



Choosing Wisely Guide

Saudi Arabia



المركز السعودي لسلامة المرضى
SAUDI PATIENT SAFETY CENTER

وزارة الصحة
Ministry of Health



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Section 1: About Choosing Wisely Saudi Arabia

The issue

As the nation increasingly focuses on ways to provide safer, higher-quality care to patients, the overuse of healthcare resources is an issue of considerable concern. Many experts agree that the current way healthcare is delivered contains too much waste.

It is urgent that healthcare providers and patients work together toward choosing care that is supported by evidence showing that it works for patients like them; is not duplicative of other tests or procedures already received; won't harm them; and is truly necessary.

Choosing Wisely Campaign

Choosing Wisely is an international initiative that was initiated by the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) Foundation to help providers and patients engage in conversations about the overuse of tests and procedures and support efforts to help patients make smart and effective care choices. Recognizing the importance of providers and patients working together, leading healthcare provider organizations, along with Consumer Reports (patient-targeted materials), have joined Choosing Wisely to help improve the quality and safety of healthcare in America.

Choosing Wisely Mission

The mission of Choosing Wisely is to promote conversations between clinicians and patients by helping patients choose care that is:

- Supported by evidence
- Not duplicative of other tests or procedures already received
- Free from harm
- Truly necessary

Choosing Wisely Saudi Arabia

Choosing Wisely initiative aims to Improve the quality and safety of care delivered to the patients through the reduction of waste, unnecessary tests, and procedures by improving communication between patients and healthcare providers, with focusing on implementing the best practices guidelines.

Choosing Wisely Saudi Arabia initiative was launched by the Ministry of Health in 2019. And now it is a collaboration between Saudi Patient Safety Center and the Ministry of Health. The vision of the initiative is that healthcare services should be safe, effective, efficient, patient-centered, and to ensure providing the appropriate level of services based on scientific research. Moreover, there is evidence that the current delivery of healthcare services in Saudi Arabia includes unnecessary waste of resources. The mission here is to raise physicians' and patients' awareness of the misuse of medical resources by influencing their attitude, to help them utilize resources more efficiently, leading to eliminating preventable harm to patients, subsequently enhance patients' safety. Therefore, a National Steering Committee was established to ensure credible and effective leadership support.

Who will benefit from implementing Choosing Wisely?

Using Choosing Wisely recommendations were built targeting both, healthcare providers and patients. These recommendations can help you as a healthcare provider/stakeholder to reduce low-value and unnecessary care in your practice. Also, patients to empower them in health decision making and choose the appropriate care for them or their family members.

Choosing Wisely Saudi Arabia Overall KPIs

- % of Reduction of waste in radiology tests
- % of Reduction of waste in laboratory tests
- % of Reduction of waste in unnecessary prescribed Medication

Choosing Wisely Recommendations

The Choosing Wisely recommendations were established by national medical specialty societies and represent specific, evidence-based recommendations that clinicians and patients should discuss. Recommendations were built as bundles that includes (healthcare providers' recommendations with its KPIs, and patients' recommendations) Each recommendation provides information on when tests and procedures may be appropriate.

The Choosing Wisely scientific committee is responsible for producing and publishing the recommendations on Choosing Wisely Saudi Arabia Website where all recommendations are uploaded <https://choosingwisely.spsc.gov.sa/index.html>.

Continuing the Professionalism Challenge

Choosing Wisely is part of a multi-year effort to help physicians and other healthcare providers be better stewards of finite healthcare resources. In order to identify some gaps in choosing wisely SA, the Ministry of Health (MOH) conducted an in-depth survey. Part of that survey was about studying the awareness level of healthcare providers and the most common practices that don't follow guidelines. Below are the results of the analysis:

Choosing wisely awareness level

- 82% never heard of choosing wisely.
- 43% feel is not responsible and/or uncomfortable talking to patients about avoiding unnecessary tests/procedures.
- 28% considered unnecessary tests and procedures as not a problem.

Most common over use in physicians' practice

- 53% prescribe antibiotics in adults and children with uncomplicated sinusitis caused by viral infection that can be resolved in 10 to 14 days without treatment.
- 54% order diagnostic lab tests at regular intervals (every day) in ICU.
- 50% order set of laboratory tests before minor surgical interventions for low risk patients with non-cardiac symptoms.
- 52% order head scans for patients with minor head injury who are at low risk.
- 40% order lumbar spine imaging for adults with non-traumatic back pain.

Section 2: Administrative Framework

In this section, we will explain some points related to the administrative side of the initiative in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to understand the mechanism of its management inside and outside your health organization.

Therefore, before starting to talk about the implementation of Choosing Wisely initiative, we would like to review; choosing wisely initiative inclusions, teams/members roles and responsibilities, champions & ambassadors criteria, and organizational chart.

Choosing Wisely Initiative Inclusions

To implement choosing wisely correctly, we need to understand type of facilities, area of focus, and target audience for the initiative.

Facilities Included	Hospitals & Specialized Centers	Primary Healthcare Centers
Services/ Departments Focused on	<p>Across multiple domains mainly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emergency Department - Inpatient - Outpatient - Pharmacy - Laboratory - Radiology 	
Targeted Audience	<p>All Physicians Patients</p>	<p>All Physicians Patients</p>

Choosing Wisely Saudi Arabia Teams/Members Roles and Responsibilities

Choosing Wisely Saudi Arabia is a national initiative as described in section 2, that's why it needs everyone's involvement to succeed. So, below we explain all the participated bodies, their description, their responsibilities and to whom they report. This will help the initiative reach its goal.

Body	Description	Roles & Responsibilities	Reports to
Choosing Wisely steering committee	The advisory body. Members include experts, authority figures, and senior stakeholders in the initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choosing Wisely Saudi Arabia Governance They have a significant stake in how the initiative is managed. 	Chairman of Choosing Wisely steering committee
Initiative leader	Leader of the Choosing Wisely initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overseeing the project Decision making 	Choosing Wisely steering committee
PMO	Project management office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project management which includes planning, executing, monitoring, controlling, and closing out projects 	Project leader
Choosing Wisely scientific committee (CWSC)	Choosing Wisely scientific committee created to manage choosing wisely recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for reviewing, producing, and approving healthcare provider and patient recommendations related to Choosing Wisely 	Project leader
Regional Champion	The representative of Choosing Wisely the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees the hospital champion implementation process. Guides the hospital champion throughout the project. Supports the hospital champion. 	PMO
Hospital Champion	The representative of Choosing Wisely in a healthcare institute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implements the project Carries the day-to-day tasks of the project in the healthcare institute. 	Regional Champion
Health Societies Department	The health societies department in the Saudi Commission for Healthcare Specialists (SCFHS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage and communicate with health societies and request the CW recommendations from them. 	CWSC
Societies	Scientific societies for each domain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build the material related to their specialty. Review and endorse the material. 	Health Societies Department

Regional Champion Criteria

- Willingness
- A decision Maker or influencer
- Have a healthcare quality background or worked on improvement projects
- Have proven ability to drive change management and use different techniques

Hospital Champion Criteria

- Willingness.
- Be a healthcare professional, Preferably a physician.
- Have the time to implement the project within the healthcare institute.
- Team player and can lead the initiative.

Choosing Wisely Saudi Arabia (CWSA) Organizational chart



Section 3: Implementing Choosing Wisely

This section is built based on Kotter's 8-Step process for leading change. You are invited to modify this action manual to fit your organization's change framework if your organization already has one. The objective is to be thorough without becoming mandated.

Using Kotter's 8-Step Process for Leading Change to Integrate Choosing Wisely

Step 1: Generate a Sense of Urgency

Create a meaningful opportunity and utilize it to entice people to sign up to drive the change.

Available Resources

- Choosing Wisely Recommendations.
- Patient Educational materials.
- PowerPoint presentation template.
- Choosing Wisely Saudi Arabia one-pager.

Unnecessary tests and procedures might be harmful

Unnecessary tests and procedures can be harmful to patients in many ways. They can lead to false positives, which can cause unnecessary anxiety and additional testing. They can also lead to false negatives, which can result in missed diagnoses and delayed treatment. Moreover, unnecessary tests and procedures can expose patients to radiation, which can increase their risk of cancer. Additionally, they can result in unnecessary surgeries, which carry the risk of complications and infections. Finally, unnecessary tests and procedures can be expensive, both for patients and for the healthcare system as a whole. Therefore, it is important for healthcare providers to carefully consider the risks and benefits of any medical intervention and to engage their patients in shared decision-making to ensure that they receive the most appropriate care.

Proof that Choosing Wisely is Important

A study published in the Archives of Internal Medicine showed that implementing the National Physicians Alliance "Top 5" lists* in the US could save more than \$5 billion. The study found that the most common and expensive activity was ordering a complete blood count as part of a general medical evaluation, which cost \$32.7 million. This underscores the importance of choosing wisely when it comes to medical tests and procedures, in order to reduce unnecessary costs and improve patient outcomes.

* The National Physicians Alliance "Top 5" lists are evidence-based recommendations developed by the NPA to help healthcare providers and patients make informed decisions about medical interventions, with the goal of promoting high-value, evidence-based care and reducing the use of unnecessary tests and procedures.

STEP 2: Get Leadership Support

Bring together a team that has the power and drive to steer and assist a cooperative transformation initiative.

Kotter asserts that the steering alliance needs the correct mix of members, a high level of trust, and a common goal. The entire team should reflect:

- Position Power: Enough essential figures should be involved to prevent those left out from obstructing progress.
- Expertise: It is important to include all points of view so that intelligent decisions can be made.
- Credibility: For the group's statements to be taken seriously by other employees, the group must be recognized and respected by individuals within the organization.
- Leadership: There should be enough established leaders in the organization to be able to spearhead the transformation process.

STEP 3: Create Strategic Vision

The transformation effort should be guided by a vision, and you should develop tactical strategies to help you get there.

Spend some time developing your internal vision and campaign adoption level with your guiding coalition. Make sure your objectives support and

align with the current strategies and goals of your organization. The Guiding Coalition should specify the goals and timetable for Choosing Wisely implementation inside your business and lay out the metrics by which success will be judged.

The main objective of Choosing Wisely is to promote discussions between doctors and patients regarding the necessity and hazards of testing, surgeries, and therapies.

Here are some examples of different levels of interventions that your organization might start with.

BASIC	MODERATE	ADVANCED
<p>Educational Campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post awareness materials targeting patients on both digital platforms, such as LCD screens, digital banners, the website, and social media, and non-digital ones, such as posters displayed on reception tables, walls, and waiting rooms, as well as printed handouts provided to patients. All materials will be available for download on our website. - Send choosing wisely recommendations to healthcare providers to their work emails. 	<p>Measure Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set performance goals for physicians using Choosing Wisely recommendations, which are available on our website. - Develop reports to track progress and identify areas for improvement. - Provide communication skills training to physicians to improve conversations with patients about tests, procedures, and therapies. 	<p>Electronic Integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incorporate applicable Choosing Wisely recommendations into your electronic medical records (EMR), creating an alert if an order doesn't align with a recommendation. - Create a system or process to review and monitor the utilization of resources, such as tests, procedures, and treatments, within the organization. This can be done by establishing committees or dashboards to track

<p>- Conduct workshops or lectures for healthcare providers about choosing wisely and the recommendations.</p>		<p>and analyze data related to resource utilization.</p>
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To effectively monitor performance goals and measure the impact of changes being implemented, it is crucial to develop a monitoring tool that clearly identifies the focus area(s) and tracks progress over time. To create a performance measurement plan, start by identifying the focus area(s) for improvement, establishing a baseline for performance measurement using current data and analysis, defining the desired outcomes, and developing a monitoring tool to track progress towards the desired outcomes. By following this plan, you can measure your organization's performance in the identified focus area(s) and assess whether the desired outcomes are being achieved.

STEP 4: Form Choosing Wisely Team

Get a group of individuals together who are eager, willing, and able to act quickly to make a change.

Give a Presentation about Choosing Wisely to Educate All Healthcare Providers:

- Request to speak at the upcoming board or senior leadership meeting. Choose the information that is most relevant to your organization and its vision using a prepared PowerPoint slides as a starting point.
- Present at Grand Rounds.
- Invite a speaker from the Saudi Choosing Wisely Task Force to present at the medical staff meeting.
- Make “Choosing Wisely” part of the agenda at regular departmental or admin meetings.

Publish an Article in Your Organization’s Newsletter

Publish an article about choosing wisely initiative in your organization’s newsletter. The article can include an elaboration of the choosing wisely

concept, the impact of initiative, implementation process, and different resources.

Distribute Educational Resources

You can print, distribute, and hang printed materials or post the educational resources on your organization’s digital platforms (LCDs, Emails, digital banners, etc.). You can find all educational materials on our website, including:

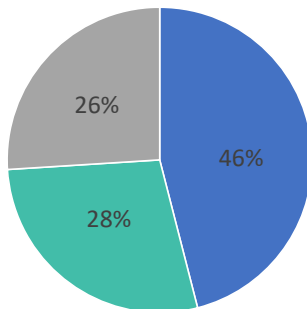
- Patient education materials.
- Choose wisely recommendations for healthcare providers.
- General educational materials about the initiative.

STEP 5: Eliminating Barriers

To lead change in structures or systems, remove barriers that might prevent reaching the goal.

Identifying barriers

Referring to Choosing Wisely SA survey that was conducted by MOH, the results also identified reasons physicians say they order unnecessary tests and procedures.



46% patients’ requests and keeping patients satisfied

28% physician reassurance and being safe

26% following hospital standard guidelines

Addressing Obstacles to Change

The goal of Choosing Wisely is to provide patients with the best possible care, as outlined by national specialty associations. To promote patient

education, it is important to provide materials that explain the CW recommendations in patient-friendly terms.

To overcome resistance to change and improve the culture of evidence-based decision-making, consider sharing case studies and examples of successful implementation. These examples can demonstrate how following the CW recommendations has led to improved care quality and reduced the use of unnecessary tests, procedures, and treatments. By highlighting the benefits of evidence-based care and the positive impact it has had on patients, providers may be more willing to adopt new practices and embrace a culture of continuous improvement.

Promote Risk-Taking

To encourage innovation and nontraditional approaches to improving care quality, it's important to be open to taking risks and thinking outside the box. However, it's vital to gain buy-in from key stakeholders early on, such as the CFO and Risk Management, particularly because some Choosing Wisely recommendations may result in lost revenue for the organization.

One way to gain support is to show how following the CW recommendations can actually improve the organization's appeal by improving quality measurements and safety ratings. Physician leaders can also use evidence-based medicine from the "Lists of 5" to justify accepting what may be viewed as a higher malpractice risk by reducing unnecessary tests and treatments.

STEP 6: Produce Quick Wins

Produce, monitor, assess, and celebrate minor and significant accomplishments on a regular basis, and link them to outcomes.

Quick wins:

- Post patient educational materials (printed or digital) in exam and waiting areas.
- Encourage specialty departments to choose recommendation(s) from their area of expertise on which they will focus their efforts. Post the recommendations as a reminder.
- Choose the recommendations that can be measured easily. Afterwards, Share unblinded data to confirm quick wins and recognize accomplishments.
- Share all success stories including healthcare providers' and patients' stories on your social media platforms and with the national choosing wisely team to post it on CW website.
- Fashion a rewarding plan within the organization for those achieved goals.

STEP 7: Attain Sustainability

To ensure the sustainability of the Choosing Wisely initiative in Saudi Arabia, it is important to focus on building a strong foundation. This can be achieved by establishing a clear vision, mission, and goals, as well as implementing effective strategies to achieve them. It is also crucial to engage stakeholders, including healthcare providers, patients, and policymakers, and to foster a culture of continuous improvement and innovation.

To sustain the initiative, it may be necessary to seek funding from multiple sources and to establish partnerships with organizations that share the same vision and goals. Additionally, it is essential to monitor and evaluate progress regularly and make adjustments as needed. This can be accomplished by developing metrics and key performance indicators to measure the success of the initiative and identify areas for improvement.

Change the System

- Review all (order sets) to check for unnecessary tests and procedures.
- Include the implementation of choosing wisely recommendations in the annual performance evaluation.

- After Gathering, analyzing, translating the data for specific performance measures, taking an action is the important step. This will allow healthcare professionals to identify the area of improvement, make corrective actions, and to track and anticipate the outcomes.
- Develop a comprehensive strategy to address concerns about increased malpractice risk while balancing the need for better quality outcomes and avoiding unnecessary care. One approach to achieving this goal is to establish a system for tracking and resolving those concerns.

Stay Updated

Visit our Choosing Wisely Saudi website, choosingwisely.spsc.gov.sa, to stay updated on new recommendations and learn from other national experiences in implementing the Choosing Wisely initiative.

Social Media Engagement – Follow our social media platforms, Twitter and YouTube, with the handle @choosewisely_sa. Stay connected and receive regular updates on the Choosing Wisely initiative in Saudi Arabia, including news, success stories, educational resources, and upcoming events.

International Updates – Stay informed about the latest international achievements in the Choosing Wisely movement by following social media accounts and websites dedicated to Choosing Wisely initiatives worldwide. This will provide valuable insights into global best practices and innovative approaches to sustainable healthcare.

Conferences and Workshops – Actively participate in national and international conferences, workshops, and seminars focused on healthcare quality improvement, patient safety, and evidence-based medicine. These events offer opportunities to learn from experts, share experiences, and gain insights into the latest international trends and innovations in the field. Present your own progress and outcomes related to the Choosing Wisely initiative in Saudi Arabia, fostering knowledge exchange and collaboration with international stakeholders.

STEP 8: Drive the Change

Develop the methods to assure leadership growth and succession and explain the links between the new behaviors and organizational success.

It can take 5-7 years for a culture to evolve and become self-sustaining. Ongoing exposure to the vision and goal are crucial. Giving timely, constructive feedback on practices and behaviors that have been implemented and are in line with the objective enhances the likelihood that the change will stick. One of the most challenging yet essential steps needed to make sure that patients don't undergo unnecessary tests and procedures is changing behavior.

Changing Culture

- Standardize choosing wisely recommendations in your healthcare institution.
- Integrate Choosing Wisely recommendations into your organization's electronic medical record and clinical decision support tools.
- Provide quarterly reports to the Regional Champion to show progressions, who should review the report and share it with the Initiative Leader at the national level.
- Leaders/regional champions/hospital champions who have embraced the Choosing Wisely principles should be encouraged and supported.
- Include CW recommendations' discussion as a standing agenda item at your staff meetings.
- Provide patients with readily available educational resources and information to encourage them to ask questions, which will inspire the healthcare professionals to be aware of the answers.
- Give people who participated in the Choosing Wisely campaign recognition, perhaps by doing so at staff or executive meetings.
- Create a process and discuss progress regularly. An example may be sending out applicable educational materials to patients prior to their appointment based on the symptoms or request for visit.
- Make sure Choosing Wisely is a part of your organization's overall mission statement when interviewing potential employees.
- Include Choosing Wisely as part of new employees orientation.

As the Choosing Wisely campaign moves from education to implementation in Saudi Arabia, we hope this action manual will give you the tools and inspiration to integrate Choosing Wisely recommendations into your practice setting.

References

- *Choosing Wisely Saudi Arabia.* <https://choosingwisely.spsc.gov.sa/index.html>

- *International, Inc., A. S. (n.d.). Choosing Wisely. Choosing Wisely. <https://wsma.org/Choosing-Wisely>*
- *The 8 Steps for Leading Change E-Book. www.kotterinternational.com*

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