

MEDIA RELEASE - 23 February 2024

Health Translation Queensland launches snapshot of Queensland's health research digital ecosystem

Health Translation Queensland (HTQ) today launched a snapshot of Queensland's health research digital ecosystem which will help drive health care value by encouraging collaboration and data sharing between health care and research organisations.

Queensland's Health Research Digital Ecosystem Capability Statement will enable health researchers to better navigate the health and medical research digital ecosystems to safely access and share research materials, to improve health care for Queenslanders.

The Health Research Digital Ecosystem Capability Statement was funded by Queensland Health, bringing together world leading experts from Queensland Health, CSIRO's Australian e-Health Research Centre (AEHRC) and The University of Queensland's Queensland Digital Health Centre (QDHeC) to map and describe the health research digital ecosystem in Queensland including electronic medical records.

HTQ Executive Director Professor John Prins said the capability statement enables researchers, clinicians, institutions, and government to more effectively share and access relevant digital data to improve health care and health outcomes in the community.

"This will help to drive health care value by encouraging collaboration and data sharing between health organisations, and we've been delighted that this has been a true partnership," said Professor Prins.

"A snapshot of Queensland's health research digital ecosystem also supports future planning, enabling the strengths, needs and investment opportunities in Queensland's health and medical research to be identified, prioritised, and implemented more effectively – and to attract more of the best and brightest to our state."

Digital health is increasingly recognised globally as the backbone of optimal health care delivery, opening new ways to deliver care to more people, more efficiently. A 2019 study by Ernst and Young Health Sciences and Wellness on the value of data in health care concluded that harnessing this information would seed innovation, advance medical research, and improve patient care.

Project co-lead and QDHeC Director Professor Clair Sullivan said this was an example of the work underway across key research institutions to develop digital and technology innovations to drive better health service delivery and health outcomes.

"The objective of the project was to produce useable reference materials to support Queensland's health care and medical research institutes to inform ongoing activities and investment in Queensland's health research digital ecosystem, and ultimately to support more effective health and medical translational research," Professor Sullivan said.

"This work will accelerate the translation of research findings into clinical practice to deliver better health outcomes and a more responsive and sustainable health care system."

Project co-lead and CSIRO's AEHRC CEO Dr David Hansen said the work drew on Queensland's significant expertise and strengths in digital health research.

"Digital health enables patients greater access and control of their health information while providing clinicians the insights and intelligence to make better, more effective decisions," Dr Hansen said.

"Projects like this leverage some of Queensland's many strengths in this area, including that we have the largest digitally integrated health care delivery system in Australia, covering approximately 48% of all acute inpatient beds."

Queensland is at the forefront of the digital hospital agenda in Australia with the integrated electronic medical record (ieMR) supporting Queensland Health's Digital Health 2031 strategic vision. Leading the digital hospitals agenda is part of an ambitious agenda to transition Queensland Health to a world-class, digitally-enabled health system where the power of data and digital technology is used to improve quality of care, patient safety, system efficiency and productivity.

Currently, the data needed to make complex health care decisions is stored in both paper and electronic records, making it hard to access and connect with. Increased capability and capacity is needed to improve the translation of this data into knowledge in order to rapidly transform the health care system and improve health care outcomes.

The Health Research Digital Ecosystem Capability Statement built on Queensland Health's existing work and that of the key digital health research groups active within the HTQ partnership.

"We hope this work provides greater clarity to clinician-researchers, researchers, policy makers and funders as to the many strengths of Queensland's health research digital ecosystem, to support future research, policy and investment decisions that improve patient care," Professor Prins said.

To read the Health Research Digital Ecosystem Capability Statement and view the accompanying video visit www.healthtranslationqld.org.au/news-events/digital-ecosystem-mapping.

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About Health Translation Queensland

Health Translation Queensland (HTQ) helps translate research into clinical practice by bringing together many of Queensland's universities, research institutes, health and hospital services, CSIRO's Australian e-Health Research Centre and Queensland Health. HTQ provides a platform for greater integration and collaboration between clinicians, educators, researchers, academics, policy makers and health consumers. HTQ is accredited by the NHMRC as a Research Translation Centre.

For more information on HTQ visit www.healthtranslationqld.org.au