

Delivering more effective care for more patients of COVID-19 through Digital Health Solutions

WNSW PHN partnered with Precedence Health Care, and their shared health platform, Inca, to implement a new self-assessment tool to assist COVID-19 patients to recover safely at home following the announcement in October 2021 by Minister Greg Hunt of a \$180 million investment to support and strengthen primary care as Australia continued to reopen following Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns.

Opportunity

October 2021 announcement of \$180 million to support and strengthen primary care.

Key strategies included the development of National COVID Triage, Management and Escalation Infrastructure and COVID Community Care Pathways.

A success factor for these strategies would be the shared care of patients by facilitating coordination and better communication and connectivity between patients, carers, and health care providers across the health care continuum.

Strategy

Guided by the WHO's framework on investments into digital health, including not duplicating existing digital tools or systems and be appropriate to local context.

Empowering GPs to find a convenient and operational means to maintain clinical contact and patient engagement during extreme duress and evolving advice from the NSW Government.

A platform needed to be fit for purpose for our region taking into consideration the levels of digital health literacy for both care providers and recipients.

Actions

Rapid evaluation of shared care platforms that featured Covid care in the community pathways, interoperability with existing systems, secure portal access for outliers, compliance, dual reporting capabilities, speed to market ability and planned integration with Cerner eMR.

Agile decision making at an Executive Management level assisted in the selection of the Precedence Health Care, Inca Integrated Care Platform for rapid deployment to all practices at no cost, and implementation at 32 practices achieved within 14 days of commencement.

Results

The Inca platform shares self-reported clinical observations with the patient's GP and other care team members to a clinical dashboard, allowing providers to view and monitor progression and exercise informed clinical judgement, and for the patient to remain connected and engaged with their care providers.

Healthcare providers have eagerly adopted this system, while patients feel supported during their isolation period and pressure has been relieved on ambulance and hospital services.

Inca will continue to be supported by WNSW PHN as we recognise the additional benefits of the software in the management of chronic disease such as Type 2 diabetes.