



# SUMMARY REPORT

## Queensland Policy Leaders Series

### The Future of Health in Queensland

**Wednesday 4 September**

7.30am – 9.00am

Customs House, 399 Queen St, Brisbane

**Moderator - Professor Andrew Burton-Jones**, Professor of Business Information Systems, The University of Queensland Business School

**Cameron Ballantine**, Chief Information Officer, Metro South Health

**Veronica Casey AM**, Executive Director Nursing Services, Princess Alexandra Hospital

**Chris Crooks**, Strategic Solutions Executive, Telstra Health

**Dr Rae Donovan**, Consultant Emergency Doctor and Medical Director (Digital Hospital Services), Princess Alexandra Hospital

**Professor Steven McPhail**, A/Academic Director, Australian Centre for Health Services Innovation

**Dr Christine Slade**, Senior Lecturer, Institute for Teaching and Learning Innovation, The University of Queensland

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## Breakfast Summary

The key theme from the 2019 Queensland Futures Institute *The Future of Health in Queensland* focused on the advantages of digital innovation within the health industry and opportunities for further development of digital health. The adoption of digital health technologies and innovation were discussed in the context of Metro South Hospital and Health Service's use of such technology, associated processes and outcomes.

A strong consensus emerged for a multidisciplinary approach considering education, the training and culture of staff and clinicians, as well as patient perspective alongside new technology applications. This included the consideration of patients, communities and consumers in using technology as an enabler of improved health outcomes, rather than an endpoint.

The discussion highlighted that whilst the prominence of technology in the health sector will grow in the future, the focus must remain on people.

### Key comments from Panellists

#### Cameron Ballantine, Chief Information Officer, Metro South Health

- Five inpatient facilities at Metro South have adopted integrated electronic medical records (ieMR), providing data and significant benefit to clinician care and patient health outcomes. Accordingly, the partnership with academia and industry during this transition has become increasingly digital. It is critical that data be accessible to the right people, at the right times, in order to improve the quality of service provided by the system
- Potential barriers to the success of such data revolve around the ability for clinicians to effectively use the data, but more importantly the public perception and trust in the data and associated processes. This means changing the culture and perception around the adoption of new technologies and data collection, as patients must learn to trust the digital dexterity of clinicians

#### Veronica Casey AM, Executive Director Nursing Services, Princess Alexandra Hospital

- Digital health technology is the enabler of the workforce within the health industry, not the endpoint. While this transition is clinically driven, it should retain a customer focus and encourage patients, communities and consumers to adapt to these developments
- Metro South has provided rich feedback during the adoption of digital health technologies. Observations of staff and positive feedback has indicated the systems, data dashboards and ieMR have improved health outcomes and will continue shaping processes into the future
- Digital health is not all about the technology and data, but also addresses the workforce, culture, teams and education. Initial applications have shown teams are able to communicate differently and with more agility than previously possible
- While 'change fatigue' and the speed at which culture adapts to digital health technology could potentially remain challenging, the benefits of this transition far outweigh the cost. Ultimately, these developments are achieving improved quality of service across the health industry

#### Chris Crooks, Strategic Solutions Executive, Telstra Health

- Queensland is leading the country in improving care services and health outcomes using digital health technology. This is being facilitated by the rich data-sharing activities between different parts of the health industry (e.g. pharmacy databases and ICU information), enabling better use of existing data
- The use of data to drive decisions is not the only outcome of digital health; greater engagement with consumers and patients, as well as improved communication flows within hospitals are also improving health outcomes – this shows solutions do not always need to be high-tech
- While the cost of digital health technology is high, the improved outcomes for the industry provide value greater than the cost. Due to the nature of the industry, return on investment is not a suitable metric for success



**Dr Rae Donovan, Consultant Emergency Doctor and Medical Director (Digital Hospital Services),**

**Princess Alexandra Hospital**

- Digital health technology, such as ieMR, is a means to an end. We must use these developments as tools to improve the quality of service in the industry. This means maintaining a patient-centred focus while providing benefits to clinicians
- We must continue to question how the system can be improved (e.g. what is the benefit of new developments such as wearables?). We can utilise existing technologies and data in order to drive decision-making around this. As such, the access to data and digital literacy of clinicians is critical to the success of digital health
- While current education and training focuses on clinical skills, it should also focus on the digital skills required, as this is now an important component of working in the system. This would enable the enhancement of decision-making using technology and data, which could potentially be lifesaving

**Professor Steven McPhail, A/Academic Director, Australian Centre for Health Services Innovation**

- The most important elements of digital health are the opportunities for technology to support decision-making and patient care. The value of these developments is captured not only in the technology itself, but in the experience that all stakeholders have when engaging with digital health. In other words, it's not only the initiatives and activities facilitated by digital health, but the way that these are accessed, experienced and engaged with that matters
- The public and all stakeholders should be included in discussions around data and health information to ensure everyone understands the benefits, risks and opportunities of digital health
- Training must be provided to both clinicians and consumers of healthcare, in order to empower effective engagement and deliver the highest quality experience. An example of such an initiative is the use of patient portals, which would allow patients a digital space to communicate and learn about their healthcare, independent of their clinicians

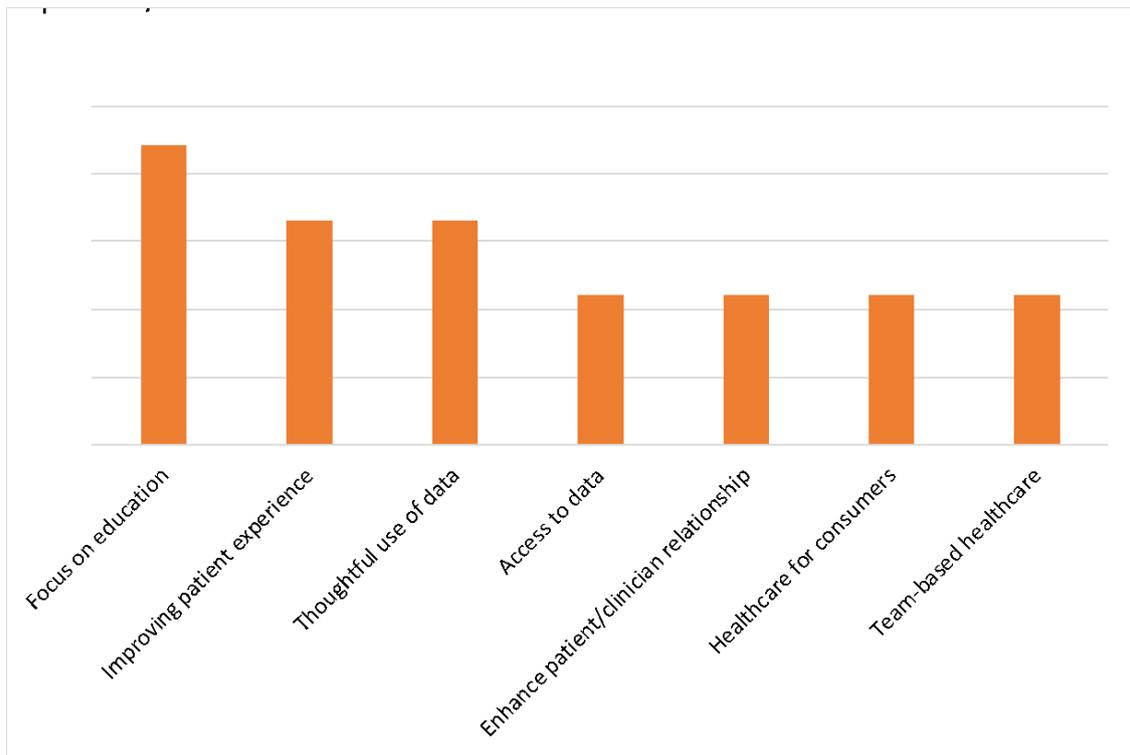
**Dr Christine Slade, Senior Lecturer, Institute for Teaching and Learning Innovation, The University of**

**Queensland**

- The opportunities around the adoption of digital health in Queensland are endless; ultimately, the health industry is improving patient outcomes and experiences moving forward
- Accessible health data enables consumers of healthcare to deal with their own situations better, while clinicians are also able to engage more effectively to provide a high quality of service. Patient portals help the broader community understand more about specific conditions as applicable to individuals' situations, which can lead to better health outcomes as they more actively engage with their healthcare providers
- There is more work to be done in the education around technology and digital leadership. This would lead to a better understanding of the potential of technology and could also improve the industry in situations like trials – new methodologies and tests could be developed after understanding the different perspectives, uses and opportunities of healthcare moving forward
- The altruistic nature of digital health initiatives, such as My Health Record, should be marketed more heavily in order to educate people about the opportunities they bring



## Summary of Breakfast Comments



## Summary of Ideas

- The focus needs to remain on education, not only for healthcare providers but also for patients, consumers and the community. This should include education around digital literacy and dexterity to ensure health data is accessible and delivers quality trusted outcomes for all parties
- Improving the patient experience should remain a key priority. While digital health initiatives and technology can improve quality of service, the human element and relationship between healthcare provider and patient must not be adversely impacted
- Patient portals and similar initiatives, such as recommended resources or websites, could be used to support healthcare for consumers and better educate the broader community regarding health
- Digital health should increasingly enable diverse teams, with a range of expertise, to work cohesively in creating innovative solutions and improving quality of service and patient outcomes

The Queensland Futures Institute acknowledges the support of UQ Business School Commerce Honours student, Jordan Ferrari, for his summary of the Breakfast

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