ELDAC
End of Life Directions for Aged Care

Digital Technologies in the Australian aged care sector:
a national project experience.

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The storyline of this session..

1. A national project to support palliative care in aged care

   why palliative care? why technology??

2. Innovative palliative care technologies making a difference in aged care   '

   Digital dashboard & an app!

3. Integration> implementation > and beyond……

   Experiences and the learnings

But first- what is Palliative care???

Palliative care

...an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families who are facing problems associated with life-threatening illness. (World Health organisation, 2020)

Palliative care is not just care provided in the final stages of life. Sometimes palliative care can be of benefit for a person at their initial diagnosis of a life-limiting condition... (Palliative care Australia, n.d.)

Care at the end of life matters, because……………

Life has 100% mortality rate

Death is part of life for ALL OF US

Aging population

Getting older and living longer.

End of Life Direction for Aged Care[ELDAC] Project

ELDAC provides information, guidance, and resources to health professionals and aged care workers to support palliative care and advance care planning to improve the care of older Australians.

https://www.eldac.com.au

Five streams of activities → One of which is 'Technology and Innovation'
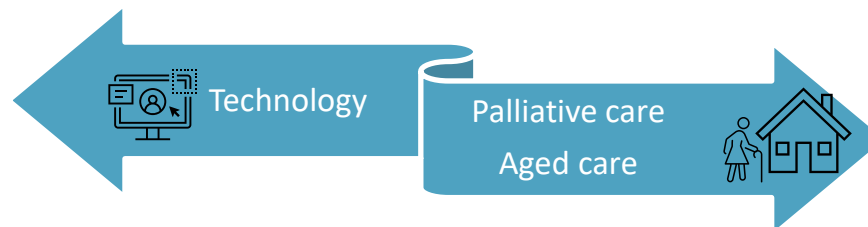
ELDAC Technology and Innovation

- T& I team is located at Flinders University, Adelaide [South Australia]

- Developing, testing and implementing technology solutions to assist the Australian aged care sector in providing quality palliative and end of life care.
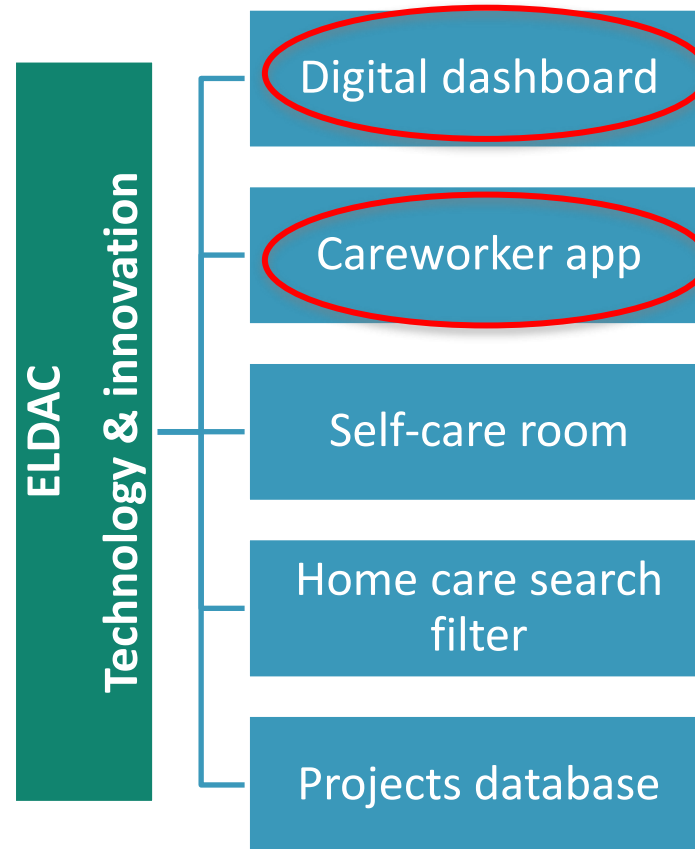
But you may ask:

Technology

Palliative care
Aged care

Why consider technology to support aged care?

Aged care sector:

➢ Huge demand- Over 3.5 million older Australians will require some form of aged care service by 2050.

➢ Resource intensive- need for hands on regular/daily care + workforce shortages.

➢ Intersection with death and dying: Aged care sector provides support to a lot of older people who are in the last year of life. Almost half over 65 year old Australians die in the residential aged care setting.

➢ Technology proliferation- Digital technologies are increasingly utilized in the aged care setting- supportive technologies, communication aids, learning and education, clinical data management platforms etc.
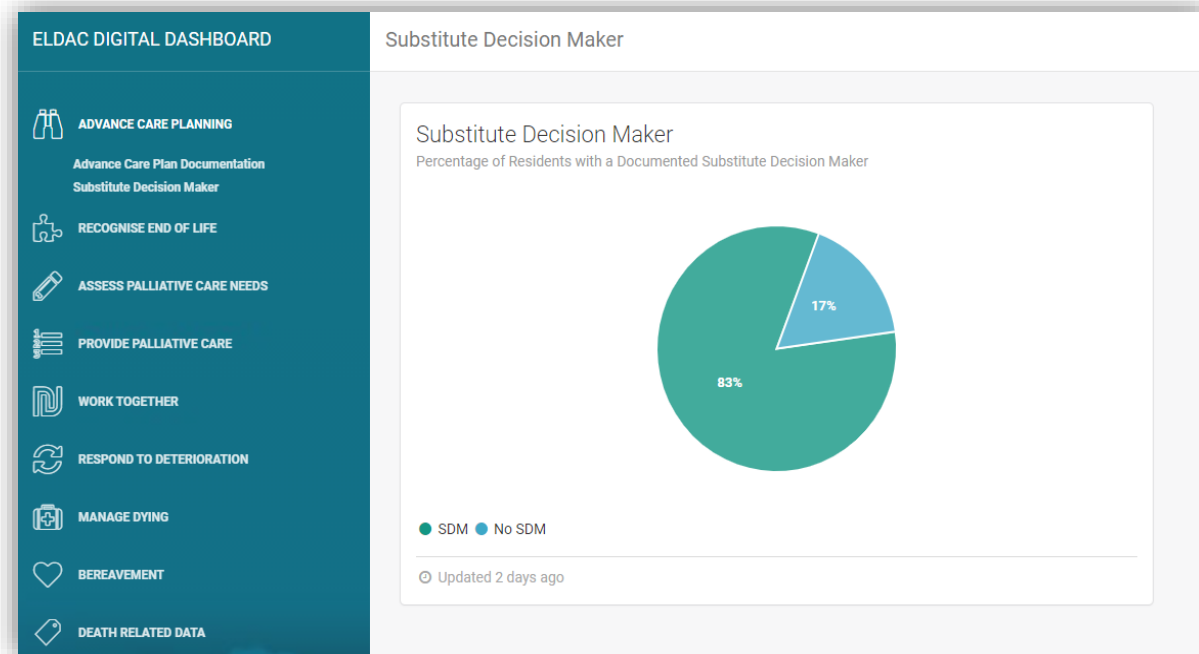
Facilitating Palliative care with technology

ELDAC
Technology & innovation

- Digital dashboard
- Careworker app
- Self-care room
- Home care search filter
- Projects database

The Dashboard example

A technology that integrates within a service's clinical data management system & provides framework for quality EOL care planning and provisioning.

Strengths of the ELDAC Digital Dashboard

Adaptable: Works with the tools, processes and mechanisms of care already in place at a service/IT system level.

Not a stand-alone technology: Seamless integration into existing clinical data management system.

Evidence based product: Based on relevant aged care policy, guidelines and end of life care evidence.

No duplicate data entry: Dashboard uses data that is collected within the service's IT system, so no need to feed data.

Realtime update: No need to wait to view care summaries and prom

ELDAC Digital Dashboard- Meaningful Impact!

Post prototype release> integration into 4 IT groups' system

15 Residential aged care sites had access to the integrated dashboard.

**The ELDAC Digital Dashboard Implementation [EDDI] Study
June-December 2020**

➢A three-month implementation evaluation study across fourteen residential aged care sites.

➢Each site supported by the study team, and a site based 'Dashboard Champion' to ensure appropriate access and use of the dashboard by all relevant site staff.

➢72 staff consented, 57 took part in the focus groups and/or the interviews.

ELDAC Digital Dashboard- Meaningful Impact!

What did we find out?

The ELDAC Digital dashboard provides an opportunity to support existing work processes.

The dashboard presented a useful mechanism to prompt clinical actions, track care needs and enable reporting to management.

The Dashboard helped nurses organise end of life care of their older residents.

Value

The Careworker App

Careworkers/personal support workers/personal care assistants/community support workers

- These are the group of care providers that are most heavily involved in day to day care giving roles in the aged care sector.

  - Unlicensed

  - Very little training in end of life or palliative care context.

  - Spends most amount of time with the older person in care interactions
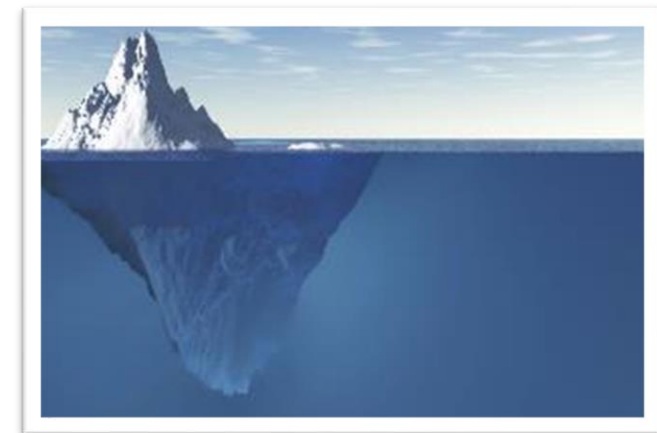
OPPORTUNITY

- Support this workforce in identifying and understanding their clients' palliative and end of life care needs and reporting it to their relevant channels.

![ELDAC - End of Life Directions for Aged Care]

The Careworker App

Aim: develop and evaluate an app that could support Australian aged care support workers (care workers) in caring for older Australians approaching the end of life in the home care setting.

- Currently in building process

But the technical build is just the tip of the iceberg

What underpins the careworker app build

1. Understanding the App landscape:

- Evidence on apps for care workers [systematic review of peer reviewed evidence]
- App markets – What is out there? [Systematic review of apps]

2. Understanding the needs of our end users

- Interviews with careworkers

3. Rigorous build process

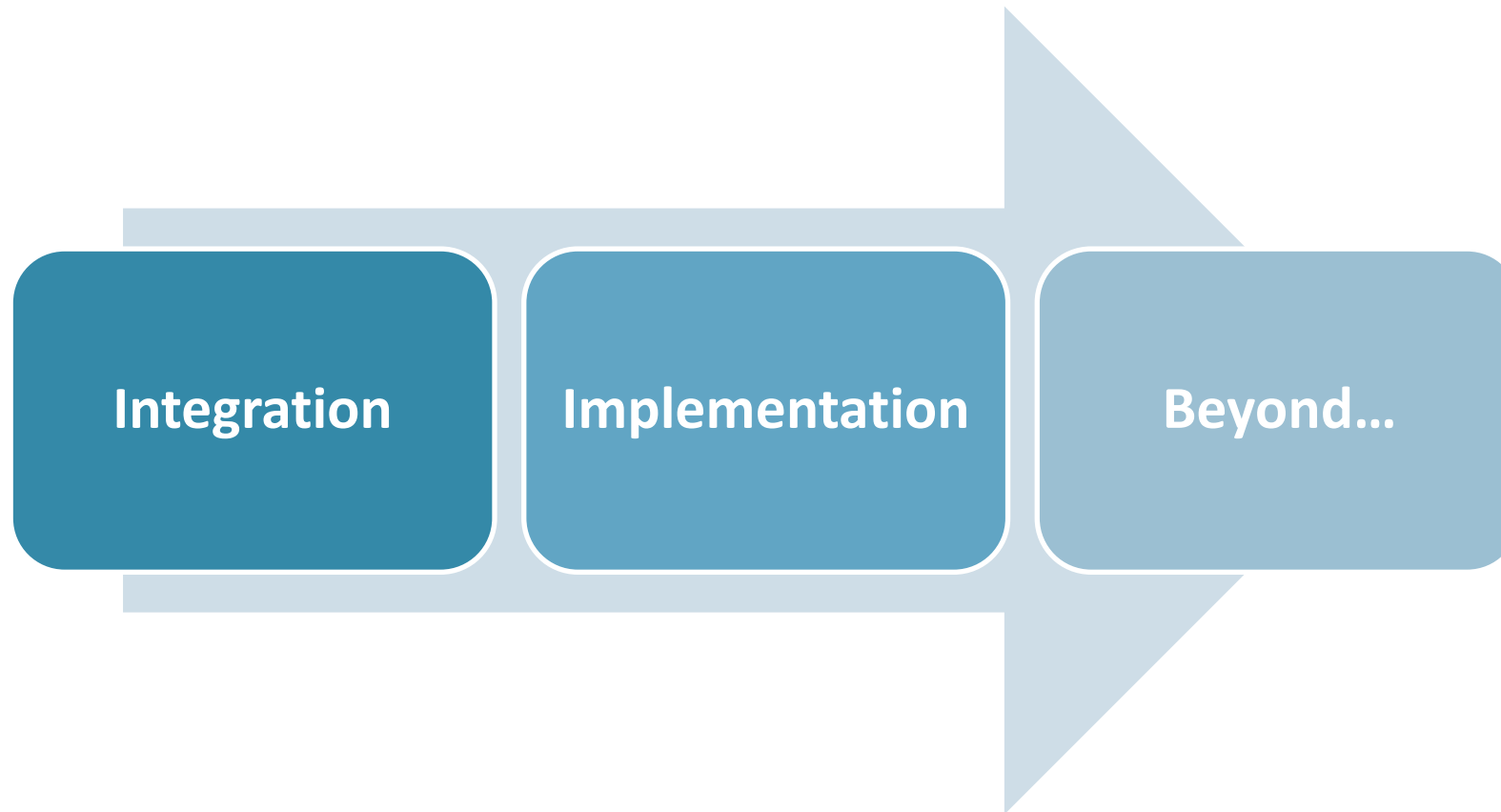- Co-design process
- User testing exercise

Technical build

Value adds of the careworker app

- Support for interactions at the point of care when caring for someone who is in the last year of life.

- Interactive- Actionable tips NOT JUST content to read.

- Links to resources for further education and support.

- Support for self-care.

Integration> Implementation> & beyond…

Access and Adoption

- Are the end users in control of the integration process? [Access]

  - How do we get the buy in from the integrators?

- Is the sector ready for this? Palliative and end of life care? Technology approaches?

- Is there a need for implementation support?

Encouraging widespread uptake

- Navigating access to, and conversations with, the right set of people- technology integrators, leadership team with interest in technology at the service level etc.

Lessons learned from the Dashboard experience

Integration and implementation

- Collaboration with the IT and the aged care sector crucial- IT system level integration + service level [mid-layer] integration successful.

- Technology should work alongside work processes that are in place- Terms and terminologies, roles and hierarchies, reporting and documenting practices etc.

- Having a service/site level champion when implementing a new technology is very useful.

- The timeframe to progress from 'interested' to 'integrated' could be very long- need the keep the flame of interest going in the meantime.

Lessons learned from the Dashboard experience

Feedback from the sector

- A Palliative care digital dashboard is a welcome addition to the Australian aged care sector's technology offerings.

- Dashboard helped the aged care services organise their end of life care practices.

- There is ongoing interest from the aged care sector on the dashboard

  - Seeking digital demonstration(s) and scoping out ways to have access to it.

  Conversations with aged care IT sector regarding integration is also occurring.

Concluding thoughts

Where to from here for technology in aged care?

"Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come."

~ Victor Hugo

Thank you and questions