

Welcome to the 'Your health. Your say.' Survey

Organisational priorities and digital health

What are your organisation's priorities in respect to digital health or eHealth?

Merri Health creates healthy, connected communities through local health services for people at every age and stage of life. Our approach addresses the medical, social, environmental and economic aspects that effect health, with services spanning across Children and young people, mental health, carer support, disability support, chronic disease management and aged care.

Our organisational priorities include creating a digital work force that is mobile and connected to better serve our community. We strive to provide holistic care for clients in the home without the need to travel out of their community for quality health services. Technology plays a major role in ensuring the needs of our clients are met and that service levels exceed expectations.

We aim to provide systems that allow our clients to interact with to perform a range of tasks, such as making/changing appointments, accessing information on their health and wellbeing. We also aim to explore options associated with home care monitoring for chronic disease and better interface with the other parts of the health system, including the various portals (My Aged Care etc) and National My Health Record.

Data, technology and improved health and wellbeing

How could data and technology be better used to improve health and wellbeing?

Access to technology can be a barrier due to the expense involved in developing platforms and applications capable of supporting clinicians and carers in the field. In some cases it is difficult to gain a complete picture of the client's needs due to the silo effect within databases where patient information can reside in multiple areas that are not integrated. As such a more integrated approach to patient data would ideally provide cares with a more accurate and comprehensive indication of the patients needs.

This needs to be a whole of government approach, at both state and commonwealth levels to ensure a joint effort in working toward this objective, rather than individual 'parts' of government doing their own 'thing' or creating separate reporting systems and/or requirements.

Innovation in healthcare

What are the barriers or obstacles to innovation in health and care?

Community health has been the poor relation to acute care i.e. the hospital sector as the funding models for community health don't generally encourage innovation due to the perceived nature of the care involved. However that paradigm needs to change as preventative health measures become more accepted as a way to keep people out of hospital and active in their community. Merri Health is investing heavily in technology to support improved client care and working with various partners on innovative models of care, including relieving chronic back pain and improving care in the home through mobility services. Developing a national digital strategy that is 'embraced' by all jurisdictions would be a positive step. It also needs to identify other key policy and or legislative requirements that may also need to be brought into line to support or underpin the national digital strategy and support its success.

What opportunities would you prioritise in respect to innovation in health and care?

Due to the breadth of health services required and the many disparate service providers it is sometimes difficult to operationalise or integrate client information in one location. Mandated government databases are not interoperable, therefore data or information relating to patient care is not integrated and not available as a single data source. So it is vital that medical professionals have access to a holistic view of patient data to fully understand the client's needs and more importantly what medication or drugs have been prescribed in the past.

What support do entrepreneurs need to enable greater innovation in healthcare?

A huge challenge for entrepreneurs in the health sector is the burden of compliance and regulatory requirements. The health landscape is a diverse and challenging environment that is undergoing rapid change in an attempt to cope with budget constraints and mounting pressure to increase service delivery. It is also highly regulated with disparate funding bodies coupled with complex mandatory reporting requirements. Support to navigate this complex environment and simplify the compliance and regulatory environment would be a great incentive.

There also needs to be a greater understanding of the interdependencies of concurrent reforms across all of government. It cannot be looked at as only being 'health', it needs to include community/social support as well as we move more towards a recognition of the interdependencies and social determinants of health has on individuals.

Priority initiative for My Health Record

What should be the immediate priority initiative for the My Health Record to ensure it delivers real value for clinicians and the public?

1. A single patient identification process to enable integrated reporting and interoperability of data sources relating to an individual.
2. Agreed levels of data capture and standard/quality of data so it can meaningfully used/accessed
3. Seek to mandate its use by clinicians and move to an opt out for the public to improve user uptake.

Some more information about you

What is your name?

First name: Phillip

Last name: Harris

Please tell us more about your organisation

Name of organisation:

Merri Health

What type of organisation do you work for?

Community Health

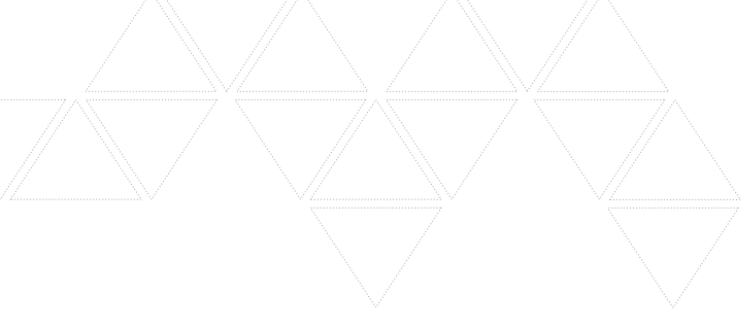
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Healthcare that moves with you

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Your responses

Responses to this survey may be published. Do you...?

Consent to your comments being quoted publicly, as long as you, or your organisation, are not identified

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