



Joint media release

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New trial to improve medicine safety for those leaving hospital

A new trial service to help patients better manage their medication after they leave hospital will be launched at Box Hill tomorrow.

Poor medication management during or immediately after a hospital stay is a risk factor in 28% of potentially avoidable hospital re-admissions within 30 days.

DC MedsRec is a community pharmacy-based service for patients discharged from Box Hill Hospital with four or more medicines, designed to help reduce the risk of harm from dangerous drug interactions.

Eligible patients will meet with a trained community pharmacist, who will look at their hospital discharge summary via My Health Record, along with a range of other medication information.

The pharmacist will then check the patient's understanding of the drugs they are taking, resolve any potential medicine safety problems and ensure any medication-related recommendations from hospital are followed up.

The pharmacist also will offer to dispose of any discontinued medications and prescriptions for the patient, with their consent.

The service is an Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA) pilot project, managed by Eastern Health in partnership with Monash University.

"Community pharmacies from the Eastern Health area will take part in the pilot, with up to 5,000 patients potentially involved," said Eastern Health Chief Executive Adjunct Professor David Plunkett.

The success of the service will be evaluated after 12 months. The results could potentially shape future projects to help patients throughout Australia better manage their medicines.

"We know medication errors often occur when patients leave hospital and can mean patients end up being readmitted — so we will assess the impact of this new service on 30-day unplanned readmission rates to hospital," said project lead Greg Duncan, from Monash University.

Australian Digital Health Agency's CEO Tim Kelsey said the service was part of a \$8.5 million program trialling innovative new approaches in post-hospital support, palliative care and the management of chronic health conditions, using digital technology to support better health outcomes.

"Pharmacists involved in the Box Hill project will be able to access their patients' hospital discharge summaries quickly and easily using My Health Record," he said.

"The ultimate aim is to ensure patients with complicated medication regimens don't end up back in hospital after taking a bad combination of medicines."

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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.

About Eastern Health and Monash University

Eastern Health's catchment is one of the geographically largest in the state, with services to over 1 million people. Services are delivered from 65 sites across 21 locations including Box Hill, Maroondah and Angliss hospitals and well as numerous community care centres. Box Hill Hospital (Eastern Health) was the first ranked hospital in Australia being the second ranked Australian research organisation and 36th research organisation overall in the world by Times Higher Education in 2018.

Eastern Health has successfully implemented an Electronic Medical Record and has the most advanced implementation of the Cerner Millennium platform in Australia. This positions Eastern Health to provide both excellent clinical care and research, with real-world benefits.

Monash University is a world leader in medical and health sciences research and education, ranking in the top 50 universities globally for clinical, pre-clinical and health in education and research.

Monash's Eastern Health Clinical School centred at Box Hill Hospital, undertakes both clinical education and research. Research spans the spectrum from applied research that establishes an evidence base to improve models of patient care, health data driven studies, laboratory translational research, to investigator-initiated trials and industry-sponsored clinical trials of new therapeutics.

The Eastern Clinical Research Unit (ECRU) contributes significantly to clinical trials activity in Australia with an estimated 7 per cent market share. Industry sponsored clinical trials have attracted approximately \$9.4 million in revenue since 2014, with more that \$2 million each year.

Through Monash, Eastern Health connects to major research infrastructure for clinical research and health data management, and a network of clinical partners across Victoria through the Monash Partners Academic Health Science Centre.