



CONVERSATIONS AT AHW

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HEALTHCARE INNOVATIONS AND DIGITAL
TRANSFORMATIONS

Australian Healthcare Week 2024

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As the world continues to change, so does the landscape of healthcare. The [integration](#) of technology and innovation has led to significant advancements in the diagnosis, treatment, and overall delivery of healthcare services. In this episode of [Talking HealthTech](#), experts from diverse backgrounds gathered at the Australian Healthcare Week 2024 to discuss the potential of digital transformation in healthcare, the impact of AI, and the global healthcare challenges and opportunities.

Australian Healthcare Week was the perfect platform for healthcare leaders to share their insights and experiences. Numerous discussions revolved around how integrating technology helps advance patient experiences and the [healthcare ecosystem](#).

Utilisation of Virtual and Digital Technologies

Dr Emily Kirkpatrick, Executive Medical Director at Calvary-Medibank Joint Venture (CMJV), discussed the future of healthcare, emphasising funding and system reform. Utilising virtual and digital technologies to deliver care, particularly within homes and supported independent living settings, can bridge many gaps in healthcare access.

Changes in funding models are needed to meet the healthcare needs of multicultural communities and individuals with disabilities. This reform is necessary to create a sustainable system that adapts to the constantly evolving healthcare landscape. Modern funding models can ensure that resources are allocated more effectively, and patients receive the necessary care.

> Watch Interview with Dr Emily Kirkpatrick

Continuous Improvement Through Feedback

Healthdirect Australia's [implementation](#) of an AI Clinical [Decision Support System](#) (CDSS) exemplifies how collecting and acting on feedback can refine healthcare technology.

Nirvana Luckraj, Chief Medical Officer, highlights how the CDSS has been customised to match Australian-specific needs, reflecting ongoing improvement. Feedback from nurses and consumers is invaluable in refining digital tools. Nirvana also shared how healthcare events internationally provide essential global insights, enhancing the scope and understanding of care models. These insights contribute towards the continuous improvement of healthcare solutions, ensuring they are patient-focused and address the unique needs of diverse populations.

Digital Pilots and Expanding Innovations

Ken Saman, CEO of Personify Care, explained how a digital consent pathway developed alongside a geneticist has reshaped informed consent for genetic testing. They recently partnered with Professor Chris Barnett and the Commission on Excellence and Innovation in Health in South Australia to develop a digital consent pathway for children undergoing genetic tests. This addresses the issue of long waitlists for such tests and ensures proper informed consent from patients and parents. Innovations like these signify the importance of digital pathways in improving patient outcomes and providing them with a seamless care experience. Providing these pathways digitally ensures a higher quality of consent and better prepares patients for their medical journeys.

Enhancing Patient and Employee Experiences

Tim Deveson, Account Director at Genesys, elaborated on patient and employee experiences in the [digital health](#) space, specifically focusing on patient access and omnichannel engagement. Tim discusses how using self-service bots and digital channels augments [patient experience](#) and enhances [operational efficiency](#). These digital tools are crucial in providing patients with timely information and support while freeing up care advocates to focus on high-value tasks.

[> Watch Interview with Voni Leighton](#)

Bridging Communication Gaps

Dr John Lambert, Chief Clinical Information Officer at NT Health, emphasised the value of bridging the communication gap between clinicians, executives, and IT [specialists](#). With extensive experience in the public sector, Dr Lambert used his unique background as an intensive care specialist and anaesthetist to illustrate the importance of clear communication in driving healthcare improvements. It's crucial to speak a language that resonates with both clinicians and executives to drive effective decision-making.

Digital Transformations and Standardised Practices

Gareth Sherlock, former Chief Information Officer at Cleveland Clinic London, has extensive experience in managing large transformations within healthcare. Gareth's experience highlights why standardised practices are essential for consistency and quality across healthcare settings. Standardisation ensures that best practices are upheld and that patients receive consistent, high-quality care regardless of location. It is essential to build a culture of gratitude within organisations, engage stakeholders effectively, choose the right partners, implement robust governance structures, and adhere to financial stewardship.

Advancing Patient-Centric Care

[Patient-centric](#) care is no longer a concept but a reality in modern healthcare. Voni Leighton, Co-Founder and Clinical Director of Vitalis Healthcare at Home, emphasises the power of collaboration and its benefits to patients. The key to better healthcare is working alongside former colleagues and friends, creating a network committed to [patient-centric](#) care delivery. Vitalis Healthcare at Home has been instrumental in pushing the envelope for at-home care services. By forming strategic partnerships within the healthcare industry, Vitalis Healthcare at Home has effectively met patients' needs in the comfort of their homes.

[> Watch Interview with Gareth Sherlock](#)

Navigating the Digital Transformation Journey

Successful digital transformation requires cultural adaptation, stakeholder engagement, effective governance, and choosing the right technology partners.

Australian Healthcare Week 2024 has shown that the future of healthcare lies in strong collaboration, continuous innovation, and a patient-centred approach. As we embrace digital tools and new methodologies, we must ensure that these solutions are accessible and beneficial for all. The fusion of clinical wisdom and digital prowess is the key to unlocking healthcare's full potential.

Original Article: <https://www.talkinghealthtech.com/australian-healthcare-week-2024>

Australian Healthcare Week 2025

> Watch Feature Episode

In this episode of Talking HealthTech, hosts Peter Birch and Sophie Turner are joined by guests Emily Mailes, Ed Marx and River Nygryn for a compelling discussion on healthcare innovation and digital transformation during Australian Healthcare Week 2025.

The conversation covers topics such as [digital health](#) strategy, [patient experience](#), [cybersecurity](#) and the future of healthcare.

Imagining Victoria's Digital Health Outlook

Victoria is casting a long-term vision for its healthcare system, and Emily Mailes is leading this effort. As the Chief eHealth Strategy Officer of the Department of Health Victoria, she's setting a clear ten-year plan rooted in tangible outcomes rather than just flashy technology. Emily's primary focus isn't tech for the sake of tech. It's about ensuring digital health initiatives streamline patient care and make a real difference. As she explains, it's crucial to be clear on system, patient, and workforce outcomes.



What's interesting is Emily's approach; it's not about plotting a straight line to the future. Instead, she believes in adapting and evolving continually. This means building digital growth into the everyday operations of healthcare, ensuring the system gradually becomes smarter and more effective. By embracing this method, healthcare providers can achieve the long-term value that comes with scalable investments in technology.

Drawing Lessons from Around the Globe

Victoria's approach to digital health isn't insular. Emily mentions the value of learning from international models and adapting best practices to fit local contexts. She highlights the importance of not just replicating but understanding and tailoring global insights to enhance Victoria's healthcare landscape.

Getting Real About Cybersecurity

In the digital age, cybersecurity is not just an add-on; it's a core part of healthcare's digital transition. Emily and River Nygryn, the Chief Information Security Officer at HammondCare, underscore the need to protect sensitive [patient](#)

[information](#). Unlike a credit card number, a health record can't just be cancelled and re-issued. When breaches happen, they can have a lasting impact, making security non-negotiable.

Emily sees cybersecurity as both an operational and strategic necessity. It has systems for real-time threat monitoring and ensures they evolve alongside [technological advancements](#).



Infusing Humanity into CyberSec Strategies

River tackles cybersecurity from a refreshing angle: the human side. Third-party suppliers are pivotal in healthcare, and building relationships with them is crucial. Maintaining those human relationships with suppliers and third parties ensures you bring that human element to them. Given the growing complexities in healthcare tech, like smartphones transitioning into medical-grade devices, staying one step ahead of emerging risks is vital.

Transforming Patient Experience with Empathy and Tech

Ed Marx, CEO of Marx Advisory, shares his views on patient experience. He argues that digital innovation can transform patient care without breaking the bank significantly. It is key to shift from IT as an isolated process to viewing it as an integrated service. Ed's insights shed light on how small changes can lead to big improvements in patient satisfaction. Creating a culture of empathy is crucial; he suggests always having a patient as a speaker in meetings. This suggestion not only centres on patient needs but can also profoundly change how healthcare teams approach care.



Powering Up the Healthcare Workforce

Alongside digital tools, a motivated workforce is essential for transformation. Ed underscores that for digital changes to take hold, there must be a personal transformation within the workforce. Leaders need to model change by staying updated with digital trends, whether it's being active on new platforms or incorporating digital solutions into daily [workflows](#).

Practical steps, like encouraging volunteerism in patient care settings or shadowing clinical staff, push the digital shift forward. These initiatives nurture an understanding between healthcare providers and the tech they use, laying the groundwork for long-lasting innovation.

Scalable and Collaborative Healthcare Solutions

Looking ahead, scalable digital solutions are vital for sustainable healthcare. The future relies on healthcare stakeholders joining forces to confront complex challenges with innovative solutions. Patient-centred care delivery systems can achieve long-term value with scalable investments, marking a path for digital initiatives that truly drive change.

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