



MEDIA RELEASE

4 August 2009

HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY TO WORK SMARTER

After a 12 month trial among more than 700 patients in two regions of Australia, including the Geelong region, a Chronic Disease Management Network (CDM-Net) focussing on links between general practice, the patient and specialist care is to be rolled out nationally.

Sue De Gilio, Barwon Health Chief Executive says that the launch of CDM-Net at the Geelong Hospital interlinks with the Barwon Health vision four years ago to become a smart hospital with an integrated ambulatory service.

“Roughly four years ago we decided that we needed to work more efficiently with the funding we receive. We came up with a vision to be a smart hospital and ultimately, with integrated ambulatory services, a smart health service. We could only do this by harnessing technology,” she said.

“Embarking on this journey has numerous associated costs; fortunately we had robust, well established IT systems in existence. To progress our vision we received 50% of the initial outlay for digitising records from the then Department of Human Services (now Department of Health).”

“With this funding we commenced the journey by digitising our medical records in tandem with digitising X-Rays, introducing ‘Smart’ Carts and generally focussing on technology to improve efficiency. We are now positioned to work towards electronic records and are progressing with other linked initiatives to help our staff work more efficiently.”

“Work on establishing a single point of entry for patients into Community Health and Rehabilitation Services is well progressed. This system will greatly assist our staff in case managing patients to ensure they see the right person at the right time in the most efficient manner possible.”

“Ultimately, improved methods for managing chronic disease will take the pressure off acute services by intervening early.”

“We still have a lot of work to do. Fortunately we are well on the way. It has meant significant change in how we work, but the culture has seen a massive shift in understanding that the new systems are better for the patient and better for the professional”

“CDM-Net now means we can integrate patient information in Barwon Health with our partners in general practice.”

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