

RDNS telehealth international win

The RDNS (Royal District Nursing Service) telehealth project, which allows a nurse to make a 'virtual visit' to a patient at home, has won the Outstanding 'ICT' Innovation award in the Asia Pacific Eldercare Innovation Awards 2013 in Singapore.

The award was made on the opening day of the 4th Ageing Asia Investment Forum where 300 international delegates from business, government and community sectors are gathering to discuss the challenges of ageing populations in the Asian region.

The win came on the same day as RDNS made its first public demonstration in Asia of its seniors-friendly telehealth solution that will potentially enable earlier hospital discharge for patients, prevent medicine mismanagement and maximise nursing resources.

Earlier in the day RDNS demonstrated its project with a videolink between conference guest-of-honor (Singapore's Senior Minister of State, Mr Chan Chun Sing) and nurse Amanda Murray who was more than 6000 kilometres away at the RDNS call-centre in Melbourne. Ms Murray took the Minister through a mock consultation which was a conversation as though he was a real patient, monitoring his 'medication' (lollies for this occasion) and hypothetically taking his blood pressure.

The RDNS solution is the principal platform of the organisation's move into delivering care using high-speed broadband technology, and is designed specifically to help address the challenges associated with caring for an ageing population.

The effectiveness of the project called **Healthy, Happy and at Home**, has been tested over the past 24 months in Australia with a sample size of about 50 clients. Each client has a special monitor at home with an inbuilt camera, allowing nurses at the RDNS call centre to conduct two-way video calls with clients at the comfort of their home.

The project is being pioneered with the help of the Victorian Government (Department of State Development and Innovation) under its Broadband Enabled Innovation Program (BEIP). The objective is to help clients remain in their homes for longer to avoid hospital stays and reduce the overall burden on the health system.

RDNS Chief Executive, Adjunct Professor Stephen Muggleton, said he was delighted with the win.

"I want to particularly thank the Department of State Development, Business and Innovation who have given us magnificent support as well as our partners and the RDNS team who have delivered this innovative solution," Professor Muggleton said.

"It is a great example of how clever but easy-to-use technology can provide better in-home support for consumers.

"The success of this project is opening up a range of other exciting solutions that build on the capacity of our nurse-led call centre."



The telehealth development is opening new doors for the delivery of vital home nursing and healthcare. At RDNS's world-class call centre in the Melbourne suburb of Camberwell, a team of nurses make a 'virtual visits' to clients at home using broadband technology.

It means that RDNS clients – as well as their families and carers – have the peace of mind that RDNS staff can “see” that the correct medication is being taken while also *engaging* in a professional, reassuring nursing assessment and consultation.

RDNS, which is Australia's oldest and largest home nursing organisation, makes nearly two million care and support visits to 45,000 clients who are living at home or in other places of their choosing. Staff will travel 10 million kilometres, equivalent to 13 round trips to the moon.

The '**Healthy, Happy and at Home**' project is a major and exciting innovation for the participating partners (RDNS, Telstra, Healthe Tech and La Trobe University) and is demonstrating the benefit of broadband-enabled medicines and nursing management to enable ageing-in-place.

(Pictures available)

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Tuesday 16th April 2013

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