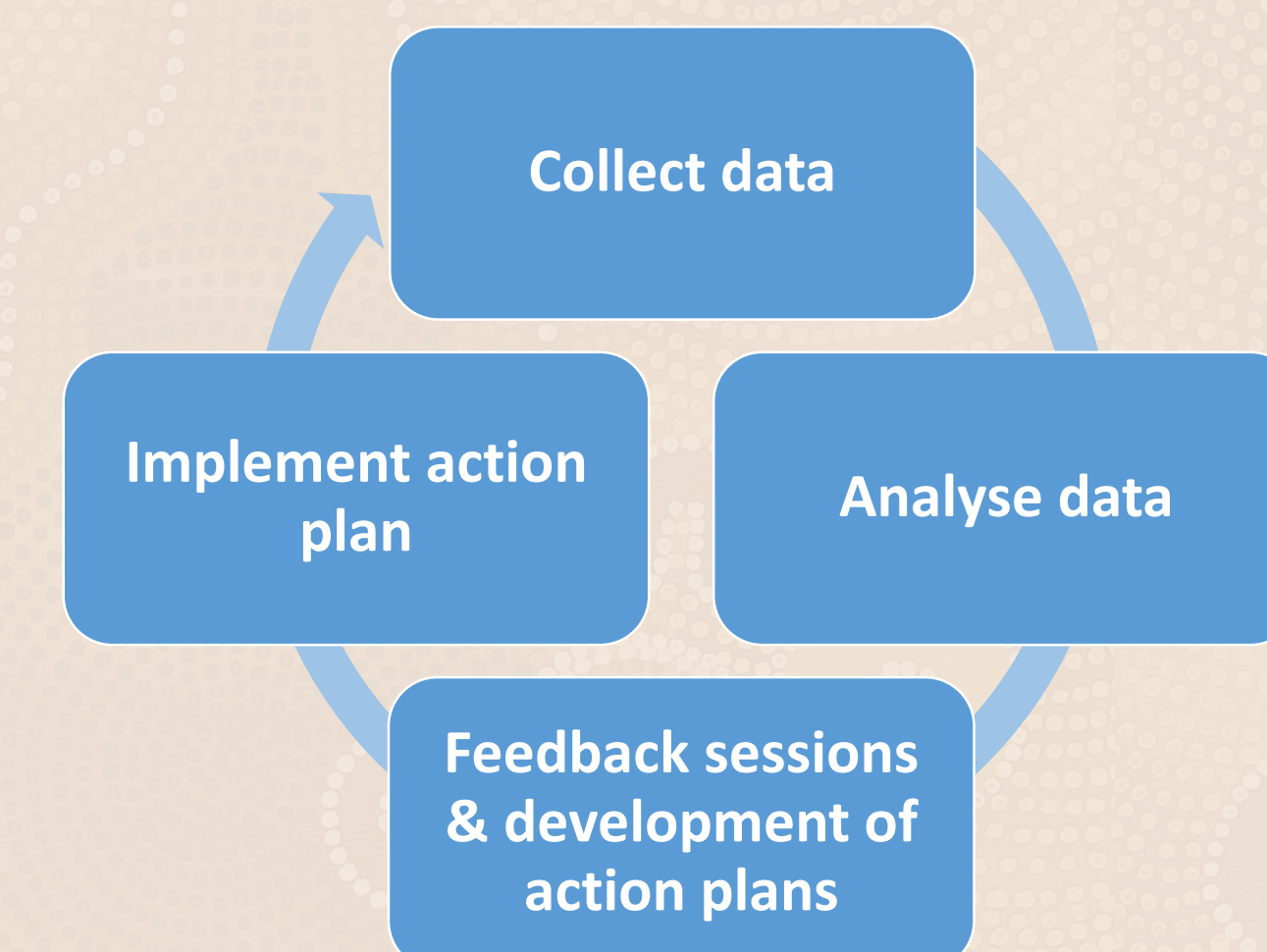
A robust quality management program was designed in collaboration with the University of Queensland Centre for Clinical Research and the National Serology Reference Laboratory. This involves regular testing of quality control and quality assurance materials to monitor the ongoing analytical quality of CT/NG testing on the GeneXpert.



A software system for electronic transfer of results has been developed to streamline the POC testing process and eliminate the need for manual result entry into patient files.



A CQI working group has been established to engage with existing sexual health CQI activities in participating health services. The group will integrate sexual health CQI key performance indicators, including STI testing rate, STI testing coverage, unique STI test positivity, completeness of testing, treatment interval, STI testing rate and STI repeat positivity rate, into existing practices.



Conclusions

The translation framework has provided a solid basis for expansion of the program. The remaining 3 years will focus on building the capacity of health services and staff to take ownership of the program, continue POC STI testing as standard practice and integrate POC into their sexual health quality improvement program. Funding for continuation and long-term sustainability of the program will be also be investigated over the next 3 years.

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References: Guy R, Natoli L, Ward J, et al. A randomised trial of point-of-care tests for chlamydia and gonorrhoea infections in remote Aboriginal communities: Test, Treat ANd GO – the 'TTANGO' trial protocol. *BMC Infectious Diseases*. 2013; 13:485. doi: 10.1186/1471-2334-13-485.