

Title	#lettertome
Number	18
Authors	Sonia Fullerton, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre
Abstract	<p>Ever been hit by such a brilliant idea that it's a bit stunning? That's what happened to me when I learned about #lettertome on social media. I had been a firm supporter of other initiatives to promote patient-centred care, but had never questioned the tradition of sending outpatient letters to the referring doctors rather than to the patient themselves. In writing a #lettertome, it's not just about who the addressee is. It's a summary in patient language of the most important issues for the patient, and the plan we have agreed on together. Patient centred care puts the patient and the family at the heart of every decision. Patient outcomes are better when they are active, engaged and informed participants in their care. Patients' recall of verbal information is quite poor, with patients remembering about half of the information given . Written information is retained better. Very often outpatients have many more than appointment per day and receive lots of complex information. It's not surprising that patients may not fully remember what was discussed and decided. Patients have been very keen on the new letters and take a hardcopy home with them to share with family and their GP. And the other good thing? It's free, and you don't have to ask anyone's permission to do it. It's an example of patient centered, clinician initiated, bottom up change in the health service. Let me know if you try out #lettertome at your place.</p>