

Acknowledgements

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Department of Health and Aged Care



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Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care



Australian Government
Australian Digital Health Agency



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Part 1

Understanding data and digital in Australia's aged care sector

The recently released Intergenerational Report¹ forecasts that by 2062, the number of people over the age of 65 is expected to more than double. The number of people over the age of 85 will more than triple. The aged care sector workforce is already under strain and will need to increase to meet this demand.

Enduring data and digital transformation of the sector will be needed to meet the challenges of an ageing population, increasing demand for aged care services, particularly in the home, slowing population growth and a persistent national skills shortage.

Up to one-third of time spent on administrative tasks can be saved by embedding digital technology, increasing the digital capability of the aged care workforce and introducing new policies on data sharing. While there is a current and projected shortfall in the aged care workforce, based on Department workforce projections², digital enablement has the potential to reduce the estimated shortfall in the aged care workforce from 36,974 to 20,951 workers by 2030 (based on the proportion of administrative care minutes of 31.7% and an intervention effect of 41.2%).

“ We need to think about how we can innovate and better use digital to help solve the aged care system. ”

– departmental representative

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety (the Royal Commission)^{3,4} also identified gaps in aged care data and digital technologies that hinder effective care, including:

- information on aged care services often being complex and hard to find, making accessing services difficult
- variable digital literacy within older Australians and the workforce, with disparate, disconnected, and at times paper-based care management systems utilised across the aged care sector
- fragmented and incomplete data, with notable data gaps in areas such as workforce, finance, regular assessment of care needs, quality of life, quality, and safety of care
- limited interoperability between systems and entities, hindering a person-centred view of pathways and outcomes within providers, with Government and across systems such as health and aged care
- a lack of consistent data standards to support software development and the reuse of data³.

As stewards of the aged care system, the Department of Health and Aged Care (the Department) plays a key role in leading work with the sector to resolve these system-wide issues. This strategy outlines the Department's approach to encouraging innovation and harnessing the power of data and digital to improve care and wellbeing for older people.

The Strategy on a page

VISION

Our vision is to deliver the highest quality person centred care for older people while driving a sustainable and productive care and support economy through data and digital innovation.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Person-centred

Tell us once

Diverse

Integrated

Care-focused

Trusted

OUTCOMES

Outcome 1

Older people and their support networks can navigate and actively participate in their care and well-being.

Outcome 2

Aged care workers, service providers and health professionals are digitally empowered to provide higher quality, and better-connected, care.

Outcome 3

Data is shared and reused securely to deliver a sustainable and continually improving aged care system.

Outcome 4

Modern data and digital foundations underpins a collaborative, standards-based care system.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Promote healthy ageing, independence and choice

Create simplified, user-friendly experiences

Maximise time for direct care

Strengthen care connections

Improve security and access control

Optimise data collection and utilisation

Build and embed data and digital maturity

Encourage innovation and provide stewardship



Our vision for data and digital in aged care

Our vision is to deliver the highest quality person centred care for older people while driving a sustainable and productive care and support economy through data and digital innovation.

We recognise that data and digital are enablers to improving care and wellbeing. This is also a key goal of the draft Care and Support Economy Strategy. Better data and stronger digital foundations will support older people and enable the sector to provide better quality care.

Our vision is about older people, the care they receive, and empowering them to lead fulfilling and meaningful lives. It is about enabling people to remain as active and independent for as long as possible. As well as enabling older people's support networks to be active in and informed about their care when it is needed. It highlights the fundamental role of the workforce and service providers, in whose hands rests the delivery of high-quality care.

Data and digital are enablers provide support, tools and information that enable each of the groups involved in the sector to be more effective and successful. But data and digital are only valuable where they are focusing on an overarching vision. This is the purpose of the Vision; to ensure that investment, effort and focus on data and digital solutions remain targeted at achieving the fundamental goal of improving care for older people. This strategy aims to focus data and digital, working in unity, on the things that will improve the care that people receive. The data system and digital landscape that this strategy aims to create consist of the things that most directly and meaningfully realise this vision.

This Vision is the heart of the Aged Care Data and Digital Strategy, and all components exist to support it.

Unifying data and digital to provide exceptional aged care

The purpose of the Aged Care Data and Digital Strategy is to achieve the Vision. It will provide guidance, clarity, and actionable recommendations regarding how the sector can leverage the combined power of data and digital to deliver exceptional care experiences, promote independence and foster connections for older people and their support networks.

The core of this purpose is that the Strategy needs to be clear, pragmatic and actionable, providing tangible, specific steps towards achieving the Vision. These steps need to work towards using data and digital in combination to enhance care experiences and connections for older people. This is the Government's strategy for data and digital in aged care, but it is aimed at the sector, and at enabling all groups to better utilise and interact with technology in order to achieve improved outcomes for older people.

“The sector is immature and chaotic, with an incredible disparity in knowledge, terminology and different terms meaning different things to different people.”

– Academic representative

Notably, the purpose isn't about forcing digital adoption on older people and their support networks, or putting data and digital in the place of face-to-face care. The purpose of this strategy is to achieve the vision, a vision in which data and digital are supporting, empowering and enabling factors for high-quality, relational and individualised care. Preserving choice and having technology work to make other non-digital channels more accessible, efficient and effective are key components of leveraging data and digital in a person-centred way.

“ We are doing lots of work on standardisation. There are millions of standards, pick one and go with it, then educate the sector on it. ”

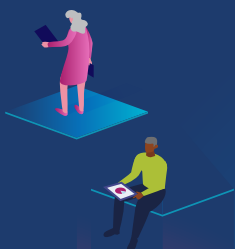
– Peak body

What we heard: an evidence-based approach

This strategy is underpinned by consultation and research with older people, their carers and stakeholders involved directly or indirectly in the care of older people.

HIGH LEVEL OF WILLINGNESS TO USE NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Our consultations indicated that there is high level of willingness to use new technologies, however, lack of learning opportunities, appropriate technical support and user friendliness poses some barriers, especially for older people and their carers.



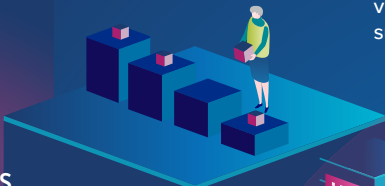
TARGETED EDUCATION AND TRAINING IS REQUIRED

Appropriate, targeted education and training is required to facilitate an uplift in the digital literacy and capability of older people, service providers and aged care workers.



ABILITY TO CHOOSE BETWEEN DIGITAL AND NON-DIGITAL CHANNELS

Maintaining the ability to choose between digital and non-digital channels, and to make choices about the ways to engage with aged care is vital for older people and their support networks.



GUIDANCE AND CLARITY ACROSS THE SECTOR

A key role of the Strategy should be to provide guidance and clarity across the sector, allowing all groups to understand the direction and focus of data and digital in aged care.



THE NUMBER OF DIGITAL SYSTEMS IN USE HAS EXPANDED

The number of digital systems in use has expanded dramatically and has created fragmentation. In order to ensure effectiveness the focus should be on user-friendly, simple and fit-for-purpose digital solutions.



ACCESSIBILITY AND AFFORDABILITY

Accessibility and affordability are key drivers of engagement with digital health solutions for older people, aged care workers and service providers.



DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES SHOULD MAKE THE PROVISION OF CARE SIMPLER AND EASIER

Digital technologies should be used to make the provision of care simpler and easier, rather than adding complexity and administrative overhead. Automation and streamlining of non-care tasks is key to generating efficiencies.

GREATER CONSISTENCY AND UNIFICATION

Greater consistency and unification within the sector and with the healthcare system is necessary. Digital foundations need to enable interoperability, in order to reduce complexity and enable more continuous care.



TARGETED AND APPROPRIATE FUNDING

Many highlighted that specific, targeted and appropriate funding is a pre-requisite to the greater adoption of digital technologies⁵.



“It’s not that they can’t, it’s that they haven’t learnt yet: innovation and education are key.”⁵

– Technology vendor

A principles-led approach

The Department has taken a principles-led approach to guide the Strategy's development. These principles reflect what we have heard from older people and the sector, underpin decision-making and ensure that the Strategy is delivered in a way that remains true to its underlying Vision and Purpose. The guiding principles have informed the development of this strategy, and will continually inform the implementation of activities under it. The principles have been designed to ensure that the development of data and digital in aged care remain focused on the right things to genuinely achieve the Vision.



Person-centred

The selection, design and implementation of all initiatives are focused above all on the benefits they achieve for older people.

The implementation of each initiative strongly considers the impact on older people. They are appropriately engaged and understood.



Trusted

Trust, privacy and security need to be safeguarded.

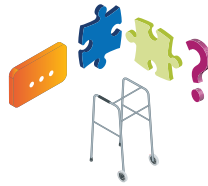
Initiatives involving the sharing of sensitive information are tightly controlled to uphold the privacy of individuals. Consent, confidence and trust in how personal information is secured and used is fundamental.



Tell us once

Information should be re-used and shared so that people only need to tell their story once.

Initiatives consider how systems and information can securely include the right people at the right time. This takes the burden off the older person to repeat their story.



Diverse

The aged care sector is diverse with individualised needs.

It is recognised during implementation that changes can impact individuals differently. These must be deeply understood to ensure no change negatively impacts particular demographics due to ignorance.



Integrated

Technical standards should be used to promote harmonisation across the aged care and associated systems.

Where there are clear gaps in consistency, standards should be used to steward a harmonious aged care system.



Care-focused

Burden for frontline workers should be minimised so they can focus on providing high-quality care.

Implementation ensures the important work front line workers do is supported by tools and processes that allow them to dedicate more time to providing quality care.

Alignment with data and digital across health and government

We, as the Department of Health and Aged Care, play a leadership role in enabling data and digital aged care initiatives and innovation that will empower older people to live more good days. We cannot do this alone.

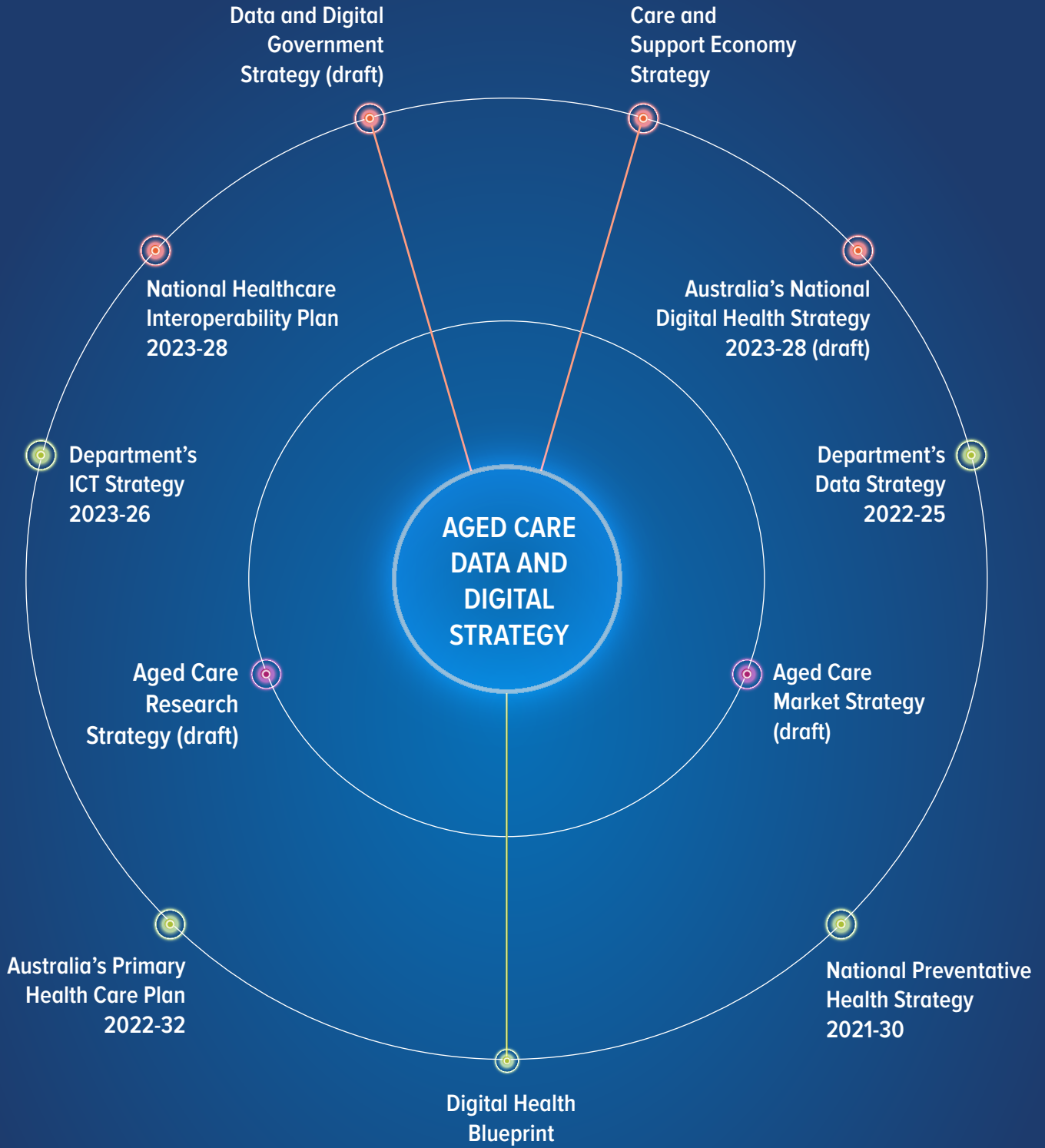
The aged care ecosystem is a complex mix of individuals, priorities, organisations, responsibilities and capabilities. In developing and delivering this strategy we need to continually work closely with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) to leverage their expertise in aged care data, and the Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA) who lead national digital health programs. Additionally, aged care does not stand alone, and we are aligning our approach to support the broader care and support economy, including disability services and veterans' care.

We recognise that much of the same workforce provides health and aged care services, and that is why we have positioned our strategy to be a companion strategy to the draft Commonwealth Digital Health Blueprint. Our strategy and this Blueprint set out, respectively, the future for data and digital in aged care and health, and both seek to strengthen continuity of care. This alignment will bring aged care and health data and digital systems closer together, for example adopting the same data standards so that information is more easily shared.

This strategy does not sit in isolation, and will not be successful unless it leverages, builds upon and connects deeply with other strategies, plans and reform activities occurring within Aged Care and Health as a whole.

“ When facilitating transfers, the inability of systems to talk to each other and lack of compatibility makes it incredibly difficult.⁵”

– Consumer group representative



Key ○ Aged care specific ○ Department-wide ○ Broader strategy

References 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15

Our commitments to the sector

We have high ambitions for Australia to achieve the world's best aged care system. Innovation and stronger adoption of data and digital is essential to achieve this. We must understand who we are doing this for.

Helping service providers and connections with healthcare

Providers benefit from streamlined systems, tools and services to help deliver consistent, effective aged care.

Deliver personalised care

Minimised administrative and reporting burden

Timely access to accurate information

Clarity of how to use systems effectively

Service providers
Broader healthcare workforce
Aged care assessors
Aged care workforce



Supporting research and innovation

Technology vendors benefit from innovation and clarity around long-term policy and priorities, and industry benefits from aged care research and access to information that supports a deeper understanding of older people's needs and the aged care sector.

Supported by clear system standards

Promotion of ongoing digital innovation

Clear evidence to inform investment

Technology vendors
Researchers
Sector groups
Peak bodies

A more personalised and connected aged care experience

To illustrate these benefits, the Strategy depicts the journeys of three core personas and their interactions with four supporting personas.

The main steps of the aged care journey for older people, aged care workers and service providers are brought to life through the characters of Jenny, Anita, and White Hills, respectively. The supporting personas, being an informal carer, a health clinician, an assessor and a technology vendor, are tightly involved in the journeys through the aged care sector of Jenny, Anita and White Hills.

The Personas are generic. Everyone's aged care journey will have nuances and individual features that make them unique, but these Personas are designed to reflect a bit of everyone, and to highlight some of the ways that the initiatives in the Strategy will improve the experiences of aged care for everyone in the sector.

Meet our personas



Jenny

Older person

Age: 70

Gender: Female

Location: Shepparton, VIC

Jenny lives at home with her partner, Peter, who has early-stage dementia. Jenny helps Peter take his medication and do his regular memory activities. She also tries to manage the grocery shopping and house cleaning by herself. Jenny has arthritis, currently managed through medication and exercises from her GP. Jenny is beginning to find it difficult to keep up with all her responsibilities and wants to begin planning for the future of her and Peter to help them remain in the home for as long as possible.



Anita

Aged care worker

Age: 45

Gender: Female

Location: Shepparton, VIC

Anita moved to Australia with her family eight years ago from India after her husband found work in the region as a specialist mechanical engineer. Anita and her family are now permanent residents of Australia.

Having cared for her elderly relative before they passed, she is passionate about caring for older people and helping others at this stage of their life. Prior to moving to Australia, Anita was a teacher in India. She used the move to change her professional focus and move into the care sector.



White Hills

Service provider

15 years in business

Location: Bendigo and surrounds, VIC

White Hills Aged Care is a not-for-profit provider that has been delivering home and residential aged care to the older people of Bendigo and the surrounding region of Victoria for 15 years. They operate a large aged care home in Bendigo and smaller facilities in Shepparton, Echuca and Kyabram. Five years ago, White Hills commenced delivering home support services due to increased demand across the same locations. White Hills is a medium-sized enterprise with ~250 employees and ~50 contractors.



Sondra

Informal support network

Sondra is Jenny and Peter's daughter. She is an informal carer and authorised representative, supporting them with day-to-day tasks and helping manage their care.



Clara

Health clinician

Clara is a general practitioner working in Shepparton. She has been seeing Jenny and Peter for over ten years and is helping to support them with ageing healthily.



Transform Inc. (tech vendor)

Technology vendor

Transform Inc. is a large Australian-based technology vendor that has been developing digital solutions for the aged care sector for over 25 years.



Janice

Aged care assessor

Janice is an aged care assessor, working in Bendigo and surrounds. Her background is in nursing and she transitioned into assessment 15 years ago.

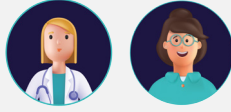


ENHANCING JENNY'S AGED CARE JOURNEY

by harnessing the power of data and digital

PLANNING AHEAD

Other members of the ecosystem are involved during the journey



Jenny goes through a range of steps in her aged care journey

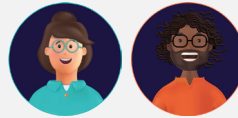
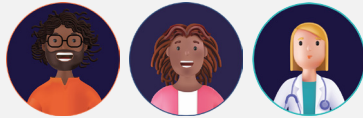
During a regular check-up, Jenny's GP suggests to Jenny that she begins using aged care services

The Strategy positively impacts Jenny and her journey through aged care

Before even entering the aged care system, Jenny has access to digital tools that support her to age well. She and her carers have the right information to make important decisions about her and Peter's future.

ASSESSMENT

GETTING MORE HELP



Jenny is ready for an aged care assessment to identify the level of care she requires.

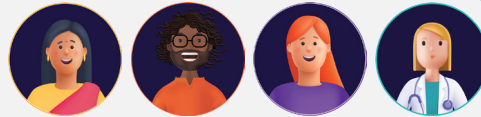
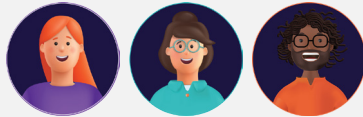
Jenny decides that she does need the extra hand in the home. She applies for an assessment.

Jenny is assessed quickly and fairly through the Integrated Assessment Tool app. She feels informed and confident that the level she is assessed at matches her needs and can arrange for reassessments herself if her care needs substantially change.

Jenny comfortably registers for an assessment thanks to the help of the My Aged Care app. Her My Aged Care profile securely links to her health records, so all her information is on hand for a simple and streamlined process. She comfortably books an assessment using the My Aged Care app.

FIND A PROVIDER

RECEIVE QUALITY CARE

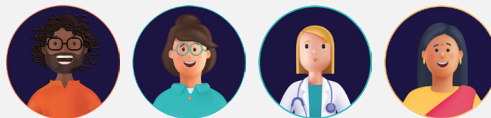


Jenny wants to find a provider that can meet her care needs.

A care plan is developed for Jenny and she begins receiving care from Anita at White Hills.

Jenny uses the My Aged Care app to compare providers in her area and discovers that White Hills can provide her with the services she is after. She feels empowered to choose White Hills with clear and relevant information about the quality of their care being available to her.

Jenny receives high quality care from Anita and her colleagues, with access to modern Assistive Technology that she chooses to use. Jenny is impressed that every worker at White Hills knows her story, and are able to adapt to her individual needs quickly.



Jenny's care needs change from time to time, leading her to move between different care settings.



Whether Jenny is transitioning to hospital, respite or residential care, she finds the process is easy as she only tells her story once, and that systems throughout the health and aged care systems securely share her real-time data.

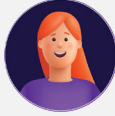


GROWING ANITA'S AGED CARE CAREER

by leveraging the power of data and digital

STUDY AND QUALIFY

Other members of the ecosystem are involved during the journey



Anita goes through a range of steps during her career in aged care

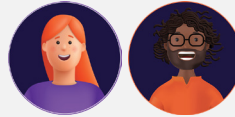
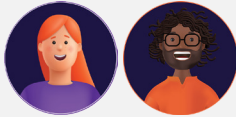
Anita pursues her Certificate III in Aged Care.

The Strategy positively impacts Anita and her journey through aged care

Anita enjoyed her studies and feels particularly confident in tackling the digital systems she will have to use when she is working. Be they for administrative or care purposes, Anita finishes her course feeling suitably qualified to not only give great care, but also use digital tools effectively in care settings

SCREENING

SEEK EMPLOYMENT



Before starting at White Hills, Anita needs to undertake screening processes.

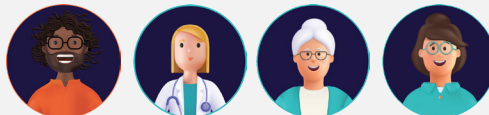
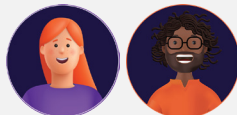
Anita begins her job search now she has appropriate qualifications.

Anita finds the screening process smooth and seamless. Strong systems integration makes the process efficient for her and White Hills, her information is re-used throughout the process, keeping the data entry and manual administration for Anita minimal.

Anita feels confident during her job search. She found White Hills not only has capacity to take her on, but real-time and accurate information indicates it is a great place to work with a good culture and alignment to her career aspirations.

INDUCTION

DELIVER QUALITY CARE



Anita goes through an induction at White Hills

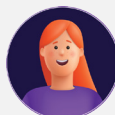
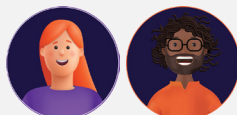
Anita provides in home and residential care to the clients of White Hills.

Anita finds that White Hills takes into consideration her recent studies when designing her induction program. This makes her process fast-tracked since she is able to quickly pick up the specific systems and technology that White Hills uses.

Anita enjoys using all the digital tools at her disposal as they minimise the time burden of administrative tasks and support her to give greater care to Jenny. Anita finds that she communicates effectively with broader health networks as quality information on Jenny and her other clients is shared securely in real time.

INDUCTION

ONGOING TRAINING

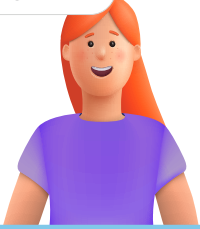


Anita wishes to find opportunities to advance her career

Anita seeks opportunities for continuous learning to stay current with best practice.

Anita feels in control of her aged care career. Her system skills mean that she can easily transition into other parts of the organisation, and she is able to develop innovative new ways to use technology in the provision of care.

Anita feels on top of the ever-changing digital landscape. White Hills is deliberate in giving time to Anita to upskill her data and digital capabilities. She finds the courses are tailored to her already strong capability to push her knowledge even further.

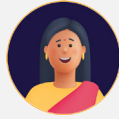


STRENGTHENING WHITE HILLS SERVICES

by enabling the power of data and digital

ATTRACT/RETAIN WORKFORCE

Other members of the ecosystem are involved during the journey



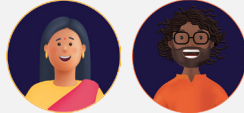
White Hills goes through a range of steps as an aged care service provider:

White Hills seeks appropriate employees, such as Anita.

The Strategy positively impacts White Hills while they provide aged care services to their clients

White Hills finds it easier to attract and retain employees as they have effective systems that make their employees jobs easier, and more focused on relationships and providing care. They are also able to better identify staff with existing data and digital capabilities through accreditation and training courses

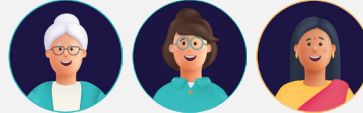
MANAGE OPERATIONS



White Hills does a lot to manage its operations; from rostering staff to receiving clients.

White Hills finds they spend less time on data entry and administration, as data is integrated from the point of capture, and manual tasks are automated. They find that this greatly frees up the capacity of Anita and their other staff members, resulting in more time available for great care.

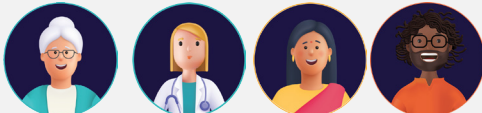
EDUCATION/TRAINING



White Hills facilitates data and digital training for Anita and its other employees, and for Jenny and their clients that are interested.

White Hills provides ongoing digital and data training to Anita and other employees. This training is aligned to the capability of each individual staff member. White Hills also supports Jenny and their other clients to become more digitally literate if they so choose.

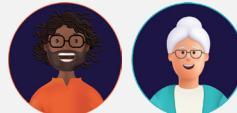
DELIVER QUALITY CARE



White Hills provides in home services to Jenny and others, while also managing a residential aged care facility.

White Hills find their workforce are well integrated with one another, and the broader healthcare workforce. This means Jenny and their other clients receive seamless care no matter if provided by an employee of White Hills, or someone else. White Hills are supported by innovative technology that enhances the care provided to Jenny and others.

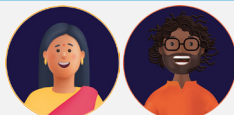
MONITOR/IMPROVE CARE



White Hills monitors the care needed and received by Jenny and their other clients.

White Hills is enabled through digital supports to consistently and easily monitor the care provided to their clients. They are also able to get information about their customers' changing health needs from general practitioners, hospitals and other care settings, which they can use to provide better, tailored care.

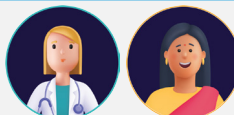
REPORTING



White Hills completes all reporting required by the Commonwealth.

White Hills has up to date systems that produce reports and submit data to the government automatically. The reports use high-quality, real-time data so White Hills can confidently focus on value-adding activities, knowing that their compliance requirements are met.

FACILITATE NETWORKS



White Hills frequently rely on their health networks, to support Anita and employees in their care delivery.

Information is shared across the health and aged care systems effectively and White Hills finds that their employees can facilitate flourishing networks across the care systems, with minimal time spent on chasing down additional information or finding contacts.

Focused outcomes will make our vision real

To ensure that the intended benefits are being achieved, and that the Vision is realised, four specific outcomes will be used to monitor and evaluate the progress of the strategy.

To ensure strategic alignment across health and across government, these outcomes are aligned closely with the outcomes in the Commonwealth Digital Health Blueprint. Monitoring activities and key performance indicators for each outcome will be included in the companion implementation plan and roadmap and reviewed regularly, so that progress against each outcome informs the ongoing development and implementation of the strategy.

OUTCOMES

Outcome 1

Older people and their support networks can navigate and actively participate in their care and well-being.

Outcome 2

Aged care workers, service providers and health professionals are digitally empowered to provide higher quality, and better-connected, care.

Outcome 3

Data is shared and reused securely to deliver a sustainable and continually improving aged care system.

Outcome 4

Modern data and digital foundations underpin a collaborative, standards-based care system.

“If there are outcomes, there is a need to be able to measure them. We need to know what the targets are.”⁵

– Aged care provider

Priority areas outline our path to achieving outcomes

The Strategy's strategic priorities articulate the targeted domains in which specific initiatives and actions will be undertaken in order to achieve the overarching vision and purpose of the Strategy. For each outcome there are two strategic priorities.

Grounded in the principle that older people are at the centre of age care, the eight strategic priorities cover the breadth of an older person's journey, starting with ageing well before care, being able to access and navigate the system easily when needed, and then being supported by high-quality connected care and by a system underpinned by clear stewardship and guidance.

OUTCOMES			
<p>Outcome 1</p> <p>Older people and their support networks can navigate and actively participate in their care and well-being.</p>	<p>Outcome 2</p> <p>Aged care workers, service providers and health professionals are digitally empowered to provide higher quality, and better-connected, care.</p>	<p>Outcome 3</p> <p>Data is shared and reused securely to deliver a sustainable and continually improving aged care system.</p>	<p>Outcome 4</p> <p>Modern data and digital foundations underpin a collaborative, standards-based care system.</p>
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES			
<p>Promote healthy ageing, independence and choice</p> <p>Create simplified, user-friendly experiences</p>	<p>Maximise time for direct care</p> <p>Strengthen care connections</p>	<p>Improve security and access control</p> <p>Optimise data collection and utilisation</p>	<p>Build and embed data and digital maturity</p> <p>Encourage innovation and provide stewardship</p>

“If you would calculate how much taxpayer money goes into admin, it would be scary. So much of the money is diverted into admin, not care giving.”

– Technology vendor

Stages in delivering this vision for 2028

The Aged Care Data and Digital Strategy Action Plan (the Plan) will underpin this strategy by providing a time-based view of the concrete actions under each strategic priority. It will detail how data and digital improvement activities will strengthen aged care and improve wellbeing, as well as how the progress towards the four outcomes will be monitored and evaluated.

It will be a separate living document to the Strategy that will be refreshed each year. It will be developed through engagement with stakeholders and informed by Government-committed deliverables and responses to the Royal Commission.

For each action area, the Plan will identify:

- timeframes from completion
- who will lead and have accountability for delivery, where accountable owners may delegate responsibility where this is appropriate, but they cannot delegate accountability
- engaged partners to assist implementation
- how the Department will monitor and measure progress
- the actions in short-term, mid-term and long-term horizons.



“ The [data and digital] strategy is important, but it has 148 recommendations [from the Royal Commission] it needs to respond to. The strategy needs to be doable.⁵ ”

– Peak body

Part 2

What the Department is doing to uplift aged care data and digital

The outcomes and priorities form the core of the strategy

Achieving this strategy will involve focused effort, coordinated attention across the sector, and the provision of funding and resources to enable change. In this section we provide detail about the outcomes the strategy seeks to create, as well as the strategic priorities that will guide and direct attention to achieve the outcomes.

For each outcome, we have outlined what progress will look like, how it will be measured, and how it connects to achieving the overall vision of the strategy. Each outcome has two priority areas, and together these seek to tangibly drive progress towards achieving the outcome.

For each priority area, we've suggested some action areas within that are examples of the kinds of initiatives that will fall within that priority. These are suggestions only and a detailed Action Plan will be developed each year that will set out funded actions that reflect government investment under each priority. We've also highlighted examples of how such actions could improve the experience of aged care for the Jenny and the other personas that we've met.

We want to work with you to hear how we can achieve the outcomes of this strategy. We will continue to listen to identify which action areas most important to you, and which will be most beneficial if targeted.

Outcome 1

Older people and their support networks can navigate and actively participate in their care and well-being, safe in the knowledge that their story follows them

Progress against this outcome involves tangible increases in the availability, accessibility and usefulness of data and digital technology that supports people to understand and make informed decisions about their care.

Supporting an uplift in digital capability and using this in turn to increase people's health literacy should enable people to take greater control of their own aging¹⁶. This outcome encompasses aspects such as access to services, user-friendliness of the systems and satisfaction with the quality and relevance of information. Success will be measured quantitatively through metrics regarding the prevalence and use of digital channels, engagement with care, and digital and health literacy, as well as qualitatively through consultation with older people and their support networks.

The priority areas to achieve this outcome are:

- Promote healthy ageing, independence and choice
- Create simplified, user-friendly experiences

Promote healthy ageing, independence and choice

This priority is about leveraging digital technologies and data-driven insights to enable older people to understand their own ageing process, age healthily, and make decisions about their own care, whether they are receiving formal aged care services or not. It seeks to foster an environment in which older people and their support networks are given choices about how they want their days to look, are empowered with the tools and information to be able to make those decisions in an informed and individualised way and are able to safely and easily transition into aged care when they choose to pursue additional supports.

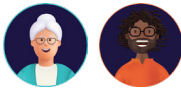
Action areas

AGEING WELL APPLICATION



Develop an application that can be used by older people to understand their health, current position on the broader life curve, and the things they can be doing to age healthily.

SMART HOME AND MONITORING INNOVATION



Investigate and promote the uptake of digital tools that can support care in the home appropriately. This includes, but is not limited to, falls prevention, detection and response, surveillance and monitoring, and robotics for daily chores.

ASSESSMENT BOOKING AND VACANCY MANAGEMENT



Develop a system in My Aged Care (MAC) that enables older people to digitally book and manage their own aged care assessments and identify service providers with current vacancies for the services they require.

DIGITAL AND HEALTH LITERACY



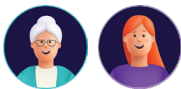
Assess the current digital capability among older people to provide tailored training, ongoing learning support and opportunities and technical support for digital queries and help.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FUNDING



Identify an appropriate incentive program to support older people, in particular those with disabilities, in improving their independence, quality of life and inclusion with the help of assistive technology.

DIGITAL INNOVATION FUND



Establish funding for digital innovation and applications that support older people and their carers to remain independent and safe in their own home.



Jenny downloads the Ageing Well application and uses it to manage both Peter's and her own ageing. She develops a better understanding of their health needs and steps she can take to assist, as well as gaining confidence in using digital tools and systems. When the time comes for her to begin looking for additional support, she is already comfortable with the systems, technology and health terminology to make the transition smoother.

Later, as Peter begins to require more care and attention, Jenny faces a crucial decision regarding their future. During this challenging period, Jenny easily navigates systems and locates quality information online about services in her area, and this enables her to make an informed choice to move to White Hills, where Peter can receive more tailored support for his dementia, and she is able to remain with him and receiving supports she needs.

Create simplified, user-friendly experiences

This priority centres on ensuring that all digital interactions are intuitive, accessible, and enriching for older people, support networks, aged care workers and service providers. It emphasises designing technology with users in mind, ensuring easy input, streamlined experiences and relevance of information. It seeks to realise the potential of digital technology by making it more accessible, easy to navigate and understand, and driving increased confidence and adoption of technology.

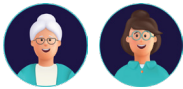
Action areas

OLDER PEOPLE DIGITAL INCLUSION PLAN



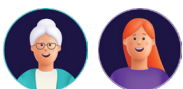
Establish a targeted plan for addressing digital inclusion in older people, including those with dementia, accessibility restraints, and connectivity problems. Similar to First Nations Digital Inclusion Plan¹⁷.

MY AGED CARE ENHANCEMENTS



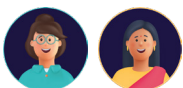
Improve MAC for better functionality, user-friendliness, information sharing and compatibility with other platforms. This includes functions to manage services, manage health records, and access timely information to manage care.

RURAL AND REMOTE DIGITAL INCLUSION PLAN



Develop an inclusion plan for remote and rural communities to provide targeted education, online services, support, and financial incentives to reduce geographic disparities.

MY AGED CARE TO CARER GATEWAY INTEGRATION



Integrate MAC and Carers Gateway for transfer of data and connectivity when caring for older people, particularly those transitioning in and out of residential facilities and hospitals.

AGED CARE DIGITAL DESIGN STANDARDS



Develop digital design standards to provide guidance on user-centred design, safety and security, interoperability, training and support, and ongoing evaluation framework.



Jenny is enthusiastic about how technology can assist her and improve the care she receives. When she receives a tablet device from her service provider, she initially feels intimidated by the complexity of using this technology. However, upon its arrival, she realises that the tablet's interface is simple and intuitive. It assists her in planning and managing her day, and she genuinely enjoys using the device.



Sondra utilises streamlined systems and user-friendly technologies to support her care for older people. These systems offer intuitive and simplified interfaces, enabling her to swiftly navigate through processes without getting caught up in complex technical challenges. This efficiency minimises stress and allows her to focus on what truly matters: delivering attentive and empathetic care. With easy access to essential information and seamless interactions, Sondra can dedicate more time and attention to addressing the unique needs and concerns of each individual.

Outcome 2

Aged care workers, service providers and health professionals are digitally empowered to provide higher quality, and better-connected, care

Progress against this outcome involves the establishment of data and digital solutions to connect care services, as well as enabling the use of technology to improve the quality and person-centricity of care.

The Strategy aims to empower aged care workers, service providers and health clinicians by streamlining workflows, promoting effective cross-disciplinary communication, reducing administration, and facilitating the use of new technologies. This outcome will be measured quantitatively using metrics regarding information and data sharing across health, digital literacy and maturity, workforce productivity measures, and uptake of specific digital technologies, as well as qualitatively through interviews with aged care workers, service providers and other health professionals.

The priority areas to achieve this outcome are:

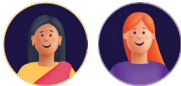
- Maximise time for direct care
- Strengthen care connections

Maximise time for direct care

This strategic priority seeks to use data and digital technology to optimise the allocation of time and resources, ensuring that as much time as possible can be dedicated to quality care for older people. It aims to do this by reducing the time needed for other non-care activities, including duplicative data entry, administration, communication, and information lookup. It seeks to make aged care more about caring and less about administrative processes, ensuring a better and more meaningful experience for everyone involved.

Action areas

BUSINESS-TO-GOVERNMENT (B2G)



Develop a common interface between providers and the Government for direct interaction between the two parties. This interface should include automation with APIs and common data definitions.

DIGITAL MEDICATION MANAGEMENT



Support and facilitate the widespread use of e-prescriptions in the sector and utilise SNOMED CT-AU standardised terminology for medications.

DIGITAL LITERACY AND TRAINING UNIFICATION

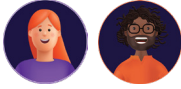


Embed digital literacy training within existing degrees and certificates through the use of partnerships between service providers and existing educational institutions such as TAFEs and universities.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) CARE NOTES AND ADMIN TASKS



Increased use of AI-powered tools that automatically generate care notes by extracting relevant information from interactions with older people. This includes use of voice recognition and transcription.

DIGITAL UPLIFT FUND

Establish funding to improve digital capabilities and bring in tools with proven clinical effectiveness or ability to generate efficiencies, like medication management, digital rostering or workforce management.



Anita spends less time dealing with paperwork and administrative tasks, as key information is captured quickly at the point of care, and re-used so that she doesn't need to repeatedly enter the same data. She can also access the information that she needs for her job quickly and in the moment, saving time and making her better informed. She uses this saved time to build deeper relationships with her clients, and to be able to learn to use new technologies that can help her provide even better care.



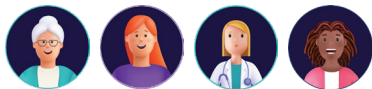
At White Hills Aged Care, digital solutions and optimisation of operations enable them to reduce the amount that they invest in administration, manual data entry and system workarounds. They are able to reinvest their time and resources into direct caregiving and the development of new innovative uses of technology. This shift is not just about productivity growth—it is about instilling a sense of fulfillment and purpose in their workforces, knowing they can spend more time on the things that make a tangible difference in the lives of their customers.

Strengthen care connections

This strategic priority seeks to improve care coordination, enhance treatment outcomes, and provide a more holistic and person-centric approach to care, recognising the multifaceted needs of individuals. It aims to facilitate the seamless flow information across health, aged care, allied health, and disability sectors. Its purpose is to create an integrated and connected care ecosystem, ensuring that relevant data can be shared securely and efficiently where needed. The story and information of an older person should flow seamlessly between health and aged care professionals, optimising treatment plans and ensuring timely interventions.

Action areas

MY AGED CARE TO MY HEALTH RECORD INTEGRATION



Integrate My Aged Care and My Health Record (MHR) to allow information on either system to be pulled into another. This is to enable the workforces to better communicate with another. This will strengthen continuity of care between sectors, provide a more unified view of an older person's care and enable workers in different sectors to better communicate with another.

INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT TOOL APP



Develop an Integrated Assessment Tool (IAT) application to enable assessors to complete the IAT on any secure device that they wish to use and synchronise with MAC.

E-REFERRALS FOR ALLIED HEALTH



Enable Allied Health professionals to utilise the MAC e-referrals platform, Health Link, currently used by medical practices.



As Jenny and Peter each transition between different parts of the health and aged care systems, they find that their story follows them, and at each new stage the people around them are prepared to seamlessly continue their care. Their personalised care plans evolve and transition with them, and Jenny feels at ease knowing her care manager, general practitioner, physiotherapist and specialist are all working together as a team to manage Peter's dementia and help with her arthritis.



White Hills Aged Care can quickly accommodate new residents and customers, catering to their individual care needs with a clear understanding of their background and current needs. They can plan effectively for residents' requirements for additional services such as engaging allied health professionals. White Hills can provide necessary information about residents to the other health professionals, and to receive updates on the status of people in their care.

Outcome 3

Data is shared and reused securely to deliver a sustainable and continually improving aged care system

Progress against this outcome involves rationalising the collection and use of data, ensuring that only useful data need to be collected, that is collected at the right place, and that is used effectively to improve care¹⁷.

By ensuring that excess data is not accumulated, and that data that does exist is available to those with a genuine use for it, the aged care sector can gain valuable insights that can be used for continual improvement, while avoiding the burden of unnecessary data capture. This includes researchers and the secondary use of data to provide insights that can improve aged care outcomes. This outcome will be measured quantitatively through metadata analysis, investigating the volume of data being collected, tracing their utilisation, and outlining unneeded data captures or under-utilised data sources.

The priority areas to achieve this outcome are:

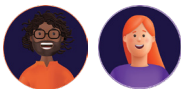
- Improve security and access control
- Enhance data collection and use

Improve security and access control

This priority aims to improve the provision and security of digital and data technology to ensure aged care is secure and reliable. It seeks to provide access to data and systems only where there is a genuine and approved need, and never at the expense of the protection, privacy and security of data. Given the sensitivity of the information captured and shared in aged care, it focuses on providing a safe environment where confidential health data remains inaccessible to unauthorised entities. By developing a culture prioritising the improvement of security and accessing control, older people's data and information will be protected from emerging risks.

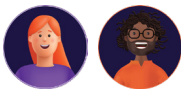
Action areas

SECURITY AND PRIVACY FRAMEWORKS



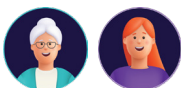
Design and implement frameworks for data encryption, user authentication, security audits and staff training to set the standard for privacy and security.

DATA GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK



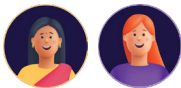
Develop a data governance framework to clarify the roles and responsibilities for data management and ensure accountability among staff and stakeholders.

CLOUD DATA STORAGE



Use up-to-date encryption technology to enable secure cloud data storage for individuals to keep their health information in one place with controlled access to the right people.

SINGLE SIGN-ON



Simplify login processes by providing workers, health clinicians and service providers with access to multiple applications and platforms with a single set of credentials.

PROVIDER DIGITAL ACCESS AND HEALTHCARE PROVIDER ONLINE SERVICES ACCESS



Include systems managed by Services Australia in the streamlining of access controls to improve the security of data managed in these systems.

CARE SUMMARIES AND ASSESSMENTS TO MY HEALTH RECORD



Update MHR to enable care summaries and assessments, including aged care and allied health assessments, to be uploaded directly to MHR.



With the clear guidance on data governance and security frameworks, White Hills is confident in investing in digital solutions and security systems which safeguard the large volume of older people's sensitive data. They feel reassured that they can follow the guidelines and ensure that their security processes and systems are compliant. They have increased confidence in using the information that they have, knowing the correct ways to store, handle and share it.



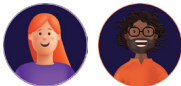
Transform Inc. uses the specific technical guidelines to provide highly secure systems which they can assure to providers are fully compliant. With clear frameworks on security, privacy and authentication, they know exactly what protections they need to build into their systems to safeguard sensitive data. They are clear about the government's roadmap, and are consulted through the process, and so they feel confident about upcoming changes and are more comfortable investing in their systems to provide innovative solutions to White Hills and other providers.

Enhance data collection and use

This priority aims to enable data and digital solutions to provide care that is evidence-based and tailored to the individual needs and continuously improves. With improved access to relevant data, those working in aged care can make better-informed decisions on care, identify areas to improve, and optimise services for the best possible outcomes for older people. Secondary use of data enables deep research into the sector to support the evidence-base for future decision-making. Improved data access and utilisation across aged care will transform data into a powerful tool for continuous improvement and decision support, ultimately translating into enhanced well-being and satisfaction for older people.

Action areas

CONSISTENT DATA STANDARDS



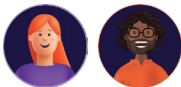
Provide a step-by-step guide on effectively implementing consistent data standards across the aged care sector, including but not limited to, entry guidelines, data quality assurance, training, and education.

CLINICAL INFORMATION STANDARDS



Committed use of SNOMED CT-AU standards for clinical terminology across healthcare, and Individual Healthcare Identifiers (IHIs) for identifying patients.

GOVERNMENT PROVIDER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (GPMS)



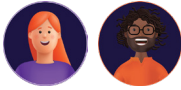
Facilitate better sharing of information between service providers and government through use of GPMS to improve data quality and consistency, while reducing administrative overhead.

NATIONAL AGED CARE DATA ASSET



Make clean, well-structured and analysis-ready data about aged care available for researchers and secondary data users to provide evidence-based insights and improvements across aged care.

NATIONAL MINIMUM DATA SET



Establish a set of standardised data elements that must be collected uniformly across the aged care sector. This will enable data to inform sound research, policy design, new programs and initiatives, and future data collection activities.

TARGET POPULATION DATA COLLECTIONS



Target data capture of demographics in aged care that are underrepresented in current datasets. This will provide high-quality data to represent populations receiving care more accurately.



White Hills find they can collect consistent data from their systems and employees which makes it simple to provide the data to the government and other appropriate stakeholders. In turn, White Hills receives high quality information on the aged care system as a whole. This helps them in planning for future demand, while also allowing White Hills to understand their own performance relative to other providers.



Clara is able to access a range of datasets that she finds extremely useful in her work caring for older people. The information is readily available to her and allows her to effectively tailor her approach to each of her clients. This allows her to support older people to live more good days as her advice is informed by an array of evidence-based research and data that demonstrates the trends and clinical evidence to support her clients to age healthily.

Outcome 4

Modern data and digital foundations underpin a collaborative, standards-based care system that is safe and secure

Progress against this outcome involves the establishment of key system-wide technical foundations to uplift the data and digital maturity and capability of the sector.

This includes agreement on standards by which the sector can collaborate digitally, frameworks for innovation and the development of new technologies, and privacy and security controls to ensure the protection of the highly sensitive information being collected. The progression of this outcome will be indicated by the establishment, agreement and utilisation of key sector standards, frameworks and guidelines, as well as through measurement of data breaches, security compliance, and consumer confidence in their data security.

The priority areas to achieve this outcome are:

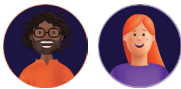
- Build and embed data and digital maturity
- Encourage innovation and provide stewardship

Build and embed data and digital maturity

This strategic priority aims to build the collective data and digital skills and tools of the aged care sector in effectively managing data and utilising digital technologies in a secure way. It focuses on establishing foundational technologies, frameworks and capabilities upon which the sector can develop increasingly robust digital tools. This priority seeks to enable a future state of the aged care sector that can manage data responsibly, harness technology effectively, and where older people will benefit from an efficient care environment.

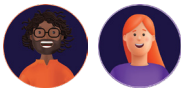
Action areas

API-FIRST DESIGN



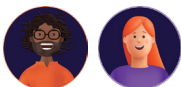
Design standardised interfaces that allow different software systems to communicate and share data. This will replace the use of CSV files with APIs for interoperability purposes.

API STANDARDS



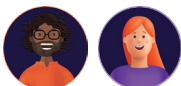
Establish a set of API standards to define how they are to be designed, documented and used. This will cover aspects such as naming conventions, data formats, authentication methods, error handling and versioning.

DIGITAL SYSTEM REFERENCE ARCHITECTURE



Develop a structured framework outlining the design principles, components and interaction of digital systems used to deliver care and manage operations.

MESSAGING STANDARDS



Build upon the Department's commitment to use Health Level 7 Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (HL7 FHIR) messaging standards across healthcare by adopting the standards for aged care and including additions where required.



Transform Inc can leverage established technological foundations and frameworks to seamlessly integrate their own products with government systems and with other technologies. They are able to collaborate more effectively with service providers and develop innovative solutions to problems, knowing that the baseline requirements and functionalities have been met.



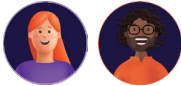
Strong system and technical standards enable White Hills to select and utilise the systems and technology that best meet their specific requirements. They can feel confident that the software that they acquire is compliant, and interoperability standards mean that they can easily pull together a number of systems to support their various functions. White Hills are empowered to use technology in innovative ways, knowing that they don't need to focus on connectivity, data transfer and functionality concerns.

Encourage innovation and provide stewardship

This strategic priority is about government leadership, setting clear guidelines, standards, and ensuring uniformity across the aged care sector. This priority recognises the necessity to have a single, clear target set for the future of the industry while the aged care sector shares, adopts and adapts to innovate together towards common goals. It seeks to develop standards and frameworks that facilitate effective and unified digital innovation and adoption, promoting transparency, accountability, and the optimal utilisation of digital technologies.

Action areas

SECTOR ENGAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE PLAN



Provide a plan for a structured approach to engaging stakeholders, managing stakeholder relationships, and governing activities within the aged care sector.

DIGITAL CONFORMANCE FRAMEWORK



Develop a framework that sets standards and guidelines that define the requirements for digital technologies, systems and processes to ensure that systems used in the sector meet consistent design criteria, such as conformance.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND INNOVATION FRAMEWORKS



Design a framework that sets the guidelines and benchmarks for the development and implementation of AI and other technological advancement. Including guidance on avoiding ageism in AI¹⁸.

ACCREDITATION/ STAR RATING DIGITAL COMPONENTS



Develop the digital requirements in accreditation processes and star ratings to provide information to consumers about the digital capabilities of their potential providers.



Jenny experiences an innovative system that puts her at the centre. The system is coordinated and consistent, and across all care settings she receives modern, high-quality care. The system is well governed so she can navigate it feeling confident that the technology, systems and tools that are used to support her care are backed by standards and frameworks that protect her and promote her well-being.



White Hills experiences notable benefits by embracing a unified and standardised approach to digital implementation. This approach enables White Hills to adhere to the highest industry standards and best practices while simultaneously allowing them to safely be innovative in their service delivery. Having a clear roadmap facilitates strategic planning for future investments and work planning, ensuring that White Hills effectively provides modern care while maintaining compliance with established standards.

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Terms and acronyms

Term/acronym	Description
ACIITC	Aged Care Industry Information Technology Council
ADHA	Australian Digital Health Agency
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
API	Application Programming Interface. This is the method by which different applications and systems are able to communicate and share information.
Artificial intelligence (AI)	The theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages*.
Business-to-Government (B2G)	B2G refers to the sale and marketing of goods and services between the private sector as a supplier and a government body as a customer.
Consumer	While this strategy is intended to benefit all older people, 'Consumer' is used to talk specifically about people receiving formal government-funded aged care services.
CSV	Comma-separated values. This is a type of file commonly used for transferring data.
Digital channels	Any method of communicating, sending information or accessing data that uses digital technology.
Health Level 7 Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (HL7 FHIR)	A type of standard that defines how healthcare information can be exchanged between different computer systems regardless of how it is stored in those systems.
Individual Healthcare Identifiers (IHI)	A unique number in the My Health Record system used to identify an individual.
Integrated Assessment Tool (IAT)	Basic screening questions and activities to assess an older person's cognitive ability.
My Aged Care	The starting point to access Australian Government-funded aged care services and information.
My Health Record (MHR)	An online summary of a patient's health information, available to them and their health provider.
Service provider	Any organisation providing government-funded aged care services.
SNOMED CT-AU	Systemized Nomenclature of Medicine – Clinical Terms. It is a standardised and core set of clinical health terminology that can be used in electronic health records.
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
Technology vendor	Any individual, group or organisation that is developing and selling software or hardware for use in aged care.

* Oxford dictionary