



## Media release

Wednesday, 19 June 2019

### My Health Record launches Rapid Access Cardiology Clinic testing

The Australian Digital Health Agency, in partnership with the University of Sydney, is pleased to launch a study into the use of My Health Record in Rapid Access Cardiology care.

The Agency and the University of Sydney have launched the pilot to investigate how My Health Record can support the management of low to intermediate risk chest pain patients through the Rapid Access Cardiology Clinic (RACC) model, initially based at Westmead Hospital.

The pilot aims to enhance the quality, safety and efficiency of cardiology services, and if successful, may be scaled up to roll out across the country. It is expected that this study will yield lower rates of hospital readmissions and avoid a rise in major adverse cardiac events, such as heart attacks. Furthermore, the pilot, may also help to develop targeted cardiovascular disease prevention programs including lifestyle modifications to address common risk factors such as high blood pressure.

During the pilot, clinicians will access a person's My Health Record when they present to the Rapid Access Cardiology Clinic at Westmead Hospital and draw on the information within the record to make quicker diagnoses and treatment decisions.

"Our study aims to provide greater accessibility to the information needed to better treat all Australians suffering chest pain, and to safely divert people with non-acute chest pain from being admitted to hospital," says Professor Clara Chow, Professor of Medicine, Academic Director, Westmead Applied Research Centre, at University of Sydney.

"Australia's Health 2018 report revealed heart disease was the single leading cause of death in 2018 with 170 Australians aged 25 years and over having a heart attack every day. Last month we discovered more than two-thirds of Australian adults have risk factors for heart disease.<sup>1</sup> Statistics like these remind us of the importance of looking after our heart health and My Health Record provides Australians with a place to store all-important records regarding your heart history and preferred treatment methods,<sup>2</sup>" says Heart Foundation's General Manager of Heart Health and Research, Bill Stavreski.

RACCs are outpatient clinics, located within hospitals, that provide prompt assessment and management of chest pain. Led by cardiologists, the clinics function to reduce the sizeable number of patients experiencing chest pain attending NSW hospitals.

Consumer Simone Marschner says, "I walked out of the Rapid Access Cardiology Clinic satisfied that I'd had a thorough health assessment and equipped with advice about how to reduce my risks at home. The clinic was not just easy to access, it kept me out of hospital. Now, the peace of mind that comes with knowing that my test results and management care plan are available at a glance on My Health Record, so I do not have to remember or repeat details to my GP later on, is invaluable."

The test bed will explore how My Health Record can support risk stratification of patients referred to the RACC, reduce duplicate testing, and support communication among healthcare providers via the system's shared healthy summary function. The study will attempt to understand and address existing barriers to the seamless flow of information along the patient journey and among healthcare providers. The results will be

<sup>1</sup> Heart Foundation, [Almost 13 million Aussies risk heart disease: new data](#)

<sup>2</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, [Australia's health 2018 report](#)



used to scope the feasibility of an innovative, cardiology-specific application that is populated with information from My Health Record to optimise patient care.

“We need all Australians to be aware of the prevalence of heart disease and the work left to do in improving our heart health. This program is a great example of how we can use digital technologies to meet this goal and deliver better health outcomes to all Australians,” says Agency CEO Tim Kelsey.

When appropriate, patients who attend a RACC may be given a management plan and allowed to go home without having to enter the hospital, saving emergency medical staff from admitting patients, organising urgent cardiologist assessments in the community and referring to GPs.

Not only will hospital staff benefit from the reduced burden of chest pain care but patients now have an alternative option to heading straight into emergency departments and prolonged hospital stays depending on their condition.

Further study into the effectiveness and safety of the RACC model of care is underway to reduce the burden of chest pain on NSW hospital emergency departments.

## **ENDS**

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### **About the Australian Digital Health Agency**

The Agency is tasked with improving health outcomes for all Australians through the delivery of digital healthcare systems, and implementing [Australia’s National Digital Health Strategy – Safe, Seamless, and Secure: evolving health and care to meet the needs of modern Australia](#) in collaboration with partners across the community. The Agency is the System Operator of [My Health Record](#), and provides leadership, coordination, and delivery of a collaborative and innovative approach to utilising technology to support and enhance a clinically safe and connected national health system. These improvements will give individuals more control of their health and their health information, and support healthcare providers to deliver informed healthcare through access to current clinical and treatment information. Further information: [www.digitalhealth.gov.au](http://www.digitalhealth.gov.au).

### **About the University of Sydney**

The University of Sydney is Australia’s first university, founded in 1850 on the principle of providing higher education for all. It was one of the first universities in the world to admit students on academic merit, and women on the same basis as men. Today the University is ranked in the world’s top 50 universities, reflecting their reputation for leadership in research and education. The University aims to create a place where the best researchers and academics and most promising students – whatever their background – can achieve their full potential. The University of Sydney is dedicated to understanding and solving the world’s biggest healthcare challenges, with world leaders in medicine and health research. [www.sydney.edu.au](http://www.sydney.edu.au)

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