

Roundtable 4

Connected healthcare: towards a Northern Queensland regional digital health strategy

- **Interoperability in Rural Healthcare**

The meeting emphasised the critical role of interoperability in rural areas like North Queensland (NQ), where multiple organisations are involved in patient care. Challenges around data sharing agreements, consent, and Indigenous data sovereignty were also discussed.

- **Reimagining Rural Digital Health Strategy**

There is an opportunity to rethink Queensland's rural digital health strategy, especially in the post-COVID-19 context.

- **Potential Partnerships for Rural Health Reform**

Discussions highlighted the potential for partnerships or alignment with other groups to support infrastructure and relationships essential for rural and remote health reform in Queensland.

- **National Health Information Exchange**

While there is concern about the feasibility of creating a national health information exchange within a meaningful timeframe, stakeholders are committed to establishing a social contract for joined-up healthcare in the region, focusing on data sharing and continuity of care.

- **Interoperability Working Group**

The formation of a technical working group to focus on interoperability was suggested, initially targeting aged care with the potential to expand. Success will require a coalition of committed stakeholders.

- **Testing Digital Health Implementation**

It was advised that the implementation process be tested before a full rollout, to learn from evidence and others' experiences.

- **Indigenous Healthcare and Data Justice in NQ**

The importance of data justice, sovereignty, and co-design in Indigenous healthcare, particularly in NQ, was highlighted. Integrating a strength-based approach in health and disability services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities was also discussed.