2021

BRILLIANT WOMEN

in digital health

Recognising and celebrating women in digital health

Health

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Introduction

Telstra Health is proud to present the 2021 Brilliant Women in Digital Health.

In its inaugural year, the 2021 Brilliant Women in Digital Health award initiative set out to recognise and celebrate women in digital health for their outstanding achievements, while raising awareness about the opportunities in the sector and inspiring others to follow their lead.

It has been created as an important component of the Brilliant Connected Women in Digital Health network, which launched in October 2020. Since then, the network has grown to nearly 1,000 women and men who work in, or have an interest in, digital health. The award initiative actively supports the purpose of the network – to connect, share, inspire and celebrate.

This report announces and profiles the successful 25 award recipients, in addition to the selection of one team of six individuals, by sharing their stories and contributions to digital health – whether for mentoring, medical research, contributing to technology development, improving health outcomes using digital health or introducing a new digital process for the delivery of health and aged care.

After a six weeks' nomination period from June to July 2021, it was a challenging task for the five judges to narrow down more than 140 nominations to the final award recipients. It's reflective of the impressive activity within the sector, and we look forward to growing the cohort of Brilliant Women in Digital Health in years to come, with the 2022 awards to be launched by mid-year.

Acknowledgement of Country

Telstra Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

In this report recognising the 2021 Brilliant Women in Digital Health, we have acknowledged the location of all award recipients, including the Traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place and Country names.

Diversity in digital health is nowhere more important than in closing the gap in Indigenous health outcomes.

While we have only detailed the general locations, we acknowledge the many different and distinct groups, clans and peoples local to each Country and Nation, each with their own culture, customs, languages and laws. We also acknowledge there are variations in the way that some language or group names are spelt. Beyond Telstra Health's commitment to long-term reconciliation and our respect of the Traditional Custodians and their continuing connection to land, the aim of the inclusion of Traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place and Country names is to raise awareness of the First Nations peoples' millennia of living on the Australian continent, and to celebrate the richness and diversity of Indigenous cultures.

Executive summary

As Managing Director of Telstra Health, I am delighted to announce the inaugural 2021 Brilliant Women in Digital Health awards. Congratulations to all award recipients!

We are proud to celebrate their achievements and recognise their positive impact in Australia's digital health sector. We also set out to raise awareness about the opportunities and importance of this innovative and growing sector, as well as inspire others to follow in related careers.

It has been wonderful to see the 2021 Brilliant Women in Digital Health award initiative come to life, with the final award recipients selected amongst the 140 impressive applications we received, confirming the immense talent and diversity of people working in digital health.

Thank you to our eminent judges for their support and commitment to the award initiative, especially in completing the difficult task of deciding these final award recipients.

In reflecting upon the final 25, plus the team award, I believe they all embody the intent of the initiative and the Brilliant Connected Women in Digital Health network. They showcase excellent technical expertise and have demonstrated an exemplary commitment to their work in digital health, with significant impact across the health, aged care, medical research and technology sectors – and often above and beyond their day-to-day roles. It has been very exciting to learn of the variety of projects and work taking place in digital health. It has also been encouraging to see the diversity of the final award recipients, with winners spread across Australia and across career stages.

We hope the stories found in this report inspire the next generation, as we continue to seek innovative ideas and minds to disrupt the status quo and foster diversity and inclusion.

There is a consistent theme in the report from the award winners in their hopes for the potential of digital health in creating a connected and improved health care experience, accessible to all – no matter someone's location, health needs, socioeconomic and cultural settings, or otherwise.

I believe digital health has the potential to lead the technology industry to improve gender diversity, equity and representation of women across the sector.

I'd like to thank each award recipient, as well as every person nominated for the 2021 awards, for your contributions and impact made in digital health. In addition, thank you to everyone who took the time to submit a nomination for someone else. It's often the case that women do not acknowledge or seek to promote their successes, so through these nominations we have been able to highlight the achievements of many who may otherwise go unacknowledged.

We intend to hold the awards again in 2022 and encourage you to consider submitting a nomination next year, including many of those we weren't able to recognise this year. We can't wait to share the detail of the 2022 awards with you by mid-year. I also look forward to the February 2022 in-person event when we will further celebrate the achievements of the inaugural award recipients.

I hope you enjoy reading this report and sharing it with your networks, as you discover the inspiring stories and achievements of the 2021 Brilliant Women in Digital Health.

Congratulations to all once again.

Professor Mary Foley AM
Managing Director, Telstra Health

Our five judges

Thank you to our five esteemed judges from across the health and aged care sectors who have been part of the 2021 Brilliant Women in Digital Health award initiative.

Professor Christine Bennett AO

Telstra Health, Board Director & University of Notre Dame, Deputy Vice Chancellor, and Head of the School of Medicine, Sydney Campus

"While it was incredibly challenging to come to a shortlist with so many deserving applicants from across Australia, it's been wonderful to be part of this initiative to recognise women who have and are making amazing contributions to digital health. More than that, these are women who actively inspire and enable opportunities for other women in their career journey. Ideally, in 10 years' time or less, we won't still be talking about gender but rather brilliant minds. I hope to see a digitally-enabled health sector, that is safe, high-quality, efficient, accessible and responsive to changing needs through innovation led by women and men. Congratulations not only to the final award recipients, but to all the extraordinary women nominated."

Professor Bennett is one of Australia's leading health policy experts, actively involved in medical professional issues, health reform, social policy, medical education and research. In addition to being on the Telstra Health Board, she is currently the Deputy Vice Chancellor Enterprise & Partnerships and Head of the School of Medicine, Sydney Campus at the University of Notre Dame Australia. Professor Bennett is a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians and a specialist paediatrician, with over 30 years' experience in clinical care, strategic planning and senior management in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. She is a passionate champion of the potential for digital health to transform health care. She is currently on the Board of Regis Aged Care provider and is Convener of the Champions of Change Coalition Health Group, advocating for gender equality in health.

Professor Ngiare Brown

National Mental Health Commissioner and Founding Director, Ngaoara

"It was a joy to read some of these exceptional stories from women making a difference in digital health. I was tantalised by some of the expertise demonstrated and the impact made. I look forward to seeing what further positive impact can be made beyond this initiative by making their achievements and stories more visible, and inspiring others to follow their lead."

Professor Brown is a proud Yuin nation woman from the NSW south coast. She is passionate about Aboriginal and Indigenous health, child safety and adolescent development, and building the evidence base that demonstrates connection across culture, resilience and wellbeing. Professor Brown is a Fellow of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and has held a variety of positions in education, mentoring, clinical practice, policy, research and advocacy, with extensive contributions to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health over the past two decades. She is currently a National Mental Health Commissioner and the Founding Director of Ngaoara, a not-for-profit committed to child and adolescent wellbeing.

Professor Jane Halton AO PSM

Chair, Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations and Co-Chair, COVAX initiative

"It's been fantastic to recognise these very deserving award recipients, whose significant achievements in digital health have made a real difference both within Australia and internationally. Based on my personal experiences, all women – regardless of where they work – deal with gender bias, both conscious and unconscious. We have a long way to go yet, especially for women of colour or women from a non-English speaking background. Initiatives like the 2021 Brilliant Women in Digital Health are still needed to create genuine representation and to inspire women to believe in themselves as much as others do."

Professor Halton is a health expert, with a 33-year career in the public service, including as former Secretary of the Australian Department of Health and the Department of Finance. She is the Chair of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations and Co-Chair of the COVAX initiative. Professor Halton was a member of Australian COVID-19 Coordination Commission advisory committee and is on the boards of ANZ, Crown, Australian Strategic Policy Institute and the Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation. She has held numerous international positions including Chair of the WHO Board, President of the World Health Assembly and Chair of the OECD Health Committee.

Dr Louise Schaper

CEO, Australasian Institute of Digital Health

"It was a privilege to be a judge for the 2021 Brilliant Women in Digital Health, recognising the incredible and diverse talent that exists throughout the digital health industry. The recipients have gone above and beyond the remits of their 'day job', giving generously to make a real difference and impact on health care and our community. It was a challenging task to narrow it down to these finalists, as there are so many clinicians, researchers, educators and innovators from across the biomedical, health and technology spectrum who are committed to the improvement of health outcomes enabled through innovative uses of technology and information."

As a leader of Australia's peak body for digital health, Dr Schaper is a passionate advocate for the transformation of health care, enabled by technology. As CEO and Fellow of the Australasian Institute of Digital Health, she brings together world-class clinicians, researchers, innovators and organisations from across the biomedical, health and technology spectrum. Dr Schaper has a background as an occupational therapist, a PhD in technology acceptance among health professionals, is a graduate of Stanford's Executive Leadership Program, a Certified Health Informatician, a Salzburg Global Seminar Fellow and a Fellow of the International Academy of Health Sciences Informatics.

Michael Walsh

Chair, Digital Health Cooperative Research Centre

"Congratulations to all the award recipients – but also to the huge amount of people who were nominated in the inaugural year of this initiative! Each and every person should be incredibly proud of their achievements that make digital health the exciting sector it is – from helping clinicians improve health outcomes for patients, to transforming health and aged care into a new era. There is so much potential associated with digital health, yet to be harnessed, and we need to enable full participation to realise this potential. The 2021 Brilliant Women in Digital Health is just the beginning of uncovering and inspiring a wonderfully diverse group of participants."

Michael Walsh has a passion for organisational excellence and leading value-based teams achieving outcomes that improve the lives of all Australians. In addition to his role as Chair of the Digital Health CRC, he currently provides strategic advisory services to large organisations with a focus on leadership, digital health, governance, strategy, planning and transformation. Over the past 20 years, Mr Walsh has held senior executive positions, including as Director-General of Queensland Health, Chair of the Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council, Board Member of the Australian Digital Health Agency, Chief Executive of HealthShare NSW and Chief Executive of eHealth NSW.

Meet the

2021

BRILLIANT
WOMEN
in digital health

Dr Denis Bauer

Group Leader Transformational Bioinformatics, Australian eHealth Research Centre, CSIRO

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CITY OF RYDE, NSW – WALLUMATTAGAL, DHARUG NATION

3 words to describe yourself?
Passionate, energetic, unconventional

Dr Denis Bauer has been recognised for her contribution to technology development over a 17-year career, solving a wide range of high-impact health problems using bioinformatics and cloud-computing, which facilitates global collaborations, scales to unprecedented data volumes, and provides access to the new computing capability, such as hardware accelerators and quantum. Dr Bauer is an internationally recognised expert in artificial intelligence and genomics, pioneering the digital health economy in Australia by partnering with public cloud providers to distribute digital health products. Her research has substantially impacted the healthcare system, such as discovering novel disease genes to potentially diagnose and treat cardiovascular and motor neuron disease; using machine-learning software to create personalised risk predictions; and developing solutions for PhageTherapy with 'living' drugs that combat the growing antibiotics resistance in microbes, one of the biggest health challenges of our generation.

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> The digital health space evolves very rapidly, with new technology, regulatory requirements and partnerships being announced almost every day. This results in a very short collective memory for success, which I think is a perfect seedbed for innovation.

What do you think is the importance of this award initiative?

It helps to normalise female innovators and provides a network of champions and mentors who can help non-traditional professional development and career advancement. The belief that senior-level roles cannot accommodate flexible work arrangements contributes to a lack of diversity in Australia's leadership teams in my opinion. Traditional work arrangements also form barriers for minorities and individuals seeking a better work-life-balance. It's important to have role models who have successfully navigated this complexity while achieving impact in the health industry.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

One of the people who inspired and guided me most is Lynn Langit. She is an independent cloud architect, developer and educator. She is an amazingly enthusiastic and insightful individual who takes the time to tailor her mentorship approach for everyone she takes under her wings. With her help, I found my voice in the digital space and learned to embrace what makes my contributions unique.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

I've always been fascinated by measuring the inner workings of our body as this amazingly complex biological machinery. Having witnessed a family member pass away from cancer, I'm especially passionate about developing bioinformatics solutions for 'genetic surgery'. Here, genome editing technologies, such as CRISPR, can create treatments that are tailor-made for a patient's specific cancer or genetic disease. I'm fortunate to work with the Children's Medical Research Institute to make these treatments a reality one day. And by augmenting health care with digital technologies, it promises to make access to treatments more equitable.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?

The digital health space evolves very rapidly, with new technology, regulatory requirements and partnerships being announced almost every day. This results in a very short collective memory for success, which I think is a perfect seedbed for innovation. It allows new people to rise to the top quickly while keeping the established players on their toes. It lets us innovate together faster, so don't be hesitant to pitch your idea, especially if it's approaching an old problem with a new angle.
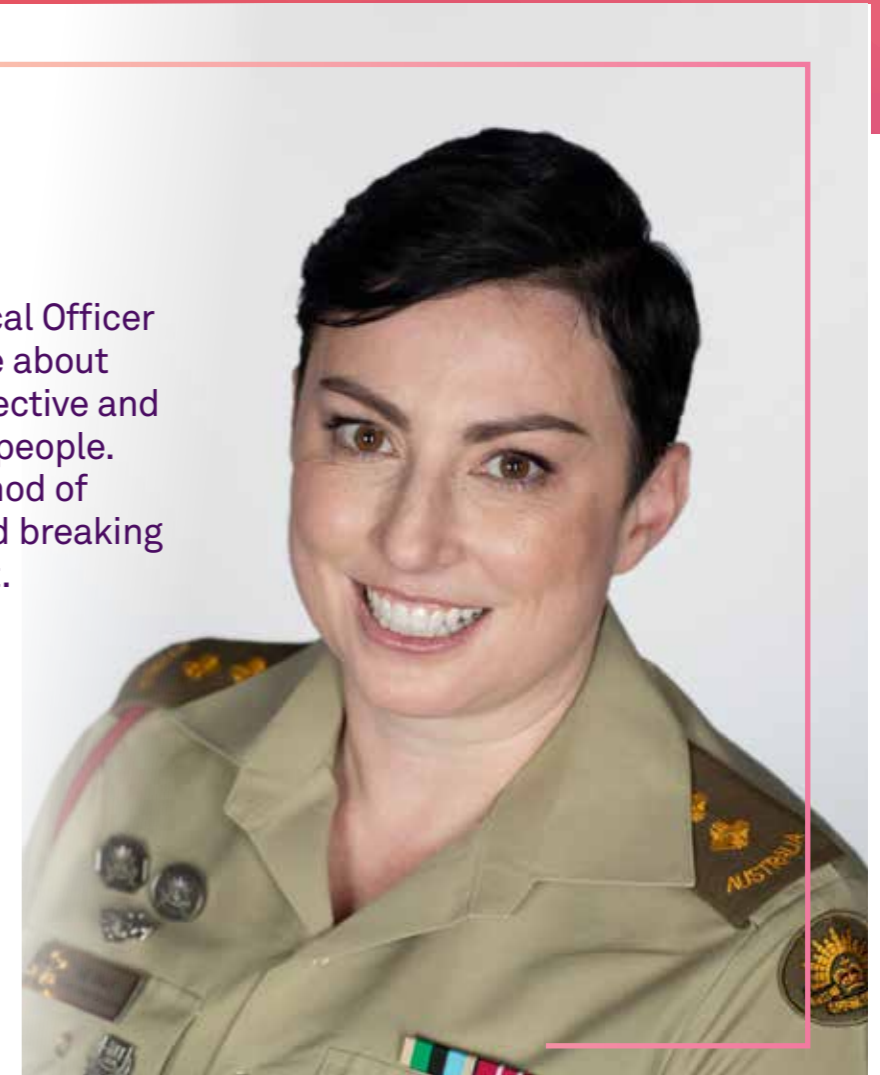
Captain Liz Daly

Medical Officer and Professional Services Recruiter – Health, Royal Australian Army Medical Corps and Defence Force Recruiting

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CANBERRA, ACT – NGAMBRI, NGUNNAWAL COUNTRY

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As an Australian Army Medical Officer (non-clinical), I'm passionate about enabling the provision of effective and equitable health care for all people. Digital health is a great method of reaching wide audiences and breaking down barriers that may exist.

Captain Liz Daly

3 words to describe yourself?
Passionate, determined, inclusive

Captain Liz Daly has been recognised for her work in helping with the rapid development of online training packages, created alongside a team of clinicians, for the Australian Defence Force's (ADF) response to COVID-19 in 2020. Now completed by over 200,000 ADF personnel and translated to 22 languages to assist other organisations and countries, it enabled the ADF to provide vital support to the Australian community in a time of crisis by redirecting the general ADF workforce and non-health capabilities to reinforce the public health systems throughout the pandemic. Non-medical soldiers were upskilled to provide additional support at contact tracing centres, testing clinics, aged care facilities and more.

What do you think is the importance of this award initiative?
Kofi Annan, the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations, once said, "When women thrive, all of society benefits, and succeeding generations are given a better start in life". This initiative not only recognises the amazing work and achievements within the digital health industry, but it also will empower young girls and women by highlighting the various roles and diversity amongst the final award recipients.

Who has been an important mentor to you?
My aunty Claire, a highly, professional, well-respected and formidable businesswoman of the faith. Claire was the National Director of St Vincent's Hospital and served on several Boards. She treated everyone who crossed her path equally, fairly and with compassion. Claire exposed me to a world whereby business and caregiving was required to go hand-in-hand and taught me the value of honest communication and sticking true to your values. Sadly, she passed away from breast cancer but she continues to inspire and motivate me.

Why are you passionate about digital health?
As an Australian Army Medical Officer (non-clinical), I'm passionate about enabling the provision of effective and equitable health care for all people. Digital health is a great method of reaching wide audiences and breaking down barriers that may exist. Digital health also encompasses mentoring and education. By promoting online communities, it builds cohesive and collaborative environments for other healthcare workers to continually learn and improve. My hope is that digital health continues to evolve and that women clinicians, leaders and educators are given further opportunities and initiatives to showcase innovation and adaptability.

What does good leadership look like to you?
A good leader is someone who walks the talk, stays true to their character and is authentic; they not only lead by example, but welcome feedback and contributions from others. Change cannot happen in isolation and by empowering and including others, excellence can be achieved. Most importantly, a leader must love what they do – they need to be passionate and driven whilst also resilient enough to handle any setbacks that may come their way when trying to achieve a goal.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?
Do not be embarrassed to be ambitious. If you have a great idea, speak up! Even if you do not get it right the first time, there is always room for growth and improvement. Do not get too disheartened if there are challenges. Instead, reach out for support from those who have gone down a similar path previously. Little by little you can work towards making an impact.

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> My hope for digital health is for us to stop calling it 'digital health' because we have enabled health care with the tools and infrastructure to ensure we have the information and knowledge where we need it, when we need it, in the form we need it- a truly person-centred, learning healthcare system.

What are you proud of from your contributions to digital health?

I'm most proud of the development of the business case and establishment of the National Clinical Terminology Service (NCTS), which went live in 2016 and was established as a foundation component of national infrastructure to enable interoperability in Australia. The NCTS, underpinned by CSIRO's Clinical Terminology Server technology, was the first FHIR native infrastructure to go into production in Australia. The NCTS has been deemed so successful that I was engaged to help replicate the service for NHS Digital with their own NCTS modelled on the same architecture and CSIRO's Ontoserver also being chosen as the preferred technology solution.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

Angela Reddy, my first Director in the Commonwealth Department of Health who taught me the importance of governance and building open and honest relationships. Carole McQueeney and Liz McCarthy who threw me in the deep end in Tasmania and started my passion for standards. Lisa Smith and Les Schumer who not only supported but also, more importantly, pushed me out of my comfort zone, challenged me and encouraged me to have the difficult conversations! Grahame Grieve who set me the challenge of making terminology accessible and usable, leading to the development of the NCTS, and continues to inspire me to be open, authentic, and collaborative. The value is always in the community!

What motivated you to work in digital health?

I always knew I wanted to work in health care and took my passion for nutrition and public health from my first role as a dietitian to the Commonwealth Department of Health, ending up in Tasmania as the Clinical Stakeholder Lead on for the first ever HealthConnect Trial in Australia. Somehow, I went from running the stakeholder consultation to working on an HL7 Specification for discharge and referrals and I was hooked! I also realised that if we ever wanted to truly enable an interoperable healthcare system, we needed commitment to fit-for-purpose standards – I never wanted to map information models and code systems again! So, 20 years on, I'm still pushing for that future, and I won't give up!

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

For us to stop calling it 'digital health' because we have enabled health care with the tools and infrastructure to ensure we have the information and knowledge where we need it, when we need it, in the form we need it- a truly person-centred, learning healthcare system.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?

For me, the key thing is about making connections and building networks. If we are going to achieve system-wide change, it's going to be through a community-driven approach. No single organisation or sector can deliver it alone.

Kate Ebrill

Product Manager, Australian eHealth Research Centre, CSIRO

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BRISBANE, QLD – MEANJIN, TURRBUL AND YUGGERA COUNTRY

3 words to describe yourself?
Visionary, passionate, tenacious

Kate Ebrill has been recognised for her contribution to technology development, with nearly 20 years of digital health experience in leading delivery and implementation with a key focus on initiatives that drive the adoption of standards to enable an interoperable, digital health system. As examples, this has included the development of the business case for the National Clinical Terminology Service (NCTS), the establishment of the My Health Record Wave Sites Implementation Programs, and the development of a collaboration program with State and Territory CIOs, which supported their implementation of national infrastructure. Across all these roles, including as a Fellow of Australasian Institute of Digital Health, Kate has developed a passion for digital health community building, to take all those involved in the journey of implementation to ensure true interoperability.

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> It's the potential of MediStays to reach marginalised and difficult to reach communities and the profound impact our service has on these people's lives that ignites my passion every day.

What do you think is the importance of this award initiative?

Traditional gender-based and single-track careers are engrained in our healthcare system. However, throughout the evolution of my own career, I have increasingly witnessed women embracing diversified career opportunities that align with their skills and interests. These range from advanced practice allied health and specialist medicine posts, through to physical and medical sciences, and leadership roles. There is also now the desire for more women to move into digital health, which has traditionally been a male-dominated segment of health. Through this initiative, we are creating awareness for women and girls of all ages of successful, and emerging, career pathways in digital health – from patient-facing roles, through to technology development and research.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

Mentors have played a powerful and important role throughout my clinical and academic research careers. Through MediStays, I was introduced to Chris Gray, a digital health entrepreneur and supporter of female founders of digital health. By sharing his experience in building and scaling digital health businesses, Chris provides me with insights and guidance to accelerate the growth and impact of MediStays.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

Clinical research has afforded me with opportunities to harness science and innovative technologies in a collaborative and multi-disciplinary environment. The opportunity for me to explore digital health evolved through a combination of meeting patients in the clinic and the personal journey of my aunt who travelled from remote NSW to Sydney for emergency cancer surgery. I recognised that through the MediStays platform, we could solve a major problem around access to care and scale the impact of our solution beyond what is possible in a face-to-face environment. It's the potential of MediStays to reach marginalised and difficult to reach communities and the profound impact our service has on these people's lives that ignites my passion every day.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

Australia's healthcare system is one of the best in the world, yet our health outcomes are not equal. Our country is vast and timely access to care reduces with distance. In cancer care, we know that the survival of country patients is up to 30% lower for people needing to travel long distances for specialist care. By utilising telehealth, remote patient monitoring and enhanced access to clinical trials, as examples, we can achieve equitable and timely access to health care and improve the quality of life and survival outcomes of these populations. If we build and validate the positive impact of digital technologies in our own communities, ultimately we can take these learnings and export our solutions to help raise health outcomes globally.

Associate Professor Sarah Everitt

CEO and Co-Founder, MediStays

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MELBOURNE, VIC – NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?
Curious, creative, hard-working

Associate Professor Sarah Everitt has been recognised for her contribution to technology development by creating MediStays – a platform that provides patients and carers with suitable accommodation when needing to travel for medical care, especially for rural and regional patients and people with disability. With the finding of accommodation still a major barrier for people to access specialist care, MediStays exemplifies the potential of digital health to break down geographical barriers and bring about a fairer and more accessible healthcare system for all. Associate Professor Everitt's early career focused on the delivery and computer modelling of radiation therapy for people diagnosed with cancer. Following more than 20 years as an established clinician researcher, she has now transitioned her entire career to focus on MediStays, impacting health outcomes through a digital health platform and service that benefits thousands of patients and families Australia-wide.

> Ideally, in 10 years' time or less, we won't still be talking about gender but rather brilliant minds. I hope to see a digitally-enabled health sector, that is safe, high-quality, efficient, accessible and responsive to changing needs through innovation led by women and men.

Professor Christine Bennett AO

> We are at the start of a digital health revolution and we need you! Not sure what it is all about? There are now many courses to get a taster. Not ready to leave your clinical job? Join a digital project at your organisation to see if it is for you. Got an idea? Reach out, there will be interested people.

Kath Feely

Chief Allied Health Information Officer, The Royal Melbourne Hospital, Royal Children's Hospital, The Royal Women's Hospital and Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre

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MELBOURNE, VIC – NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?
Enthusiastic, determined, nature-lover

Kath Feely has been recognised for her contribution to the development of technology, designed for allied health professionals (AHPs) during implementation of electronic medical records (EMR). With a background in physiotherapy before moving into informatics, Kath is the first Chief Allied Health Information Officer (CAHIO) in Melbourne. This unique position in the Parkville Precinct encompasses working with four of Australia's leading healthcare services. Kath has recently contributed to a new Allied Health Digital Health Capability Framework. Her next challenge is to continue to increase the digital health skills of AHPs, optimise existing systems and develop new solutions to meet the healthcare needs of clinicians and patients. By encouraging and supporting others to use real-time data to drive quality projects and clinical research, Kath is contributing to improved patient care and health outcomes to help create a learning health system.

Why are you passionate about digital health?
Since graduating as a physiotherapist, I have worked in a variety of roles in Australia and the UK. These experiences provided me with an excellent understanding of delivery of patient-centred public healthcare. I always used data to improve outcomes and have now found my niche: clinical informatics and digital health. These days when I talk about my work I always say, "I love it!" I thrive being able to build enthusiasm and uptake of digital health solutions and I'm motivated by the challenge of new concepts. I'm excited to continue to explore opportunities in digital heath and implement new technologies to improve health care in Australia.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?
There is huge potential in digital health and the movement is gaining momentum! It will contribute to better, more personalised and convenient health care for everyone. I hope to see all healthcare professionals incorporating new technology to increase accuracy, safety and efficiency. And every person having real-time access to their latest health information to support patient's healthcare decision making. In Australia, we will connect with patients in different ways: holograph of your healthcare professional at home, health apps with artificial intelligence capabilities or virtual reality experiences designed to improve wellbeing! Whatever the idea, we must capture healthcare data and continue to learn and provide better care.

Who has been an important mentor to you?
Jackie McLeod, my manager and EMR Director for the Connecting Care Project. Jackie had a vision, set out the values and culture, and brought four health services together to implement a world-class integrated EMR shared by the Parkville Precinct. Jackie is an incredible leader, extremely personable and a good listener. She sets high expectations for herself and her team and inspires great outcomes. This allowed me the autonomy to establish and set the direction of the new CAHIO role. Jackie provided support and direction when I needed it and encouraged me to develop many new skills along the way.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?
We are at the start of a digital health revolution and we need you! Not sure what it is all about? There are now many courses to get a taster. Not ready to leave your clinical job? Join a digital project at your organisation to see if it is for you. Got an idea? Reach out, there will be interested people. Finally, be prepared to work in dynamic, multidisciplinary teams, which include consumers and end users, a range of clinical experts, ICT, finance, communications, analysts and others. We are all working towards a common goal to embed technology into health care to achieve better outcomes for everyone.

Professor Dorota Gertig

Medical Director, Population Health Solutions and the National Cancer Screening Register, Telstra Health

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MELBOURNE, VIC – NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?
Resilient, strategic, passionate

Professor Gertig has been recognised for her instrumental work in the digital transformation of cancer screening programs for over 15 years, contributing to the international reputation of Australia's cervical cancer prevention program. As the Medical Director of the National Cancer Screening Register, she has been critical in ensuring its successful delivery and showed strong leadership in focusing on clinical outcomes and program safety. As a public health physician and senior epidemiologist, Professor Gertig has a long history of policy relevant research, utilising data from digital platforms to inform safety monitoring, program evaluation, and laboratory and colposcopy quality assurance measures. Professor Gertig's population health research is recognised internationally, as she collaborates with researchers and clinicians to provide the best evidence to maximise participation, program quality and program effectiveness. She is passionate about innovation in screening and utilising emerging technologies to deliver population health services.

What are you proud of from your contributions to digital health?
I am proud of my contributions because I don't have a technical background but I've been willing to listen, understand and ask questions of my technical colleagues. By working in a collaborative manner as a team, we're able to maximise our experience and skills to improve patient outcomes.

Who has been an important mentor to you?
Professor Mary Foley AM and Bronwyn Clere have been terrific role models at Telstra Health.

Why are you passionate about digital health?
I'm driven to improve ways of preventing disease. Population health programs need to be large scale and enable access for all, to maximise their benefits. Digital technology and scalable infrastructure are essential to ensuring population health programs are successful and that 'no one is left behind'. Digital population health is a relatively new concept and I'm excited about the opportunities for innovation digital health brings, especially in the area of artificial intelligence.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?
Eventually I believe it will be fully embedded in population health programs and a key aspect of what we do. Connectivity will be possible across all parts of the health ecosystem and we can focus on new innovations, especially in research and data analytics, to better understand disease risk and evaluate prevention programs.

What does good leadership look like to you?
Motivating teams and inspiring them to fully achieve their potential. This has to be balanced by the human elements of caring and empathy, because ultimately it's our people that are our greatest strength.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?
Get involved, be curious, ask questions and don't be afraid if you don't have all the technical skills or the health experience. Digital health is all about working in teams, so we all make a unique contribution.

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I'm driven to improve ways of preventing disease. Population health programs need to be large scale and enable access for all, to maximise their benefits. Digital technology and scalable infrastructure are essential to ensuring population health programs are successful and that 'no one is left behind'.

Professor Dorota Gertig

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Years of nursing in many different roles provided me the opportunity to see how digital health can impact patients, communities and clinicians.

Janette Gogler

Janette Gogler

Deputy Chief Nursing and Midwifery Information Officer (CNIO), Monash Health

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MELBOURNE, VIC – NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?
Pioneer, pragmatist, advocate

As Australia's first Chief Nursing Information Officer (CNIO) and founder of the growing national community of CNIOs within the Australian College of Nursing, Janette Gogler has been recognised for being a pioneer in nursing informatics in Australia, with an established career in bridging her hands-on knowledge of nursing clinical practice to its application to health technology, ranging from designing clinical data to devices. In her current role, Janette engages with over 7,000 nurses and midwives in the adoption of digital technologies that improve patient safety and enhance clinical workflows, sharing her knowledge and experience to educate and empower nurses and other clinical colleagues in the theory and practice of health informatics. Janette has been instrumental in establishing and shaping some of the earliest and largest electronic medical record implementations in Victoria; with another significant achievement being as Project Manager of the largest randomised control trial using remote patient monitoring for patients with chronic diseases.

What are you proud of from your contributions to digital health?
I'm proud of significantly influencing digital design decisions for electronic medical records in Victoria's public and private hospitals that enhance patients' safety and improve clinical workflows. I've also managed a telehealth project for 14 hospitals as outpatient substitution for regional patients thus avoiding trips to city hospitals. My project management of remote patient monitoring of patients with chronic conditions provided significant learnings for Australia in an emerging home-based consumer environment. I've influenced Australia's movement in preparing to include coded nursing data in digital systems that demonstrates the value of nursing care and nursing patient outcomes – this is fundamental for interoperability between digital medical record systems. Finally, I'm proud of achieving recognition and inclusion as a voice for nursing in digital health.

Who has been an important mentor to you?
Sunita McGowan, Manager of Nursing Informatics at Fremantle Hospital, introduced to me to the value of nursing data that influences nursing care. Adjunct Professor Lexie Clayton at Bayside Health, for her visionary projects embedding technologies in models of care and using failure as "lessons learned" to guide future work. And finally, Associate Professor Branko Cesnik for constantly sharing his knowledge in the complex world of digital health and introducing me to the international health informatics community.

Why are you passionate about digital health?
Years of nursing in many different roles provided me the opportunity to see how digital health can impact patients, communities and clinicians. I've always been an innovator, driven to modify and improve systems, either using data to demonstrate where an improvement could be made or introducing new tools to create holistic care and efficiencies. My specific areas of passion include providing nurses with the right digital tools that are embedded into workflows at the point of care; using coded nursing data to demonstrate the value of nursing care; and creating user interfaces that enable rather than inhibit clinicians to document key data for information exchange.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?
That digital tools enable ubiquitous health and be available to all people no matter where they live in this vast country. Examples are home monitoring, digital platforms for reliable health information and integrated reliable wearables. Digital health is an enabler to equality of health services. The key to link the plethora of platforms is "interoperability", which is complex and multi-layered. There are no short-term fixes and we are only at the beginning. My hope is to see a roadmap adopted during my professional years to enable true interoperability between clinical systems in Australia.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?
Digital health is multi-faceted, with a growing reach. It's an exciting time to develop a career in this space. I always recommend joining networking groups and studying digital health, including by subscribing to and reading journals. People generally favour a specific area. Look at the ability to become a subject matter expert within an organisation or role. Be prepared to develop a wide network to be informed, generate ideas and work collaboratively.

Heather Grain

Course and ISO's Development Manager, eHealth Education Pty Ltd

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MELBOURNE, VIC – NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?
Quality-driven, innovative, collaborative

Heather Grain has been recognised for her extensive career, with international expertise in the development, implementation, management and governance of digital health systems and data. Heather is also well-regarded for developing the skills of those entering the health informatics profession. A Fellow of the Australasian Institute of Digital Health, the impact of Heather's contributions to digital health is in providing pragmatic improvements to the safety and quality of data throughout health care. She is one of very few people who fully understands the relationship between health concept representation formalisms and the various technologies associated with data capture, transfer, linking, mapping and use. Heather is an expert in writing standards regarding health information use in digital environments to ensure data accuracy following health data exchange. She provides leadership in many countries to assist a more practical digital health development focused on the future, not just for today, from assisting the Jamaican Ministry of Health to implement their digital ecosystem, to greatly influencing the standards community to integrate Traditional Chinese Medicine terminology with Western health terminology.

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> Digital health is about counteracting the waste. People make the same mistakes in healthcare data and system design, over and over rather than learning the lessons. I choose to work with standards and education as a mechanism to help make change happen.

What are you proud of from your contributions to digital health?
Health care today is innovative, and the data potential is enormous, but tackling this problem at the interoperability stage is too late – we need to get it right at source and share the data designs and structures through improved data supply chain pathways. I'm proud to develop standards which address these issues. It's also inspiring to see less advanced countries seeking to solve the problems better than we do ourselves, with solutions that are truly future focused – working with them is a joy. I'm also very proud of eHRol – a tool to teach and improve clinical coder training and practice, applying new technology to old problems to get better solutions.

Who has been an important mentor to you?
I'm inspired by Marie Currie – a woman whose determination helped her achieve unimaginable goals. And I've been mentored by many, including Professor Evelyn Hovenga, Dr Chris G Chute, and my family, Simon, Andrew and Russell Grain.

Why are you passionate about digital health?
For me, it's about counteracting the waste. People make the same mistakes in healthcare data and system design, over and over rather than learning the lessons. I choose to work with standards and education as a mechanism to help make change happen. I choose to work with developing countries, which are open to pragmatic but future-focused ideas. When thinking about the future of digital health, I hope that we become more open to sharing and learning and take more responsibility in guiding our software vendors and decision-makers to not make the same expensive, and sometimes unsafe, mistakes.

What does good leadership look like to you?
A good leader recognises different opportunities and possibilities by thinking outside the box, while inspiring the current and next generations to do the same, but also acknowledges we can't always make these options happen and a small step in the right direction can be powerful instead. It's about being a problem solver and not stopping until you find a solution.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?
Volunteer with communities where you can gain experience, networks and knowledge. Be educated and practically build and test your skills, with the help of a mentor. And finally, stand on the shoulders of giants – this is really important in health care, as we should never start from scratch. Make use of the standards, people and experts around you.

Dr Amandeep Hansra

General Practitioner & Digital Health Consultant

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SYDNEY, NSW – WARRANG, EORA NATION

3 words to describe yourself?
Innovative, hardworking, passionate

Dr Amandeep Hansra has been recognised for her active support and mentoring of emerging digital health clinical leaders, as well as being a trailblazer in creating and delivering telemedicine services. Dr Hansra founded Creative Careers in Medicine, a community of clinicians seeking careers beyond traditional medical roles, with a strong emphasis on digital health and entrepreneurship, now with nearly 13,000 members and she has supported more than 60 doctors who have completed their Certification in Health Informatics. While Dr Hansra has held many different roles, from teaching to helping raise capital for digital health start-ups though the Australian Medical Angels, she says she has never seen herself as a leader in digital health but is proud of helping others to enter this exciting space.

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> I'm passionate about this space because it's all about the future. We still have a long way to go, but it's only a matter of time before we fully leverage the possibilities of technology.

What do you think is the importance of this award initiative?
It's so important to recognise female leaders in this sector and have role models that other younger women can follow. Sadly, there is such a disparity in women represented in STEM roles, for example of the STEM qualified population, women only comprised 17% in 2016. I think any initiative which promotes women to enter and work in STEM roles, and in particular digital health, is warmly welcomed.

Who has been an important mentor to you?
I don't have one specific mentor; different people have mentored me at different periods in my career. I'm always inspired by those around me and choose to surround myself with people who constantly make me want to do better. Great women leaders in this field have all been a source of inspiration for me during my journey, including those on the judging panel!

Why are you passionate about digital health?
In contrast to focusing on the barriers in our way, digital health focuses on problem solving and innovation by using our imaginations to think about the endless possibilities for how technology can improve clinician and patient experiences, and most importantly health outcomes. I'm passionate about this space because it's all about the future. We still have a long way to go, but it's only a matter of time before we fully leverage the possibilities of technology. My hope is it will address some of the challenges in our system around accessibility of health care, utilisation of data, health literacy, assistance with decision support, and the quality and safety of the services we provide. I imagine a healthcare system that is prevention-focused and not disease-driven, while also addressing the inequities across our populations.

What does good leadership look like to you?
I love this quote from John Buchan: "The role of a great leader is not to give greatness to human beings, but to help them extract the greatness they already have inside them." Good leadership is characterised by integrity, honesty, humility, courage and empathy, all the while having a vision that inspires others to follow. The best leaders I have worked with, create other leaders, and empower those around them.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?
My advice would be not to hesitate, the time for digital health is now and opportunity for significant impact is immense. Developing skills and experience in digital health will be invaluable as we see the health system start to transform into a digitally-enabled system. If you want excitement, innovation and passion, this is the sector to be in!

Emma Hossack

CEO, Medical Software Industry Association

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BRISBANE, QLD – MEANJIN, TURRBUL AND YUGGERA COUNTRY

3 words to describe yourself?
Enthusiastic, persistent, inquiring

Emma Hossack has been recognised for her contributions to technology development, as well as being an established leader in creating a better future for digital health in Australia. Emma is a tireless advocate for the role that digital health and the software industry can play to improve our health systems and outcomes, supported by a regulatory and commercial environment that makes technology-driven care and innovation possible and sustainable. Her perspective is a valuable and expert convergence between law, privacy ethics, technology development and sustainable commerciality. Emma's thought leadership and drive has made a difference to how governments and industry work together, during a period of significant change and challenge in the health sector and for the health software industry.

What are you proud of from your contributions to digital health?
It's an absolute privilege and joy to have been in roles where it's possible to provide a vision strong enough to coalesce competitors and different health professionals, Departments, Agencies and the government to work together for positive change. Creating an environment where positive debate and conciliation are possible for big important questions and change. That is my most significant contribution – enabling transformation of our industry and our industry relationship with stakeholders.

What do you think is the importance of this award initiative?
Significant achievements in digital health have often flown under the radar. Many women are more intent on getting things done than the promotion of achievements. This is of course not bad, except that role models for this career may not be readily apparent to younger women. This initiative helps to address that gap.

Who has been an important mentor to you?
Nobody I know would say they had been a mentor to me – maybe all of them have been! Most people I know and spend time with are unwitting mentors. I always find time to speak to and read about as many achievers as possible, so I am constantly being mentored.

Why are you passionate about digital health?
Digital health seemed to be the silver bullet to me. Of course, now I realise it is just one bullet in an armory needed to create change. But to succeed requires knowledge of the technical, clinical, legal, economic, moral and political environment, which is incredibly rich, complex and evolving. I believe there is no other work that offers such a challenge with such extraordinary potential outcomes.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?
I hope that the current moment in the sun for digital health embeds itself. However, it needs a business case that corrects existing patterns which are not sustainable or beneficial for Australians. We need to reward outcomes rather than the number of transactions. The beauty of digital health lies in its ability to provide transparency to users, and through this preventive, personalised and sustainable health care. This in turn gives people in vulnerable situations the chance of greater autonomy and dignity.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?
Persistence. There are an infinite number of ways women (and men) can make a difference in the field of digital health. It's relatively new as careers go, and the established pathways, expectations and traditions of some traditionally male-orientated professions don't exist. Digital health is an open and equal field where you can make a positive difference to lives for a huge number of people. I encourage you to learn from as many colleagues as possible; realise that enduring worthwhile change is complex and takes time. Above all, keep going!

> " The beauty of digital health lies in its ability to provide transparency to users, and through this preventive, personalised and sustainable health care.
>
> **Emma Hossack**

Professor Evelyn Hovenga

Professor of Digital Health, Australian Catholic University & CEO, eHealth Education

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MELBOURNE, VIC – NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?
Trailblazer, leader, persistent

Professor Evelyn Hovenga has been recognised for her extensive and diverse career in digital health, founding and leading many organisations that have formed a foundation for Australian digital health activities. Commencing her clinical professional life as a nurse, Professor Hovenga has fulfilled a variety of roles, including as a researcher, an eminent teacher and mentor of health informatics and digital health; establishing an online eHealth learning business that specialises in training courses in health informatics and coding; contributing to the development of a variety of national and international health data standards; and being a distinguished informatics author. With an extensive global network of informatics peers, Professor Hovenga's digital health leadership is well recognised, highlighted by her election as a Founding Fellow to the International Academy of Health Sciences Informatics, in addition to being a Fellow of the Australasian Institute of Digital Health.

> My hope for the potential of digital health is to achieve transformed mindsets amongst high-level decision-makers, who can influence global and local jurisdictional and organisational digital health strategies.

What are you proud of from your contributions to digital health?

During the 1980s and 90s, I developed a nursing resource management system and clinical nursing career structure, providing many hospital nurses around Australia with an ability to obtain and make use of information that empowered and enabled them to deliver better quality care. Since then, I've chaired two international conferences (1991 and 2007), resulting in the establishment of beneficial professional networks, including the Health Informatics Society of Australia (later the Australasian College of Health Informatics, now known as the Australasian Digital Health Institute); I've promoted health and nursing informatics education; and enabled the development of the first prototype of what is now the internationally acclaimed openEHR Clinical Knowledge Manager system. My early vision of population health and health workforce benefits to be attained in a sustainable manner, using well-designed and implemented digital health solutions, has motivated me to share this belief and passion as widely as possible. I'm proud of what I've managed to achieve despite the many obstacles encountered along the way.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

In 1984, Maureen Scholes, Director of Nursing at the London Hospital, introduced me to an international group of nursing, medical and academic leaders, researchers and drivers working collaboratively to solve numerous digital problems. This group, plus those with multiple disciplinary expertise I worked with in national and international standards development organisations, have mentored me throughout my subsequent career. Also, Dr Amy Zelmer, who invited me to commence my health informatics academic career at Central Queensland University in 1991.

What motivated you to work in health care, and consequently, digital health?

As a child, I often visited my grandfather in hospital and sometimes a nurse would take me to the children's ward. I then decided I'd like to be a nurse. When I was 15 years old, I had left school and was working full-time – my father arranged for me to undertake a vocational guidance test managed by the Commonwealth Government at the time. At this interview, I was advised to get into medical research. Going to university was beyond my wildest dreams at that time, as my family had arrived in Australia two years previously, English was my second language and I was attending evening classes to attain the necessary high school level of education to get into a hospital-based nursing program. I began my nursing career at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, before moving into research and focusing on nursing operational problems, workforce management changes and the impact on nursing following the computerisation of their workplaces. By attending the MEDINFO 86 Conference in Washington, D.C. in 1986, the presentations at a pre-conference workshop influenced me to adopt a new research interest in health data exchange and semantic interoperability.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

To achieve transformed mindsets amongst high-level decision-makers, who can influence global and local jurisdictional and organisational digital health strategies, in accordance with a well-defined realistic future vision of optimum population health and wellbeing, supported by a standard platform, a variety of digital health technologies and a well-supported capable workforce able to deliver health and welfare services in a sustainable manner within a well-connected digital health ecosystem.

Dr Catherine Jones

Clinical Chest Lead, annalise.ai; Cardiothoracic Radiology Lead and Clinical Director NT/QLD, I-MED Radiology Network; & Clinical Director, Medical Imaging Department, Royal Darwin Hospital

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BRISBANE, QLD – MEANJIN, TURRBUL AND YUGGERA COUNTRY

3 words to describe yourself?
Insightful, determined, methodical

Dr Catherine Jones has been recognised for her contribution to the technology development of clinically excellent diagnostic assist devices, which have the potential to revolutionise diagnostic imaging. In her role at annalise.ai, Dr Jones has led on the design, development, validation and implementation of Annalise Enterprise CXR, the company's first artificial intelligence clinical decision support solution for radiologists. She has also been instrumental in developing training to teach participants how to assess artificial intelligence (AI) and use the AI solutions in practice. Dr Jones has brought her clinical and statistical expertise, with a background in mathematics and physics, to the field of medical imaging AI to advocate for clinically useful AI amongst clinicians and promote the importance of high-quality, generalisable validation studies prior to clinical implementation.

> Radiology has a much greater opportunity than most other parts of health care to be at the forefront of digital innovation, and to create equitable access to quality, evidence-based health care globally.

What are you proud of from your contributions to digital health?

The demand for imaging across all facets of health care continues to grow, and with it the challenges for human resourcing, as maintenance of skills across an ever-broadening specialty and rapidly evolving technology advances. I'm proud of the progress to date to address these challenges, as they affect people globally, and the innovations we have brought will allow better, more accessible healthcare solutions across the world.

What do you think is the importance of this award initiative?

The digital space is highly innovative, fast-paced and competitive. Women are not represented well enough in this area, despite consistently performing to above average levels in maths, science and IT academically. Seeing other women succeed in digital health encourages other gifted, brilliant women to put themselves forward, to apply for the job, to take that next step towards making a significant contribution in this field. When that happens, the outcomes are improved for everybody.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

I have had many mentors throughout my life. Clinically, I have been fortunate to work with many excellent clinicians who are passionate about quality and safety, as well as education and research. From a research and innovation perspective, I have taken inspiration from the global movement towards evidence-based medicine, as well as the corporate perspective from the CEO of the companies I work with.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

Radiology is a digital specialty, encompassing the challenges of clinical medicine within a technological environment. Removing the technology challenges allows greater access to imaging, and levels out the playing field for disadvantaged communities. Radiology has a much greater opportunity than most other parts of health care to be at the forefront of digital innovation, and to create equitable access to quality, evidence-based health care globally.

What does good leadership look like to you?

A good leader is one who has insight, empathy and the ability to achieve goals. Often the management of human and other resources is needed to achieve those goals, on the background of skills and knowledge in the field.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?

Digital health is a wonderful space for people with ideas. Nothing is impossible! If you have a good idea, go with it, find someone who can help you work out whether it's worth doing and then push until it's done.

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There are many innovators in health care who go unacknowledged. The face of technology still remains a male one. It's so valuable to celebrate the quiet achievements of so many who do the hard change management work to make digital health a reality.

Dr Kudzai Kanhutu

Deputy Chief Medical Information Officer, Telehealth Clinical Lead, and Medical Specialist – Infectious Diseases, The Royal Melbourne Hospital

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MELBOURNE, VIC – NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?
Funny, kind, curious

Dr Kudzai Kanhutu has been recognised as a fearless advocate for addressing the digital health gap affecting large sectors of our community. She is passionate about the responsibility of health professionals to represent the needs of all patients, regardless of their circumstances, exemplified by her creative ways to support the most vulnerable members of society, utilising telehealth, My Health Record and electronic medical records. In 2015, Dr Kanhutu established a first of its kind telehealth service, enabling rural and culturally and linguistically diverse patients access to highly specialised medical treatment via video. The value of this contribution has been brought to the fore throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. In her role as Deputy Chief Medical Information Officer, Dr Kanhutu is at the forefront of the hospital digital transformation agenda, tasked with ensuring that the electronic tools and resources that clinicians need to work safely, efficiently and effectively are available to them at the patient bedside.

What do you think is the importance of this award initiative?
There are many innovators in health care who go unacknowledged. The face of technology still remains a male one. It's so valuable to celebrate the quiet achievements of so many who do the hard change management work to make digital health a reality.

What are you proud of from your contributions to digital health?
My greatest joy is the ability to provide new career possibilities to other women and girls. I'm proud of this because it allows me to pay tribute to the incredible women who have given me the courage and strength to keep going.

What does good leadership look like to you?
Focused, compassionate and strategic. A person who models their beliefs and isn't afraid to speak up when things are not right.

Who has been an important mentor to you?
My grandmother, Gogo Nyati. She always stood her ground when it mattered most. This included setting up her own business to raise funds to ensure all her children were able to go to school. It is her quiet yet ferocious resolve to personal growth and raising all those around her that I try to emulate every day.

Why are you passionate about digital health?
Digital health is an opportunity to address health inequities. If we get it wrong, so many people will suffer needlessly. Systems that are designed without the whole population in mind are simply dangerous.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?
As we move to realise the potential of omnichannel health care, for more people to be included in the design journey; and to allow people to prioritise the build and innovation that will lead to meaningful health outcomes.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?
Choose an area that you feel a genuine connection to. This will give you the strength to carry on even when it gets *really* hard!

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There is a consistent theme in the report from the award winners in their hopes for the potential of digital health in creating a connected and improved health care experience, accessible to all – no matter someone's location, health needs, socioeconomic and cultural settings, or otherwise. I believe digital health has the potential to lead the technology industry to improve gender diversity, equity and representation of women across the sector.

Professor Mary Foley AM

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> As a clinical informatician, I'm always aiming to leverage technology as a tool to support more efficient, higher-quality and safer health care than could be done by humans alone.
>
> **Dr Heather Leslie**

Dr Heather Leslie

Health Informatics Consultant, Atomica Informatics

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MELBOURNE, VIC – NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?
Curious, whole-hearted, evolving

As an experienced General Practitioner and clinical informatician, Dr Heather Leslie has been recognised for her contributions to technology development, especially in bridging the knowledge gap between clinicians and software engineers. Dr Leslie has pioneered the evolution of the Clinical Knowledge Manager (CKM) tool – an online portal for the growing openEHR International community to collaborate, and a virtual library for more than 1000 archetypes, available in 31 languages, that form the foundation of a shared, clinical content ecosystem. Dr Leslie established and led the openEHR Clinical Modelling Program as the largest effort of its kind in terms of scale and coordination, underpinning eHealth programs internationally and actively engaging clinicians to shape the health data they need to provide care. These innovations and Dr Leslie's passion for disseminating this knowledge have influenced greater national uptakes of the openEHR modelling approach, which is centred on enabling widespread use of standardised clinical information models, agreed data value sets and an open platform approach. Dr Leslie's work helps to disrupt costly traditional business models and connects data silos as a solution to semantic interoperability.

What are you proud of from your contributions to digital health?
A significant part of my role has been to leverage my knowledge of clinical practice to investigate and identify design patterns that underpin clinical models – from fractal patterns for representing details of a physical examination, through to consistent ways to represent evidence-based scores and scales. I'm proud of this effort because I've been involved from the beginning and it is one-of-a-kind. The openEHR methodology and archetype library is foundational to solving semantic interoperability, changing the way electronic health records are being developed and enabling data for a lifetime, not just the life of an app. I think this has the potential to be a game-changer in digital health and I'm privileged to have played a part in its development.

What do you think is the importance of this award initiative?
While women are well represented in the health domain, the gender disparity in STEM is still significant, especially in information technology. My work experience, until very recently, has predominantly been as the only female working alongside men. We need to do better at creating a working environment based on equality, where everyone has equal opportunity and is treated the same. Unfortunately, without initiatives like this, too many women remain invisible and muted, unrecognised and unappreciated, despite their valuable contributions and achievements.

What motivated you to work in health care, and consequently, digital health?
I worked as a general practitioner for 15 years. While I initially became involved in digital health more by accident rather than design, I've been working exclusively as a health informatician since 2000, establishing my own area of passion and expertise. As a clinical informatician, I'm always aiming to leverage technology as a tool to support more efficient, higher-quality and safer health care than could be done by humans alone. While I loved clinical practice and the direct connection with patients, I realised I could have more impact by using my clinical knowledge within the technology domain, especially working as a bridge between the grassroots clinical and the software engineers. I eventually found my niche in the unrecognised area of 'little data' design and standardisation, with the potential for this to be the foundation for better digital health, including electronic health records, data exchange, clinical decision support, artificial intelligence and personalised medicine.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?
That we'll finally start to learn from the past. We're still trapped by the longstanding approach to digital health that has arisen from ad hoc vendor application development and procurement processes that perpetuate how we've always done eHealth. We need to transition away from the unsustainable approach of proprietary data silos and pivot towards a strong engineering and informatics view of digital health, establishing common foundations for a coherent health ecosystem, independent of any individual application, vendor or project. Then digital health will truly start to come into its strength, rather than unsustainably patching things together and dabbling around the edges.

What does good leadership look like to you?
Surrounding yourself with smart, independent thinkers. Asking questions and listening to others, rather than imposing answers. Delegation and empowerment, as well as trusting and backing your team. A willingness to show vulnerability, and the courage to have uncomfortable conversations when they are necessary to promote openness and transparency.

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The award recipients have gone above and beyond the remits of their 'day job', giving generously to make a real difference and impact on health care and our community.

Dr Louise Schaper

Zara Lord

Founder and CEO, uPaged

SYDNEY, NSW – WARRANG, EORA NATION

3 words to describe yourself?
Fearless, creative and resourceful *(especially after growing up on a cattle station in remote north-west Queensland).*

Zara Lord has been recognised for introducing a new digital process for the delivery of health and aged care by founding uPaged – a solution disrupting a 30+ year-old model by facilitating workforce mobility and flexibility for nurses and access to a wider market of talent and potential customers for both hospitals and agencies. uPaged is now providing over 3,000 nurses with control and choice over their careers with work options that value them. uPaged has created a positive impact for nurses and other healthcare workers, hospitals and healthcare organisations, recruitment agencies – and ultimately, patients.

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Digital health provides an incredible opportunity to touch many lives, and in uPaged's case, this spans clinicians, clinical managers and patients.

What does this award initiative mean to you?
It's incredibly important, now more than ever, amidst the upheaval and opportunities presented by the pandemic. Personally, as uPaged was born of an idea I had while working as a Registered Nurse in a busy Sydney ICU, I had to overcome innumerable obstacles as a solo non-technical founder in a start-up world dominated by tech founders and advocates of co-founded start-ups, with my role regularly diminished or undervalued. So, I think the initiative helps raise the profile of the incredible nurses and healthcare workers that support our communities and I hope I can inspire other solo female founders to tread their own paths unencumbered by those stereotypes.

Who has been an important mentor to you?
Mathew Keeley, Co-Founder and Managing Director of fintech GROW Inc. Matt has been an incredible mentor and trusted advisor, constantly challenging my thinking and questioning why, sharing chestnuts of wisdom and fresh thinking from his experience and the market he works in that really add some weight and relevance to what we're doing at uPaged.

Why are you passionate about digital health?
I loved my role in the Intensive Care Unit for the incredible people I worked with and the impact you could have on a patient or family member's experience in what are some of the darkest days of their lives. I felt privileged to be a part of that moment and the impact you might have on it. But this impact wasn't scalable, it was limited to those in my direct care. Digital health provides an incredible opportunity to touch many lives, and in uPaged's case, this spans clinicians, clinical managers and patients.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?
I hope that user experience design is brought into the healthcare setting more. We've made some good technological advances in recent years in health and aged care, however without considering the users, these have tended to pull clinicians away from the bedside. I recall a simple daily pressure sore risk assessment on a young healthy person taking 92 clicks. There are some fantastic benefits to digital records, but they are taking our eyes off our patients.

What does good leadership look like to you?
Good leadership gives people the confidence and space to excel at what they do, by having a steadfast vision, while being open and collaborative in the path to achieving the vision.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?
Be clear on why you are driving this change and hold on to that. When it gets tough, and it will, it's your 'why' that keeps you going.

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> It's a huge privilege to be leading and translating research to realise real-world impacts in improving care delivery and patient safety.

Associate Professor Farah Magrabi

Associate Professor Farah Magrabi

Associate Professor, Australian Institute of Health Innovation, Macquarie University

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MACQUARIE PARK, NSW – WALLUMATTAGAL, DHARUG NATION

3 words to describe yourself?
Sagacious, dependable, resilient

Associate Professor Farah Magrabi has been recognised for her outstanding contribution to health and medical research by globally pioneering the study of the patient safety risks of digital health. With a background in Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Associate Professor Magrabi's research focuses on the design and evaluation of digital health and artificial intelligence (AI) technologies for clinicians and consumers. She has both helped establish digital health safety as an area of research through a series of foundational papers, and translated that research into international guidelines, directly shaping policy and practice in digital health implementation. Most significantly, her work has developed a new safety classification for healthcare IT, which has been adopted into a global practice guideline by the International Organisation for Standardisation.

What does this award initiative mean to you?
It's a huge privilege to be leading and translating research to realise real-world impacts in improving care delivery and patient safety. This initiative provides a unique national platform to bring important attention as well as the need to fund research about the new generation of digital health technologies which are increasingly incorporating AI. AI is a key enabler for improving care quality and patient safety, but its many benefits cannot be realised unless ethical and safety concerns are addressed, and it is effectively integrated into our health system. With growing use of AI, there is an urgent need to create and implement safer systems for AI in Australian healthcare.

Who has been an important mentor to you?
Professor Enrico Coiera – a truly brilliant mind and a deeply principled human being.

Why are you passionate about digital health?
For me digital health was, and still is, the most fascinating sector to research and apply my engineering skills in the real world. It has given me tremendous opportunities to integrate innovative methods from biomedical informatics, patient safety and computer science to tackle the problem of digital health safety. In the 20 years since I started, this sector has gone mainstream with digital health technologies playing a mission critical role at all levels of the health system and in the community. It's a very exciting time as we start to reap the benefits of the investment we have been making to digitise health information and now to harness AI to improve care delivery.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?
Digital technology has advanced to a point where AI systems are already having a real-world impact on people, organisations and culture. In health care, we need to ensure that AI is effectively integrated into clinical and consumer systems, allowing insights learned from data to be applied to health decisions. My research in the safety and effectiveness of AI is filling this gap. There is a long way to go as far as patient safety is concerned, with one in 10 patients harmed while receiving care, and many of these incidents are preventable. It's important to engineer healthcare services, and AI-enabled processes, to be safe by design – as much as you would when engineering bridges. With more engineers to improve the safety and effectiveness of digital health, as well as careful management of the risks of AI, there is potential to tackle urgent challenges that our health system is facing.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?
Look for real-world problems that you can help solve and be genuinely committed to solving them. In academic research, a sure-fire way to impact scholarship is to be ahead of the pack and pick new, even blue-sky areas for research and translation.

> I'm proud of contributing to an inclusive digital health future by being visibly, authentically myself at work.

Gillian Mason

Manager, Stroke Research Register (Hunter) & Clinical Research Assistant, Centre for Rehab Innovations, University of Newcastle and Hunter Medical Research Institute
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NEWCASTLE, NSW – MULUUBINBA, AWABAKAL AND WORIMI COUNTRY

3 words to describe yourself?
Authentic, curious, adventurous

Gillian Mason has been recognised for her work in influencing clinicians, researchers and other stakeholders responsible for community engagements to adapt their practices for greater utilisation of digital health, with a clear focus on innovation and patient health outcomes. As a proudly disabled and chronically ill physiotherapist, Gillian has used her over 15 years' healthcare experience 'from both sides of the bedside' to transform the way that people's lived experience is valued and included in the design of human-centred, digitally-enabled, accessible health systems. As a health care consumer and disability advocate, speaker and facilitator, she actively supports patients and carers to communicate their needs in the rapidly changing health environment.

What are you proud of from your contributions to digital health?

I'm proud of contributing to an inclusive digital health future by being visibly, authentically myself at work. I hope my impact is for women living with illness and disability to see pathways to leadership positions for them in the industry, and for health system users to feel safe and assured that their needs are being considered, with a system designed to their needs. In overcoming my own internalised ableism and sexism, I've learnt to value and then leverage the rich lived experience and the high-level problem-solving skills that I have developed from working through adversity. I've sought to become intentionally anti-ableist in my approach to professionalism, learning more about access, inclusion, disability pride and how to be influential as a science communicator, and a disability and consumer advocate.

What do you think is the importance of this award initiative?

I see this initiative as a powerful opportunity to shift our perception about what leadership, professionalism and digital health itself should look like. As a queer and disabled person, I feel strongly that if digital health is to serve all of us, it needs to be truly inclusive of women and non-binary people with diverse backgrounds, especially in terms of race, ethnicity, sexuality and disability.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

I've had the great luck to gather a wide variety of occasional and regular mentors but two women, now dear friends, have helped shape the way I embrace my disability identity. Kathryn Canavan is a talented social worker I worked with in community health. She challenged me to create healthcare environments that allow people to access care in a psychologically safe way, working towards a goal of better health whilst valuing disability, rather than fighting against it. Carly Findlay OAM has taught me so much about how to live proudly as a vibrant disabled person and how to communicate about access and inclusion in an influential way.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

I hope that we use the incredible digital tools available to us to make it much easier – and more fun – for everyone to access the health care they need. It's urgent we acknowledge the opportunity and responsibility that we have to become radically inclusive about who our health technologies benefit. We must ensure that diverse and traditionally marginalised and geographically isolated people are represented in artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithm training data. We must consider who is included and excluded when collecting and contextualising real-world and patient evidence for consideration in research and health technology assessments. I hope we commit to inclusion because digital health has the potential to transform gender, race and disability equity.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?

Always ask 'who is this for? Have I considered everyone and how will they use it? What are the barriers and how can you break them down?'. It's important to design for inclusivity right from the start. You don't have to be in a position of power to make a difference – you just need persistence and a keen eye for identifying the right people with the skills, experience and connections to make an impact.

> By utilising the benefits of digital technology, my work aims to make access to high-quality mental health care easier for all, so Australians can live mentally healthier lives. I'm proud of this because mental health treatment is an area of significant inequality and inequity.

Dr Bridianne O'Dea

Senior Research Fellow, Black Dog Institute, Faculty of Medicine, University of New South Wales
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SYDNEY, NSW – WARRANG, EORA NATION

3 words to describe yourself?
Dedicated, positive, compassionate

Dr Bridianne O'Dea has been recognised for improving health outcomes using digital health, with her research advancing digital mental health care to close the gap for the 250,000+ with a mental illness unable to access treatment. Dr O'Dea has integrated her formal training in public health, psychological science and software development to design and test contemporary digital solutions for mental health that are scalable and low-cost but also effective, engaging and translational. Dr O'Dea has created accessible services and programs that proactively reach out to youth, rather than wait for them to act, including Smooth Sailing – the only universal, digital mental health service for anxiety and depression in Australian secondary schools. Delivered to over 3,600 young people across Australia, the service detected 1 in 5 students needed care and over half of these were unknown to school services. But as result of the service, it reported a 52% increase in help-seeking and a 16% reduction in anxiety – something Dr O'Dea is incredibly proud of.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

Mental illness is a leading cause of disability and early mortality across the lifespan. Suicide is a leading cause of death worldwide – but preventable with evidence-based approaches. By utilising the benefits of digital technology, my work aims to make access to high-quality mental health care easier for all, so Australians can live mentally healthier lives. I'm proud of this because mental health treatment is an area of significant inequality and inequity.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

I hope that we're working towards a time when access to high-quality mental health care, for monitoring, treatment and recovery of mental illness, will be accessible entirely on your mobile device – carried with you everywhere, supporting you in moments of greatest need. I also wish to see a time when the prevention of mental health problems is just as important for young people as learning to read and write, with schools actively working in this space to reduce the onset of mental health problems in young people.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

Professor Helen Christensen AO, Chief Scientist of the Black Dog Institute, has an incredibly bright mind and has shown me how to conduct scientific investigations to the highest standard. She is bold in her thinking and has taught me how to push the boundaries of my own thought processes and apply this to our work in the field. Professor Christensen is also very honourable and has taught me the importance of recognising and acknowledging the contributions of others. In this way, she has been the most important mentor in my work thus far.

What does good leadership look like to you?

Honesty and integrity, leading by example, taking a genuine interest in how others problem solve, and having fun along the way.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?

The outcomes – and how you measure these – are important. Consider the impact you wish to make and measure it as carefully and precisely as possible.

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> I learnt that human connection and support from a health professional is a fundamental component to the success of digital health programs.
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> **Dr Stephanie Partridge**

Dr Stephanie Partridge

Senior Research Fellow, Engagement and Co-Design Research Hub, School of Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine and Health, University of Sydney

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SYDNEY, NSW – WARRANG, EORA NATION

3 words to describe yourself?
Resourceful, ambitious, empathetic

Dr Stephanie Partridge's has been recognised for research in transforming our understanding of the effects of digitalisation on the health of young people. She took up the challenge of addressing this under-researched area, with the aim to create lifelong impacts on the health of young people by creating supportive digital environments. Dr Partridge currently leads two digital health studies, delivering text messages to improve young people's nutrition and physical activity behaviours. She is actively working with young people and collaborating with a multidisciplinary team to co-design digital health interventions. On the side, Dr Partridge has founded and leads 'Hungry for Science', an online community to communicate science to young people.

What do you think is the importance of this award initiative?
I think it's essential to showcase the diversity of people working in the digital health sector. This initiative will allow us to interact with like-minded researchers, clinicians and stakeholders by sharing and listening to experiences, hearing different perspectives and understanding the challenges we face. Importantly, it will create opportunities for collaboration and potentially lead to innovations in digital health.

Who has been an important mentor to you?
Professor Julie Redfern from The University of Sydney is a leader in cardiovascular research and digital health. Julie has an unmatched commitment to fostering a supportive research environment. She has a clear vision of what is required to become an independent researcher and a strong sense of responsibility supporting researchers to achieve it. Julie's leadership purpose is to "thrive by inspiring others". She is an inclusive and effective leader, and saw potential in my research, investing countless hours mentoring me to write competitive funding applications. This strong and empowering leadership is rare. I am fortunate to work with Julie.

Why are you passionate about digital health?
Digital health has the potential to enhance health services and ultimately improve population health. This can range from simple to complex technologies. As an Accredited Practicing Dietitian focusing on prevention, I see the value of everyday technologies, like text messages and telehealth. They have significant potential impacts at a population level with low costs to the healthcare system. My passion for this area of digital health started during my PhD. I evaluated a multi-component mobile health program to support young adults to change their behaviours and establish healthier habits to reduce their risk of chronic disease. The program offered smartphone apps for participants to track their health, which are costly to develop and maintain. However, everyday technologies, such as text messages and telephone coaching calls, were valued most by participants. I learnt that human connection and support from a health professional is a fundamental component to the success of digital health programs.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?
I hope the digital acceleration of healthcare services does not exacerbate the digital divide for children and adolescents from disadvantaged backgrounds. Only 68% of Australian children, 5-14 years, living in disadvantaged communities have access to the internet at home, compared to 91% living in advantaged communities. Digital health initiatives must be thoroughly considered to ensure equitable access for all young people across Australia.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?
My advice is to keep equity and inclusion at the forefront of your digital health vision. Engaging consumers from disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalised backgrounds, who are disproportionately affected by poorer health in the entire project, will increase our understanding and ability to address current challenges and roadblocks in digital health. Designing for the most disadvantaged and disenfranchised will vastly enhance the chances of efficacy and universal application at a population level. Addressing these challenges and barriers can reduce costs and increase efficiency and health care quality.

Kate Quirke

Managing Director and CEO, Alcidion Group

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MELBOURNE, VIC – NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?
Driven, insightful, optimistic

As CEO of Alcidion, Kate Quirke has been recognised for her contributions to improving health outcomes using digital health, leading the company through rapid transformation and growth, as well as identifying the significant potential to use smart informatics, artificial intelligence and machine learning to create new solutions for clinical staff to improve the quality of care delivered. Alcidion provides a unique service offering to the digital health sector, with deep product capability complemented by significant delivery experience. Under Kate's leadership, the number of healthcare organisations assisted by Alcidion has grown across Australia, New Zealand and, increasingly, the UK.

What do you think is the importance of this award initiative?
The opportunity for digital solutions to improve the quality of health care delivery, patient outcomes and the working lives of clinicians is still largely unrealised. The potential for women to take an active role and positively influence these opportunities is significant. Women are still relatively under-represented in STEM businesses and in Executive positions across our listed companies. While women have long been well represented in healthcare, this initiative highlights the potential to transfer that sector knowledge to the technology domain and opens multiple opportunities for women to contribute to improved health care from a different perspective.

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> While women have long been well represented in healthcare, this initiative highlights the potential to transfer that sector knowledge to the technology domain and opens multiple opportunities for women to contribute to improved health care from a different perspective.

Who has been an important mentor to you?
I've been fortunate to have several mentors throughout my career. Mostly men in senior roles in the technology sector who recognised that I was ambitious and capable and encouraged me to extend myself – sometimes making me move into roles where I felt incredibly out of my depth. They had the confidence in me and importantly, supported me through these transitions, ensuring that I continued to learn and grow. I believe women need more confidence in themselves to push forward their goals and ideas. A great mentor will encourage and build that confidence.

What motivated you to work in digital health?
From an early age, I've been passionate about how good health care can change people's lives. My single mother was a cleaner in hospitals and had great ambitions for me to become a doctor. I took a slightly different path at university, drawn to the business side of health and landed my first role as Chief Health Information Manager at Caulfield Hospital. I was thrown into the politics of the health system very early and was often viewed as being too young and too fresh out of university. This only served to make me more resilient and determined to demonstrate I could contribute to change. Improving health care through digital technology is my purpose and it gives me great satisfaction seeing all the benefits digital health can provide.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?
While digital health can deliver multiple benefits, the timeline for adoption is incredibly lengthy. A positive outcome of the pandemic has been the relatively rapid and agile adoption of digital health solutions to support virtual care and remote patient monitoring. I hope this more dynamic approach will flow through to other areas that can benefit from the adoption of digital health solutions; for all healthcare organisations to be supported by smart technology aligned with their clinical and business requirements and deployed with true interoperability to ensure that patients receive optimal care as clinicians have access to information when and where it is needed.

What does good leadership look like to you?
The skills that I've seen in my senior management team and that I strive to bring in my leadership are honesty, openness and empathy. The best leaders are those that can actively listen, be flexible, agile and open to new ideas. Resilience is also pivotal – but it's not about being tough, rather it's self-awareness of your own strengths, weaknesses and the skills needed to help you problem solve.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?
Get on board now! Given the smart technology available today, the potential to make a positive difference is limitless and the personal reward gained from supporting better patient outcomes cannot be under-valued. It's a sector that has representation from a variety of backgrounds, combining these different perspectives to deliver improved digital support for health care.

Angela Ryan

Independent Digital Health Consultant, & Vice-Chair, Australasian Institute of Digital Health

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SYDNEY, NSW – WARRANG, EORA NATION

3 words to describe yourself?
Feminist, ally, brave

With over 30 years' experience, Angela Ryan has been recognised for improving health outcomes using digital health, making a significant impact in the areas of patient safety and the health workforce. In addition to being a Registered Nurse, Fellow of the Australian College of Nursing and Fellow of the Australasian Institute of Digital Health, Angela was awarded a Churchill Fellowship in 2017, which led to world-leading and innovative research investigating methods to reduce patient harm through national digital health safety governance. As the former Chief Clinical Information Officer at the Australian Digital Health Agency, Angela led the successful development and execution of Australia's first National Digital Health Workforce and Education Roadmap, an innovative strategy for the health workforce, endorsed by the Commonwealth, and all States and Territories.

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> My holy grail for digital health would be better workflow integration – the more seamless the experience for our workforce, the better and safer it becomes for patients and consumers.

What are you proud of from your contributions to digital health?
My commitment and tenacity! Specifically, the National Digital Health Workforce and Education Roadmap, which charts a roadmap to grow, build confidence in and sustain the health workforce in its use of digital tools and technologies. Also, the National Nursing and Midwifery Digital Health Capabilities Framework – as a Registered Nurse, I recognise the magnificent power of the nursing and midwifery workforce to be a movement for growth and change in digital health. Finally, as President of the Australasian College of Health Informatics, and in concert with the Health Informatics Society of Australia, I helped lead the establishment of a new organisation for digital health in Australasia – the Australasian Institute of Digital Health – in February 2020.

What do you think is the importance of this award initiative?
Women are still widely under-represented in leadership roles, especially evident in digital health. The same applies for diversity and inclusion more broadly. The mood has shifted, and we can't be what we don't see. We want girls everywhere to have more visible role models and to hear women's voices. Recognition and visibility matters.

What does good leadership look like to you?
Good leaders use open, transparent and effective communication. They command confidence and respect and they're kind and listen. It can be more difficult for women as leaders – they're judged through a different lens and it's not an equal playing field in this regard. I regularly mentor young women who are establishing their career in digital health; and I want to inspire and motivate women to take risks, push boundaries and believe in themselves. In the words of the first Australian female Governor-General: *"Be bold, be brave and believe in yourself."*

Who has been an important mentor to you?
My parents. They've always been my biggest advocates by encouraging me to follow my dreams. My Dad died recently so I'm dedicating this award to him. He always believed in 'a fair go'. It hasn't always been fair for women and I know he'd be proud of this acknowledgment. I'll also include the Hon. Julia Gillard AC, former Australian Prime Minister, who I've been lucky enough to meet. If you aren't inspired by Julia Gillard then I'd argue you are 'uninspirable' – she has taught women and girls globally that anything is possible if you believe and you're prepared to commit. And to never give up, especially when it's hard.

Why are you passionate about digital health?
I really believe that digital health has the power to reform and transform the health sector. You need an unwavering belief because it requires persistence and patience. You don't get into digital health because you think change can happen quickly – while that would be wonderful, and some great gains have been made, you need to be in it for the long haul. My holy grail would be better workflow integration – a seamless experience for our workforce. We still ask too much of our health workforce in using digital tools and technologies. The more seamless the experience for our workforce, the better and safer it becomes for patients and consumers.

> My hope for the future of digital health is to harness the potential of information and innovation technologies, aiding equitable access and sustainability, while supporting progressive and new ways of working.

Cathi Ryan

Director, Clinical and Business Intelligence, Digital Strategy and Transformation Branch, eHealth Queensland

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BRISBANE, QLD – MEANJIN, TURRBUL AND YUGGERA COUNTRY

3 words to describe yourself?
Determined, resilient, hardworking

With more than 20 years' experience working at Queensland Health, Cathi Ryan has been recognised for her pivotal role in leading work in providing practical digital solutions to improve care delivery and health outcomes. Most recently, Cathi has led the establishment of Queensland Health's Clinical and Business Intelligence (CBI) capability, an enterprise-level, modern scalable, secure cloud reporting and analytic platform, promoting improved information sharing and business intelligence for clinical and corporate needs. By leveraging data and analytics, it has been critical to Queensland's COVID-19 response in terms of system integration, monitoring and reporting. Under Cathi's leadership, the CBI platform is underpinning the infrastructure needed to move towards predictive, personalised medicine and to realise a health system of the future and one that ensures secure access to information and pursues future models of high-reliability care for patients.

What are you proud of from your contributions to digital health?
I've had many wonderful opportunities to be part of large-scale digital health innovations supporting Queensland Health's endeavours to become an intelligent healthcare enterprise. Some of the key data sharing projects have included the state-wide digital referrals capability; the patient online portal allowing patients and carers to connect securely with Queensland Health to coordinate outpatient care; and finally, the Queensland Health Provider Portal, enabling acute care providers to access clinical patient information held in Queensland public hospital systems in real-time. I'm also proud of the CBI platform, which is driving valuable understanding and faster translation of patient data, enabling enhanced clinical decision making, greater real-time quality assurances and identification of efficiencies across the system.

Why are you passionate about digital health?
For me, my focus is leveraging the power of health data. The transformation of hospital and health patient records from paper to digital has provided greater opportunities to leverage and utilise this data. Well-established data and analytics capabilities support trusted, integrated patient information, serving existing and future business intelligence needs. Extending on this capability, we are only in the beginning stages of realising the benefits of using this data through predictive analytics with the progressive development of artificial intelligence and machine learning – which will positively impact patient care delivery, health outcomes and business operations.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?
To harness the potential of information and innovation technologies, aiding equitable access and sustainability, while supporting progressive and new ways of working.

Who has been an important mentor to you?
I've been fortunate to have countless supportive leaders, many of whom have been strong women mentors with such focus, work ethic and genuine desire for improved patient-centred care that I admire greatly. The guidance and insight they have shared, as well as encouraging and investing in my successes and professional growth, has been instrumental in shaping my attitude and approach to my working life. I'm also inspired by my team – they are the most dedicated and hardest working group of individuals I have the privilege and pleasure of leading and working with.

What does good leadership look like to you?
Leadership is the ability to lead and guide a team, through setting a clear vision, being empathetic, accountable, showing gratitude and encouraging individuals to reach where they aspire to be.

> With only 168 hours in a week, we all need to work smarter, not harder, and digital health initiatives offer incredible opportunities to do this.

Dr Jill Tomlinson

Surgeon, Melbourne Hand Surgery

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MELBOURNE, VIC – NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?
Passionate, focused, curious

Dr Jill Tomlinson has been recognised for her contributions in encouraging medical specialists to adopt digital technologies, from formerly chairing the Australian Health Digital Agency's Specialist Toolkit Steering Group, to instigating the Australian Medical Association's Digital Health Committee, to collaborating with government groups, regulators and professional organisations to deliver digital health implementation projects that improve safety and quality in Australian health care. Dr Tomlinson is a strong advocate for technology and reform that works for clinicians, by embracing opportunities outside the traditional job description of a surgeon and developing tools and processes that enable other specialist practices to use My Health Record. Her innovative and technology-led surgical practice in Melbourne was the first private specialist practice in Australia to fully integrate My Health Record systems. As co-Chair of the Victorian Department of Health's Clinical Informatics Council, Dr Tomlinson has encouraged a 'whole of healthcare' approach, ensuring that medical specialists and general practitioners have a voice within a group that advises on lifting digital maturity across the Victorian healthcare sector, but which has traditionally focused on public sector healthcare.

What do you think is the importance of this award initiative?
Women often hide their light under a bushel and their skills and hard work can go unnoticed. Initiatives like this allow us to recognise and increase the visibility of the many incredible contributions of women within the sector. It's important to celebrate and own our successes.

Who has been an important mentor to you?
Dr Desiree Yap OAM – a brilliant woman who has encouraged me every step of the way and who has a remarkable ability to ask the important questions.

Why are you passionate about digital health?
Digital health offers substantial opportunities for improving safety and quality in health care and improving experiences for healthcare workers. With only 168 hours in a week, we all need to work smarter, not harder, and digital health initiatives offer incredible opportunities to do this.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?
I hope that we can improve access and equity through a healthcare system that delivers increasingly seamless and secure connected care. Our healthcare system is arguably the best in the world, but there is still much that we can improve for patients, for healthcare practitioners and for our community.

What does good leadership look like to you?
Leadership demands honesty, compassion, accountability and vision. You need to identify not just the goal but how everyone in the team has a role to play. Leadership is harder in tough times like a global pandemic, but ultimately more rewarding too.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?
Jump in! We need all the brilliant minds we can get! To make a change in any sector we need to identify problems and consider how to solve them. Some digital health problems have simple design solutions, but digital health has many large and difficult problems. Solving problems and making an impact requires persistence, a willingness to listen and learn, flexibility and the ability to collaborate with others. From little things big things grow.

> **"** I'd like to see us achieve the vision of a learning health system – a virtuous cycle where clinical practice creates data, data drives knowledge, and knowledge leads to improved practice.

Professor Karin Verspoor

Executive Dean, School of Computing Technologies, RMIT University

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MELBOURNE, VIC – NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?
Passionate, dedicated, innovative

Professor Karin Verspoor has been recognised for her contribution to technology development, as a computer and data scientist, with specific expertise in artificial intelligence (AI) and natural language processing. In collaboration with a myriad of health organisations and clinicians, Professor Verspoor's work focuses on using her computational skills to transform biomedical data into actionable information, to help biomedical researchers find and organise information and knowledge, and to help solve problems in biomedicine and health that need AI. A Fellow of the Australasian Institute of Digital Health, Professor Verspoor's contributions are in developing inter-disciplinary and inter-generational collaborations creating impactful digital health innovations.

What do you think is the importance of this award initiative?
The contributions of women are less visible in many fields than those of men, including in the field of digital health. There are many explanations for this problem. However, a consequence is that it is important to counter the perception that women are not making contributions. Increasing the visibility of women and their impact through this initiative will in turn inspire more women to contribute to the field.

What are you proud of from your contributions to digital health?
I discovered in about 2003 that I could use my skills to support knowledge and information management applications in health and biomedicine, and it was an epiphany! I was so excited to be able to work in an area where I could make a difference to knowledge discovery and scientific research, support clinicians to make informed decisions, and ultimately help people who can benefit from deeper understanding of diseases and treatments. I don't treat patients in my work, but I know that my work will help patients get better treatment. This is very rewarding.

Who has been an important mentor to you?
I've been lucky to have had several supervisors over my career who took an interest in my professional development. They actively sponsored me, gave me opportunities to grow and learn, and provided a sounding board for me when I wasn't confident in choices or decisions. I learned so much from people who were very generous in sharing their experiences and perspectives.

Why are you passionate about digital health?
Digital health is ultimately about leveraging technology to improve patient care. I'm motivated to work in this domain because I want to build tools that matter for people. Health is so important for everyone and disease impacts so many lives in many ways. I could be working on technologies that are primarily oriented towards making money or improving efficiencies. But I would rather work on something that has social impact and makes a difference to lives.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?
I would like to see us achieve the vision of a learning health system, a virtuous cycle where clinical practice creates data, data drives knowledge, and knowledge leads to improved practice. Doing this at scale – facilitated through global data and knowledge sharing and made possible by the tools of computation, information and data science – will mean that we are able to provide much more personalised, and ultimately more effective, care to patients.

What does good leadership look like to you?
Good leadership is grounded in purpose and involves motivating people to work towards a collective purpose. It means being curious and listening to diverse voices to define that purpose and to develop the strategies for achieving goals. It means leaning into the discomfort to resolve differences when those diverse voices sometimes conflict.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?
My advice is to collaborate, and approach collaboration with curiosity and an open mind. We can learn so much from each other if we listen. We all have different experiences that we can draw from to help identify opportunities to do things differently and to make a difference. Seek out people who share the vision of impacting health through digital technologies and are willing to give their knowledge, experience and time to achieve that vision.

> **"** There is so much potential associated with digital health, yet to be harnessed, and we need to enable full participation to realise this potential.

Michael Walsh

Professor Trish Williams

Cisco Chair & Professor of Digital Health Systems, Flinders University

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ADELAIDE, SA – TARNDANYA, KAURNA NATION

3 words to describe yourself?
Innovative, hilarious, kind

Professor Trish Williams has been recognised for her contribution to technology development by helping healthcare organisations navigate the complex requirements of digital infrastructure, cybersecurity and technology-related patient safety. Professor Williams has over 20 years' experience in academia and research focusing on digital health and cybersecurity, 15 years' experience in general practice and pharmacy computing in the UK and Australia, a PhD in Medical Information Security and is a Fellow of the Australasian Institute of Digital Health. Through the practical application of technology to health care, Professor Williams has assisted Cisco to develop the internationally recognised Healthcare and Information Management Systems Society (HIMMS) INFRAM benchmark for digital infrastructure; she has partnered with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners to create the Computer and Information Security Standards – the first security guidance for GP practice management systems; and she has tirelessly co-led and collaborated on the development of international standards for how technology and digital infrastructure can support the delivery of health care.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

As a techie at heart, and coming from a family of medical doctors, I always knew I wanted to use my capabilities in computing to support the medical profession to do their job. As clichéd as it sounds, I'm passionate about making a difference through safe, secure practical solutions. Technology, cybersecurity, common sense and health care are an exciting combination!

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

I'm optimistic that we can accelerate the safe adoption of digital health technology to improve the future health of all people. This will require better integration of digital health solutions into clinical care processes and embracing safe change.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

As the ancient African proverb says, 'it takes a whole village'! There have been many mentors over the years who have all helped me reach the position I am in now, where I can really make a difference to the community and individuals through digital health. Sandy Cook, Brendan Lovelock, Vince McCauley and my mother are but a few.

What does good leadership look like to you?

Leadership in the 21st century needs a new perspective. We now have five generations simultaneously in the workforce each with differing core values, attitudes, communication styles and motivations. This diversity means that a leader must be adaptive in their approach to engaging and encouraging their team and in influencing others. Good leadership is authentic and engenders respect for everyone, whoever they are and whatever role they have. A good leader is confident, inspiring, listens to others, openly admits their mistakes, is fearless in pursuing their vision and, of course, has a sense of humour!

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health, or looking to work in the sector, and wanting to make an impact?

Follow your passion and find joy in the work you do. Find mentors who can guide you and let you borrow their confidence whilst you develop yours! Discover your vision for the future, find like-minded people who can support you (or at least make you laugh) and bring people with you on the journey. You do not have to put people on Mars (Elon, my hero, is already doing this!) but you can make a huge difference by taking small steps towards the change you want to see in the world.

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As a techie at heart, and coming from a family of medical doctors, I always knew I wanted to use my capabilities in computing to support the medical profession to do their job. As clichéd as it sounds, I'm passionate about making a difference through safe, secure practical solutions. Technology, cybersecurity, common sense and health care are an exciting combination!

Professor Trish Williams

First Nations Dermatology Service – Telehealth, The Royal Melbourne Hospital

MELBOURNE, VIC – NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

In the inaugural year of the award initiative, in addition to recognising 25 individuals, we recognise the team responsible for the 'First Nations Dermatology Service – Telehealth', who has introduced a new digital process for the delivery of health care to First Nations peoples and improved health outcomes for populations who have reduced access to care.

This team is made up of medical professionals and support staff, including:

- **Dr Crystal Williams** – Service Co-Founder and Consultant Dermatologist, The Royal Melbourne Hospital, & visiting Staff Specialist, Royal Darwin and Palmerston Hospitals

- **Dr Vanessa Morgan** – Service Co-Founder and Acting Head of Unit, Dermatology, The Royal Melbourne Hospital

- **Dr Rebecca Dunn** – Dermatologist, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and The Royal Melbourne Hospital

- **Gabrielle Ebsworth** – Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer, The Royal Melbourne Hospital

- **Barbara Ioppi** – Head of Telehealth Services, The Royal Melbourne Hospital

- **Kate Scholtens** – Dermatology Office Manager, The Royal Melbourne Hospital

The First Nations Dermatology Service – Telehealth was funded via a non-conditional grant from Janssen Pharmaceuticals, delivered to the Service through The Royal Melbourne Hospital Foundation. With no other service like this in Australia, it's creating positive change to the health outcomes of First Nations peoples by providing access to specialist dermatology services regardless of their location in Australia. The Service provides culturally sensitive and safe care, and actively removes barriers to receiving care, by seeing patients at home or in their local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, with telehealth consultations for dermatologic conditions provided by Dr Crystal Williams. In addition, the Service provides access to an Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer to provide holistic care and service coordination. The dermatology team is also a pilot unit for the use of the Patient Health Hub at The Royal Melbourne Hospital, allowing patients greater access to their electronic medical record when they register to the Hub and improving communication.

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> This Service is a small contribution towards bridging the gap in health care access and the discrepancies between metro and remote areas.
>
> **Dr Crystal Williams**

We spoke with three of the team members – Dr Williams, Dr Morgan and Gabrielle Ebsworth.

Tell us a bit more about yourself. What three words would you use to describe yourself?

Dr Williams: Kind, caring and intelligent. I'm a proud member of the Wiradjuri Nation of central NSW, a Dermatologist at The Royal Melbourne Hospital (RMH) and a previous recipient of the Indigenous Youth Leadership Program and Jesse Street Trust Grant in recognition of my work in women's and Indigenous activism. I sit on the Indigenous Governance Committee at the RMH and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee for the Australasian College of Dermatologists.

Dr Morgan: Optimistic, determined and collaborative. I'm a mentor and instigator of this Service as well as the Rural Telehealth Dermatology Service. I sit on the Patient Health Hub Sub-committee at RMH and I'm actively involved in trying to make my unit gold standard in the use of digital technology.

Gabrielle: Compassionate, empathetic and driven. I'm a proud Wangkumara and Barkindji woman, with strong background in Aboriginal education, health policy and advocacy. I'm an Australian Indigenous Education Foundation alumnus, I sit on the Indigenous Governance Committee at RMH, and I'm the Chair of the Aboriginal Leadership Group for the Melbourne Academic Centre for Health.

What are you proud of from your team's contribution to digital health?

Dr Williams: The most rewarding part has been the unanticipated flow-on benefits, including the positive way the Service has contributed to the culture at RMH and upskilled the mainstream medical workforce in providing culturally safe care. In addition, the Service is a very special experience for the patients simply by knowing they will be seen by an Aboriginal specialist. These rewarding elements have helped me personally during the pandemic, as I have been off-country and unable to travel home to see family.

Gabrielle: I'm incredibly proud of our team, not only as an Australian first but as a Service started by women – in particular, by Aboriginal women. There is so much power and self-determination in Aboriginal patients being seen by Aboriginal clinicians, leading to engaged patients and healthcare providers know this Service works.

What do you think is the importance of this award initiative?

Dr Morgan: It showcases what is being done in this space, with an alumni to share skills and knowledge and make new connections, which hopefully leads to more ideas and seeds of change.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

Dr Williams: As a junior doctor, I spent my internship and first year of residency working in the Northern Territory, including in East Arnhem. This was my first exposure to remote health care and I saw the impact of neglected tropical skin diseases and the need for better access to dermatology services in the area. This Service is a small contribution towards bridging the gap in health care access and the discrepancies between metro and remote areas.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

Dr Morgan: Through the expanded reach of digital health, and its ability to streamline care and improve workflow, I hope we see increased engagement of patients with their healthcare journey.

Gabrielle: For there to be more funding provided to equip smaller health services with access to quality technology and connection services to provide telehealth to all community members. Too often we see patients not able to attend their telehealth appointments as they don't have a computer or stable phone connection.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

Dr Williams: After meeting Helen Milroy, recognised as Australia's first Indigenous doctor, at a conference at 19 years old, I filled out my application to study medicine the next day. There are also many people through the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association and at the RMH, including my fellow team members who have worked on this Service. Finally, my sisters Melanie and Katherine, who are both experts in their fields of education and psychology respectively, are very inspirational to me and have been my biggest supporters since even before I started medicine.

Gabrielle: My colleagues Dr Crystal Williams, Dr Glenn Harrison and Dr Luke Burchill. Together they have instilled in me the importance of comradery, dedication and a passion for providing patient-centred care to the Aboriginal community. I believe we find strength in community and with their support and guidance as senior Aboriginal physicians, I feel empowered to succeed.

What does good leadership look like to you?

Dr Williams: Dr Vanessa Morgan is a perfect example – leading a dermatology department during a pandemic but still allowing creativity and autonomy to establish this brand new and innovative service. I feel very grateful to her for the strength of her leadership during such a challenging time.

Dr Morgan: I love the current values of the RMH – People First, Lead with Kindness and Excellence Together. These have been a terrific guide during the pandemic, which has hit our hospital hard.

Telstra Health's commitment to diversity and inclusion

At Telstra Health, we recognise the value of having diverse employees who represent their unique perspectives. We're passionate about creating an environment that's inclusive and supportive, where everyone can truly be themselves. We know that diversity and inclusion fosters greater innovation and better customer connection, and helps us attract, engage and retain talented people.

We are committed to diversity in all its forms. Our commitment to gender equality is reflected in the broad range of policies, programs and engagement initiatives we have in place to help us achieve this goal. Telstra and Telstra Health are proud members of the Champions of Change Coalition – we are committed to stepping up the co-ordination of programs that reduce gender discrimination in the digital economy.

We realise there is still much progress needed to achieve gender diversity and equity, especially when focusing on women in technology roles. As such, various initiatives are in place to ensure we can actively increase the representation of women across Telstra Health, for example, by ensuring women are fairly represented on shortlists and interviews for technology and People Leader roles, and succession plans are in place to build a pipeline of future leadership talent. Ultimately, all recruitment decisions will be based on merit, however, initiatives such as these help to address inherent bias that exists in the selection process and act to strengthen our female talent pipeline and create equal opportunities for everyone.

To further support our people, we are committed to creating a working environment that promotes and fosters positive health and wellbeing. Our Flexible Work Policy helps our people work in a way that suits them, whether the reason be for family, capacity to work, mental health or any other personal reasons. Our gender-equal Parental Leave Policy offers 16 weeks of paid parental leave for all parents, whether they are the primary or secondary carer, designed to give women and men equal choice in sharing the caring responsibilities whilst balancing their careers, putting gender equity front and centre. In addition, we introduced pandemic leave and a Wellbeing Day during the COVID-19 pandemic to further support our people during this difficult, and ongoing, period.

Our various internal Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Engagement Groups are also responsible for driving significant initiatives that provide opportunities to support and represent the diverse identities and interests of our Telstra Health people. These internal groups include Brilliant Connected Women (focused on gender diversity), Spectrum (focused on LGBTQ+ inclusion), Yindyamarra Wakai (focused on First Nations inclusion) and the overarching Diversity, Inclusion and Social Capital Committee (DISCC).

Hello and thank you from those behind the scenes

We, the Telstra Health team behind the 2021 Brilliant Women in Digital Health, would like to extend our congratulations to all award recipients, as well as our thanks to everyone involved in bringing this important initiative to life; from the judges and nominators, through to the photographers, makeup artists and hair stylists across the country who helped produce the wonderful photographs. We hope you enjoy reading this report, full of inspiring achievements and insights, and we look forward to bringing you more in 2022!

Main image (above) – from left to right:

Alex White

Joanna Hilliard

Rachel Stroud

Laura Edwards

Heather Doherty

Monika Kakouri

Download the 2021 Brilliant Women in Digital Health report

Visit telstrahealth.com/BCW to download the 2021 Brilliant Women in Digital Health report and meet the inaugural award recipients.

Here you can also join the Brilliant Connected Women in Digital Health network, to attend regular events and receive a monthly newsletter with industry insights and news.

Join the Brilliant Connected Women in Digital Health network

We're looking forward to celebrating the inaugural 2021 Brilliant Women in Digital Health award recipients at future events and initiatives run by the Brilliant Connected Women in Digital Health network, further supporting the purpose of the #BCWinDH network – to connect, share, inspire and celebrate. Most notably, this will involve an event in February 2022 to be live-streamed nationally.

Join the #BCWinDH network to find out more.

Follow Telstra Health and join the conversation

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#BCWinDH #digitalhealth

For any enquiries or more information about the Brilliant Connected Women in Digital Health network or the 2021 Brilliant Women in Digital Health award initiative, email bcwdigitalhealth@health.telstra.com.

2021
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