

2022 BRILLIANT WOMEN

in Digital Health Awards

RECOGNISING AND CELEBRATING
WOMEN IN DIGITAL HEALTH
AND AGED CARE



Contents

Our 2022 Brilliant Women in Digital Health	2
Introduction	3
Acknowledgment of Country	4
A message from our Managing Director	5
Our five judges.....	6
Meet the 2022 Brilliant Women in Digital Health.....	8
Telstra Health’s commitment to diversity and inclusion	40
Join the Brilliant Connected Women in Digital Health Network.....	41

Our 2022 BRILLIANT WOMEN

in Digital Health Awards

RECOGNISING WOMEN IN HEALTH AND AGED CARE



Dr Beena Ahmed
Page 9



Tara Alexander
Page 10



Jayne Barclay
Page 11



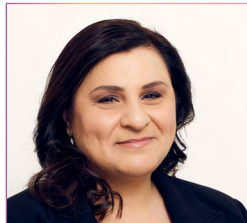
Professor Kerry Butler-Henderson Page 12



Dr Tina Campbell
Page 14



Professor Clara Kayei Chow Page 15



Sofie Karamzalis
Page 16



Bronwyn Le Grice
Page 17



Cherrie Lowe
Page 19



Kate Lucas
Page 20



Dr Angie Montgomery
Page 21



Bec Nguyen
Page 22



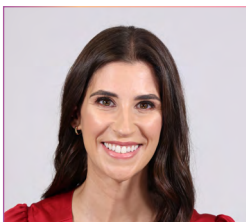
Erin Nunan
Page 24



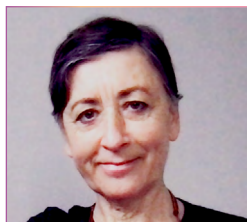
Dr Michelle Perugini
Page 25



Katherine Robinson
Page 27



Dr Anna Singleton
Page 28



Professor Helen Slater
Page 29



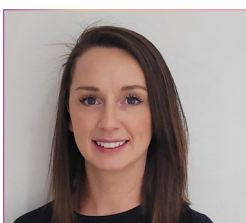
Associate Professor Clair Sullivan Page 30



Dr Janice Tan
Page 31



Dr Natalie Thorne
Page 32



Niamh Tobin
Page 34



Dr Erica Tong
Page 35



Dr Natalie Twine
Page 36



Professor Johanna Westbrook Page 37



Professor Ping Yu
Page 38

Introduction

2022 Brilliant Women in Digital Health Awards

Now in its second year, the 2022 Brilliant Women in Digital Health Awards attracted almost 100 nominations recognising women working in diverse areas in the health and aged care sectors. This initiative celebrates their achievements and contributions to digital health and technology throughout Australia and internationally.

Attracting such a high calibre of entries from women in the fields of medical research, academia, health and aged care and the private, government and not-for-profit sectors provided a challenging task for our notable judges.

The 25 award recipients profiled in this report were selected by the judges based on the following broad criteria which recognised:

- Technical expertise or contribution, with significant impact, in the health, aged care, or health and medical research sectors.
- Emerging leaders influencing or being responsible for digital transformation.
- People making a positive impact supporting other women in the sector through mentorship or upskilling.
- Demonstrated innovation in developing unique solution/s to address problems or opportunities.
- Impact and influence in the digital industry, through work in their organisation and in the broader digital community.
- Success in establishing and/or championing a digital vision or innovation.

Award recipients were formally recognised at awards events in Melbourne and Sydney on 13 October 2022.

The awards are an initiative of the Brilliant Connected Women in Digital Health Network, which has more than 1,200 members united by an interest in digital health. The network provides a community to share ideas, create connections, inspire opportunities and celebrate successes.

Nominations for the 2023 Brilliant Women in Digital Health Awards are planned to open mid-2023. With so many remarkable women achieving outstanding accomplishments in digital health, there will be plenty more to celebrate.

Acknowledgement of Country

Telstra Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and recognises 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 2022 Brilliant Women in Digital Health and Aged care, 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.

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.

A message from Elizabeth Koff AM



Congratulations to all our award recipients. We're honoured to share and celebrate your achievements and the positive impact you have had on the digital health sector and the health of our communities throughout Australia and beyond.

It is a privilege to shine a light on the hard work and dedication of our award recipients, many of whom are paving uncharted territory by bringing new digital solutions to life to tackle challenges faced in our health and aged care systems.

The Brilliant Connected Women in Digital Health Network was formed in 2020 to educate the broader community about the opportunities of digital in health and aged care, as well as explore the challenges women may face and how to be advocates for change.

In Australia, women are significantly under-represented in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), making up 28% of the workforce in 2021, whereas most of Australia's health care sector workforce is female.

The ratio of full-time equivalent health professionals who are women within the Australian population remains at around 2.5 times that of men.

This represents an opportunity for the digital health sector to pave the way for greater gender diversity in the typically male-dominated fields of STEM, and this report highlights our award recipients' career paths, achievements and the possibilities available for aspiring professionals.

In 2021, we partnered with the Australasian Institute of Digital Health (AIDH), the Digital Health Cooperative Research Centre (DHCRC) and CSIRO's Australian e-Health Research Centre to undertake the [Understanding gender diversity in digital health](#) survey.

The survey found more than 90% of women respondents believe there is still progress to be made to reach gender equity in digital health, however one in five men disagreed that progress needs to be made.

Fostering a gender diverse and engaged digital health workforce is a key enabler for Australia to be a leader in the sector on the world stage. Barriers to achieving gender diversity in our sector are layered, requiring a collective and sustained commitment to change in order to overcome.

Our 25 award recipients come from diverse backgrounds, and have varied skill-sets and qualifications. By profiling them, we hope to inspire others to devote their careers to digital health, a unique and exciting sector which offers real opportunities to be change-makers.

The judging process was particularly challenging as there were many women achieving great progress in virtual care, research and academia, and telehealth. Start-ups developing digital tools and apps for mental and physical health, and women using big data to improve health outcomes were among many initiatives worthy of recognition

What sets our award recipients apart is they have gone above and beyond their day-to-day roles to progress the digital health sector more broadly, whether that be through their leadership, governance roles, mentoring or in professional development capacities.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our judges Professor Jane Halton AO PSM, Dr Louise Schaper, Dr Steve Hambleton, Professor Ngiare Brown and Emeritus Professor Christine Bennett AO for their many days and hours of commitments to this initiative, and for navigating the enormous task of choosing only 25 award winners.

The quality of nominations is a great testament to the strength of talent in our digital health community and I look forward to recognising more women in the future. To our 2022 award recipients, please enjoy this well-deserved recognition.

Elizabeth Koff AM
Managing Director, Telstra Health

Our judges

Thank you to our five esteemed judges from across the health and aged care sectors who have been part of the 2022 Brilliant Women in Digital Health Awards.



Emeritus Professor Christine Bennett AO

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

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. She is 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 more than 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 on the Board of Regis Aged Care and is the Convener of the Champions of Change Coalition Health Group, advocating for gender equality in health. In addition to these roles, Professor Bennett is a former member of the Telstra Health Board.



Professor Jane Halton AO PSM

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

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 the Australian COVID-19 Coordination Commission advisory committee and is on the boards of ANZ, 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

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.



Dr Steve Hambleton AM

Chief Clinical Adviser, Australian Digital Health Agency

Dr Hambleton is a General Practitioner in Brisbane and a former Queensland state president and federal president of the Australian Medical Association. He is Chief Clinical Adviser to the Australian Digital Health Agency, supporting the Senior Executive Committee and Chief Executive Officer. He also supports clinical reference leads who provide clinical input into the work of the agency. He chairs the Clinical Governance Committee that operates to ensure the agency delivers programs and projects that are high quality and clinically safe.



Professor Ngiaire Brown AM

National Mental Health Commissioner and Founding Director, Ngaoara

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 a National Mental Health Commissioner and the Founding Director of Ngaoara, a not-for-profit committed to child and adolescent wellbeing.

Meet the

2022

**BRILLIANT
WOMEN**

in Digital Health Awards

RECOGNISING WOMEN IN
HEALTH AND AGED CARE



Dr Beena Ahmed

Senior Lecturer in Signal Processing,
School of Electrical Engineering and
Telecommunications, University of NSW

—
SYDNEY, NSW
WARRANG, EORA NATION

3 words to describe yourself?

Persistent, passionate, innovative

Academic Beena Ahmed is the founder of Say66, a start-up that is revolutionising the way children with speech difficulties can access affordable and engaging speech therapy exercises. Through her ground-breaking research in artificial intelligence (AI) and signal processing, she created a tool that uses AI in an interactive, tablet-based video game for children undertaking speech therapy, making it accessible and fun. Say66 products are designed to help the millions of children who miss out on essential speech therapy due to long waiting lists for services, geographical barriers or the high cost of out-of-pocket expenses. The Pakistan-born engineer also developed novel algorithms to detect the presence of sleep disorders and pioneered the use of machine learning to detect pronunciation errors in disordered speech, predicting the risk of dementia from speech. A recognised international leader and educator, she is regularly invited to speak at schools promoting AI and engineering to girls.



Despite enormous progress in speech processing, very little work has been done on disordered speech. Via my research, effective care can be provided to those in need regardless of circumstances and location.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

Despite the enormous progress made in speech processing over the past few decades, very little work has been done on disordered speech. I am proud that via my research I was able to address problems in areas of speech pathology and neurology. This research produced outcomes which are now being commercialised so that effective care can be provided to those in need regardless of circumstances and location.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

Healthcare is currently not equitable, with treatment prioritised for certain groups or diseases because of challenges in health data collection and sharing. I am passionate about bridging existing data silos and developing methods to pool data resources ethically so that interventions can be innovated for under-serviced areas.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

Most of my mentors have been men, with the first my father. He encouraged me to be independent, fearless and pursue a career I was passionate about.

What career advice would you give your younger self?

Believe in yourself!!! There are so many times in my career when I have not pursued opportunities or chosen to stay in the shadows because I doubted my abilities and was self-conscious about my gender and the colour of my skin. I would not want to repeat that.



Tara Alexander

Data Manager and Statistician,
Australasian Rehabilitation Outcomes
Centre

WOLLONGONG, NSW
DHARAWAL COUNTRY

3 words to describe yourself?

Diligent, meticulous, resilient

AROC Online Services, an IT system used by Australian and New Zealand rehabilitation services, was Tara Alexander's brainchild. With a background in statistics, she has worked to encourage rehabilitation facilities to consistently collect accurate data, creating benchmarks to measure service improvement. Over the past 20 years, she has been largely responsible for the collation of 1.9 million patient episodes of data. Using the tool she created, rehabilitation professionals can submit their data, check it for errors and completeness, re-extract it with extra fields, download service specific benchmark reports and run live analysis.



The pandemic highlighted the need for digital health to be responsive to changing needs – we need real-time access to data supported by timely research and data analytics so clinicians' time can be best spent with their patients rather than filling out forms collecting data... While it is acute care that saves lives, it is rehabilitation that makes the saved life worth living.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

We turn data into information that can facilitate more efficient service delivery and improved outcomes for patients participating in medical rehabilitation. I am proud of my vision to design and build an online system that enables real-time data collection/upload and provides live analysis plus the ability to download comprehensive national benchmarking reports. This data can be used to further medical rehabilitation research and, when used in data linkages, can lead to policy change and advocacy for rehabilitation services. After all, while it is acute care that saves lives, it is rehabilitation that makes the saved life worth living.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

The pandemic has really highlighted the need for digital health to be responsive to changing needs – we need real-time access to data supported by timely research and data analytics so clinicians' time can be best spent with their patients rather than filling out forms collecting data, thereby enabling patients to enjoy a positive rehabilitation experience.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

Two people stand out for me: my mum, who told me to put my career first and never let anyone say I can't achieve what I want (although I'm sure she didn't think I would take THAT long to give her grandkids), and my colleague Jacqueline Capell, who helped keep a clinical focus on all research we do. I am grateful to both.

What does good leadership look like to you?

A good leader knows what the end goal is, where it sits in the big picture and has a good idea how to get there. They lead by example, set expectations, inspire team members to work collaboratively and provide space for team members to excel. They delegate and trust their team to get the details right, they listen to feedback, believe in their team but speak up when needed.



Jayne Barclay

Director, Digital Health and Informatics
Mater Health Services Australia

BRISBANE, QLD
MEANIN, TURRBUL AND YUGGERA COUNTRY

3 words to describe yourself?

Creative, courageous, passionate

After starting her career in medical imaging, Jayne Barclay pursued work in clinical informatics and digital health. In her current role sponsoring the operation of multiple projects at Mater Health Services, she led the initiative for Mater to use technology to care for COVID-19 patients at home. The new 'virtual' care monitoring system enabled almost 5,000 referred patients to be cared for at home, taking significant pressure off the hospital system. Building off the success of this first virtual care initiative at Mater, more recently she led the implementation of Australia's first emergency neonatal telehealth support for Mater's private hospitals in Mackay and Rockhampton.



Growing up in a regional city, access to specialist care and services was an issue that challenged my immediate family, and I am driven by the opportunities digital health creates to help advance health equity.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

I'm proud of my contribution through my leadership role at the Mater. This includes the implementation of new technologies and services such as solutions introduced through our COVID-19 response and Australia's first virtual emergency neonatal support service across our hospital group. Another example is connecting technical capabilities with clinical practice through the introduction of permanent health informatics roles in our organisational structure.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

From a young age I was interested in working in healthcare and started my career as a radiographer. Growing up in a regional city, access to specialist care and services was an issue that challenged my immediate family, and I am driven by the opportunities digital health creates to help advance health equity.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

I believe that the immense potential of digital health is still unknown, but the most important part for us all is to keep pushing forward, challenging and dreaming up the possibilities of the future.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

I've had the good fortune of having many informal mentors. Dr Louise Schaper gave me an early opportunity through a community of practice leadership group, which helped guide where I wanted to go. Former colleagues Connie Land and Dr Monica Trujillo helped me through various parts of my career and I have learnt so much through their influence. My wife, Vanessa, has and is to this day my most invaluable mentor, giving me the confidence to follow my ambition, as well as providing honest advice and perspective where it is needed.



Professor Kerrynt Butler-Henderson

Director, RMIT Digital Health Hub,
RMIT University

MELBOURNE, VIC
NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?

Reformist, passionate, kind

Kerrynt Butler-Henderson is a pioneer in digital health education, having launched Australia's first program at Curtin University in 2005. She promotes the need for all health professionals to have digital health capabilities. Her wide-ranging influence in reforming the health workforce has included establishing professional capability frameworks and a workforce census. She developed the Promotion for Academics Tenured in Health Science (PATHS) for Women to support female academics applying for promotion. She is also a director of Grit, an international accelerator supporting female entrepreneurs in the digital health space.



I'm passionate about the digital health workforce. I advocate for the integration of digital health capabilities in graduate training, the meaningful development of capabilities in our existing workforce, and the establishment of specialist digital health roles in all care and health environments.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

My hope is for a digitally capable and safe workforce to enable and support care and wellness. And that innovations are designed to support the growth of digital fluency in our citizens and carers.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

I'm passionate about the digital health workforce. I continue to advocate for the integration of digital health capabilities in health graduate training, the meaningful development of capabilities in our existing workforce, and the establishment and support for specialist digital health roles in all care and health environments.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

Professor Kathleen Gray has been a mentor to many women in digital health. She was awarded an Order of Australia in recognition of her contribution to digital health education in Australia. She has shaped the type of researcher, educator and leader I aspire to be: one who is authentic and works with integrity. It has been an honour to work with her on Australia's digital health workforce research and education agenda.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health?

The specialist digital health workforce is still a largely hidden workforce and the greatest challenge is knowing which door to use to enter. My advice is to not look for that one door, but to try all the doors, the windows, the vents, the mailbox. The journeys of the amazing women recognised as the Brilliant Women in Digital Health highlight there are many different entry points: through training programs, champion and super-user roles, projects and specialist positions. Get involved in Australian Institute of Digital Health branch events, attend seminars, read blogs and news sites, and listen to podcasts. These will give you insights into the industry's needs.

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“There has been an accelerated embrace of digital health innovations in the health and aged care sectors in the past few years. We know this hasn't been easy and these awards provide an opportunity to spotlight the women driving a digitally enabled and connected future in the sector.”

Dr Steve Hambleton AM
Brilliant Women in Digital Health
Awards Judge





Dr Tina Campbell

Managing Director,
Healthily Pty Ltd

MELBOURNE, VIC
NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?

Innovative, passionate, persistent

Dr Tina Campbell is a health promotion specialist and creator of the patient education platform GoShare Healthcare, Australia's most widely used web-app for health content distribution. The tool allows health professionals to send customised bundles of information to patients by email or SMS. In the 12 months to June 2022, about 1.5 million patients had received digital health information via GoShare. The platform has been used for diverse purposes, including heart health checks, bowel screening, diabetes self-management, and First Nations storytelling about pregnancy and early parenting.



The digital health revolution brings access and equity, delivering the right healthcare and enriched information, at the right time and in the right place, directly to the people who need it. It helps put consumers in charge of their own health.

Why do you think it's important to have an initiative like the Brilliant Women in Digital Health Awards?

This initiative provides a moment for reflection in our busy lives. The celebration of women and their achievements in digital health can inspire girls and women with ideas and ambition to take the next step in pursuit of their goal.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

My work in patient education has been a catalyst for change in the way patient education is delivered in Australia. Access to a digital content delivery platform has enabled health professionals to transition from providing patients with static, hard-copy information to rich digital health resources. I am proud to have taken GoShare from a concept to a digital health product widely used across the health industry in Australia.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

Twenty-five years ago, I made the first of hundreds of films capturing patient and carer stories that inform, support and empower others on similar health journeys. They were originally available on VHS tapes and DVDs in public libraries, then as tiny, buffering online videos, before, finally, as high-resolution, online videos streaming straight to devices! Advances in technology have enabled the delivery of targeted health information at scale. This digital health revolution brings access and equity to healthcare, delivering the right healthcare and enriched health information, at the right time and in the right place, directly to the people who need it. It helps put consumers in charge of their own health.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health?

Make sure you are not developing a solution in search of a problem. Good ideas are simple ideas. Work on your 'elevator pitch'. If you can't clearly articulate your idea, product or service and the problem it solves in under a minute, it's too complicated.



Professor Clara Kayei Chow

Professor of Medicine, Academic Director, Westmead Applied Research Centre, Faculty of Medicine, University of Sydney

SYDNEY, NSW
DHARUG COUNTRY

3 words to describe yourself? Compassionate, driven, happy

Cardiologist Clara Chow is a pioneer in clinical practice and research that reduces the risk of heart disease – the biggest cause of death globally. She has led research developing novel digital health interventions that address cardiovascular and other chronic diseases in complex and varied patient populations. Among her innovations is the mHealth research program which has influenced guidelines in Australia, Europe and the US. The text-message-based program is used by NSW Health and the National Heart Foundation in 32 hospitals nationally, impacting more than 5,000 patients so far.



Getting the most out of data science and data analytics are strengths that are really important to our way forward in digital health.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

I have added rigor to the evaluation of digital health intervention. I have developed, evaluated in randomised trials and now implemented proof-of-concept digital health interventions to help prevent heart disease. Our text-message-based programs have been adopted in other fields, for example gestational diabetes, kidney disease, back pain and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

I was interested in international public health in the early days and did my PhD studies, based in India, on developing cardiovascular prevention programs suitable for implementation in low- and middle- income countries. Soon after I returned to Australia in 2010, I became interested in the potential of digital health for delivering simple and scalable programs. I see it as an opportunity to address gaps in the implementation and translation of the evidence in cardiovascular disease prevention and enable this to reach more people.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

My mum. Some of her life taught me to look with an open mind at all that was around me, to utilise all information to understand the world and identify the opportunities. I think these basic life skills have meant innovation has come somewhat naturally.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health?

There is a lot of noise! A lot of good ideas, but a lot of distractions. Work to your strengths and work in partnership.

What career advice would you give your younger self?

It probably would have been good to do that maths degree at university! Getting the most out of data science and data analytics are strengths that are really important to our way forward in digital health.



Sofie Karamzalis

Director, Informatics,
The Royal Women's Hospital

MELBOURNE, VIC
WURUNDJERI WILLUM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?

Determined, passionate, hard working

Sofie Karamzalis has led the Royal Women's Hospital's transition from a largely paper-based medical record system to a digital platform, going live at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Her work resulted in an 86% improvement in discharge summaries, time savings of up to 30 minutes per shift during midwife clinical handovers and cost savings of more than \$1 million. The timing of the initiative meant staff could work remotely more effectively due to the ability to access patient information digitally. She continues to demonstrate her unwavering commitment to the promise and potential of digital health by leading a talented, multidisciplinary team and keeping the patient at the centre of every decision that is made.



Leading The Royal Women's Hospital in the Connecting Care EMR program towards a single shared record has been a highlight for me. I wonder how we would have survived through COVID in a different way.

Why do you think it's important to have an initiative like the Brilliant Women in Digital Health Awards?

This program helps to create visibility of women who have made a difference in this industry for the greater good of the community. Sharing stories, celebrating successes and inspiring others to be as part of this work is key to transforming how health care is delivered and to improve health outcomes for our community.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

Leading The Royal's Women's Hospital in the Connecting Care EMR program towards a single shared record has definitely been a highlight for me. Ours was the first hospital to implement a maternity module as part of a big bang approach. Two years on, I wonder how we would have survived through COVID in a different way.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

I have a number of professional mentors who have guided me over the years. My mother has been a standout for me. She has always been an incredibly resourceful, resilient and determined woman. Her advice to me was to: 'learn to do something new and keep it in your back pocket. You will always find an opportunity to use that life skill.' I have often reached into that back pocket in my personal and professional life and it has served me well.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health?

Digital health is complex and challenging however it is a truly rewarding space to work in when you can collaborate and co-design with all stakeholders – clinicians, non-clinicians and consumers. Always make time to stop and listen and take note of what is working and what is not working – there is always room to innovate and keep improving for the better.

What career advice would you give your younger self?

Just go for it!!! Do not let your fear of failure stop you from realising your potential. Surround yourself with inspirational leaders and mentors. Don't wait for 'the right time' to advance your career in the digital industry!



Bronwyn Le Grice

Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, ANDHealth

MACEDON, VIC
DJA DJA WURRUNG, TAUNGURUNG
AND WURUNDJERI WOI WURRUNG,
KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?

Frank, fearless, persistent

Bronwyn Le Grice is the founder, CEO and Managing Director of ANDHealth, Australia's highest impact digital health commercialisation organisation. The former venture capitalist created the non-profit ANDHealth to help Australian digital health innovators access vital funding. She is an outspoken advocate for diversity, as well as the potential for well-funded researchers and entrepreneurs to generate enormous economic opportunities.



Helping companies create and commercialise life-changing technologies allows us to impact millions of lives, in a globally scalable way, from right here in Australia.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

I had no idea of the reach and impact that the company might have, just an overwhelming belief that Australian digital health entrepreneurs needed their own place to go to access world-class mentors, programs and resources. When we created the company, much of this funding did not exist, or was not being channelled into digital health.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

During my venture capital career, I was fortunate to work with a digital health company that had clinical evidence which demonstrated a five-fold reduction in hospitalisations for people with chronic disease. Helping companies create and commercialise life-changing technologies allows us to impact millions of lives, in a globally scalable way, from right here in Australia – that's what motivates me.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

The potential is almost unfathomable when we look beyond the (critical) connectivity within the health system itself, to the immense promise of precision medicine, next-generation sensors, connected medical implants and digital therapeutics. We can leverage Australia's long-standing international position as a leading centre for health and medical research, with our rapidly growing technology leadership, to create a new, globally scalable, digital health industry for Australia.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

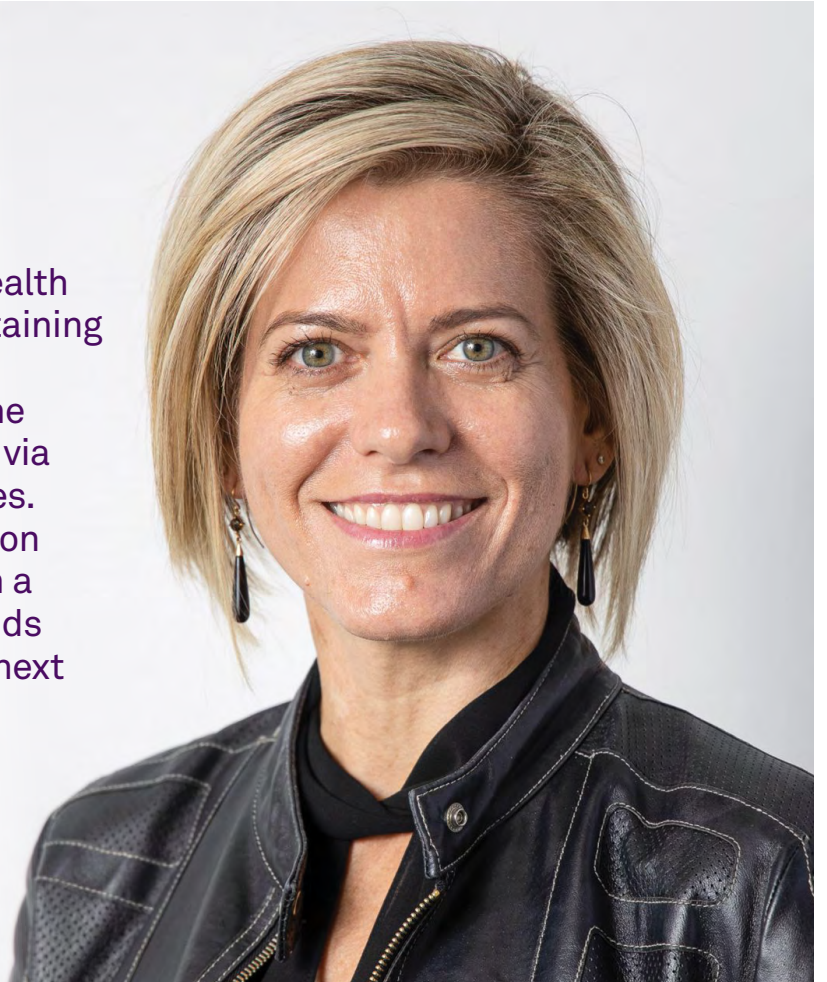
I've been fortunate to have had many people in my life who wholeheartedly support me and my sometimes-crazy ideas (like leaving a venture capital career to set up a non-profit commercialisation company while six months pregnant). The one person I will single out, though, is my husband Tom. He unfailingly encourages me to reach for my dreams, and is endlessly supportive in the face of the challenge of pursuing my career whilst also being mother to our two daughters (aged five and two), alongside his own career and aspirations.

“

“One of the most pressing issues facing our digital health sector is attracting and retaining talent. Women make up a significant proportion of the digital health sector, often via pathways from clinical roles. Recognising the contribution of these change-makers in a relatively young sector sends a positive message to the next generation.”

Dr Louise Schaper

Brilliant Women in Digital Health
Awards Judge





Cherrie Lowe

Director,
TrendCare Systems Pty Ltd

GLASS HOUSE MOUNTAINS, QLD
GUBBI GUBBI COUNTRY

3 words to describe yourself?

Passionate, determined, resilient

A nursing veteran with more than 50 years' experience, Cherrie Lowe used her extensive knowledge of hospital management and safe staffing methodologies to create software that is now being used in more than 200 hospitals in six countries, including 120 in Australia. Over a span of 30 years, she developed an evidence-based patient acuity system, TrendCare, which generates intelligent data enabling hospital managers to make informed decisions about nursing and midwifery staffing. The system supports fair and equitable workloads for nurses and midwives, and hence improves patient outcomes. Cherrie is an influential researcher, teacher, mentor and co-author of a textbook on safe nurse staffing.



TrendCare measures the demand for nursing and midwifery services. Millions of patients across six countries benefit from the use of the system on a daily basis.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

The achievement I am most proud of is the development of a unique, evidence-based acuity system, TrendCare, which measures the demand for nursing and midwifery services. I designed the system as part of my university studies while working full time as a registered nurse and midwife. It took eight years of research, development and trials to produce a valid system which could determine safe staffing and provide fair and equitable workloads. Research and development has been ongoing since 1992 to ensure that the software solution remains valid and relevant. Millions of patients across six countries benefit from the use of the system on a daily basis.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

I am very passionate about caring for nurses and midwives so that they have the capacity to provide quality care to patients. My goal was to empower nurse leaders with nursing data that measures patient acuity and the variance between the demand and supply of nursing resources.

Why do you think it's important to have an initiative like the Brilliant Women in Digital Health Awards?

The contribution that women make to digital health is significant, but it is often not acknowledged. This initiative will encourage more women to enter the field of digital health.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

Professor Evelyn Hovenga has been a colleague and a mentor to me for over 30 years. She has experience and expertise in the same research field, and we have co-authored a book together, *Measuring Capacity To Care Using Nursing Data*.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

That there will be a greater focus on data analysis, so that opportunities for improvement are evidence-based and can be practically realised. This is particularly important for safe staffing and the achievement of optimal patient outcomes in all healthcare services.



Kate Lucas

Director, Centre for Health Analytics, Melbourne Children's Campus (The Royal Children's Hospital, Murdoch Children's Research Institute and the University of Melbourne Department of Paediatrics)

MELBOURNE, VIC
NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?

Pragmatic, intelligent, kind

Kate Lucas is the inaugural director of Australia's first-of-its-kind centre for health analytics. Health analytics enable the use of data to make new medical discoveries, deliver better care and improve health. A case in point is the Kidney Exemplar project, where Ms Lucas's team works with doctors to identify children who have a likely diagnosis of Alport Syndrome and work with families to undertake genomic sequencing to confirm the diagnosis. Early detection and treatment have been shown to delay the need for dialysis by 13 years.



Data is key to an effective and sustainable healthcare system. Thirty per cent of the care we deliver is of low value to the patient and 10% is actively harmful. That means we should stop doing 40% of care - but which 40%? The answer is in our data.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

I came to digital health through working in epidemiological research studies where we collected data to work out how best to treat cancer patients. It seemed to me that the work we were doing through these slow and manual methods should be embedded into our healthcare system, not an add-on. I recognised that if we captured the clinical information when treating patients, we could use that information to learn from every patient, every interaction, every time. We can use this data to deliver better outcomes for everyone.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

I'm really excited about the use of data in health and the potential to deliver much better, more efficient and more effective care using that data. Some work shows that 40% of care is in line with evidence-based guidelines, 30% is of low value to the patient, and 10% is actively harmful. That means we should stop doing 40% of care - that's a \$74 billion opportunity to redirect resources to high-value care. But which 40%? The answer is in our data.

What does good leadership look like to you?

A good leader should be measured by the strength of outcomes of the team that they create. Good leadership is about providing direction, guardrails and resources to enable people to deliver on the vision.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health?

This is an exciting area of work. It's a growth area and we're going to see more opportunities as time goes by. But don't be discouraged by the lack of a coherent career structure. This is still a relatively new area, and we are still constructing career paths, so be willing to trust the journey and know that the next opportunity will find you when the time is right.



Dr Angie Montgomery

Co-founder and CEO,
InCheq

MELBOURNE, VIC
WURUNDJERI WOI WURRUNG
AND BUNURONG BOON WURRUNG,
EASTERN KULIN NATION

3 words to describe yourself?

Determined, curious, innovative

InCheq provides software for organisations to improve the psychological safety of their workplace and reduce the risk of psychological injuries. The product is mapped to Australia's occupational health and safety standards, allowing workplaces to capture meaningful data linked to their compliance obligations. Clients receive automated recommendations on how to reduce rates of mental illness and absenteeism. Dr Montgomery developed the intellectual property used in InCheq's hazard assessment and the methodology behind the survey results. She created an automated, evidence-based recommendations matrix that can be applied to organisations of any size. A health psychologist, Dr Montgomery has spent the past five years working as an organisational consultant and therapist. She co-founded InCheq in 2020 with the aim of shifting workplace mental health management from a reactive to a preventative approach, using scalable technology.



Integrating digital technology and healthcare is essential for the future wellbeing of our society. The opportunities are endless.

Why do you think it's important to have an initiative like the Brilliant Women in Digital Health Awards?

In the software development space there is significant visibility of male founders and CEOs. We need to build exposure for female software CEOs and founders in order to speak to the next generation of digital health and technology.

What does good leadership look like to you?

Great leaders embody the skills to unleash the potential of others. They create space where their people can access the best parts of their thinking and, ultimately, their performance. Neuroscience tells us that a brain in fear is one that has limitations to executive functioning. So great leaders create psychologically safe environments where learning is encouraged and mistakes are treated with curiosity rather than blame. These are the spaces where people will have the best ideas, tap into their workflow and get the best outcomes. Creating psychologically safe teams isn't just good for mental health, it makes good business sense.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health?

Integrating digital technology and healthcare is essential for the future wellbeing of our society but it's not easy to become an expert in both. Consider which areas of healthcare and the digital space you would enjoy and develop your niche expertise in that crossover. The opportunities are endless.

What career advice would you give your younger self?

Don't be afraid to have conversations about your vision. There are so many wonderful and interested people that come across your path who genuinely want to know about what you want to do.



Bec Nguyen

Founder and Director,
Upbeat Digital

PERTH, WA
WHADJUK NYOONGA COUNTRY

3 words to describe yourself?

Ambitious, adventurous, upbeat

Before founding Upbeat Digital, Bec Nguyen led two flagship app projects at the Telethon Kids Institute that are making an enormous difference to the wellbeing of families. The Bright Tomorrows app, downloaded more than 50,000 times, provides parents and carers with activities to support young children's brain development in positive social and emotional health. The Beacon cyber safety app provides parents, carers and educators with the skills to support their children to thrive online. Ms Nguyen is proud to have mentored many women and young females in her role as Digital Project Manager, including volunteering as a mentor for a national STEM program working with girls in remote and regional Australia for a number of years.



I'm most proud of being able to advocate for women of colour in the tech and innovation industry, honouring those that have come before me, and hopefully paving the way for those to follow.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

I have managed and consulted on over 10 digital health mobile apps involving children, young people, parents, and educators around Australia across multiple areas such as Type1 diabetes, cystic fibrosis, cyber safety and parent-child brain development. I am immensely proud to have worked with Nature Play WA to evaluate an app called Talk N Walk to encourage young females to be more physically active. I also partnered with The Wilderness Society to build a world-first citizen-science application using satellite imagery to alert, detect and monitor deforestation around Australia. I'm most proud, however, of being able to advocate for women of colour in the tech and innovation industry, honouring those who have come before me, and hopefully paving the way for those to follow.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

I look forward to the use of new innovative technologies beyond machine learning and AI that will contribute to digital health. My hope is that through these technologies there will be accessible healthcare for the entire world, regardless of location or socio-economic status. I hope in the near future that women, and especially those of colour, are represented as equals.

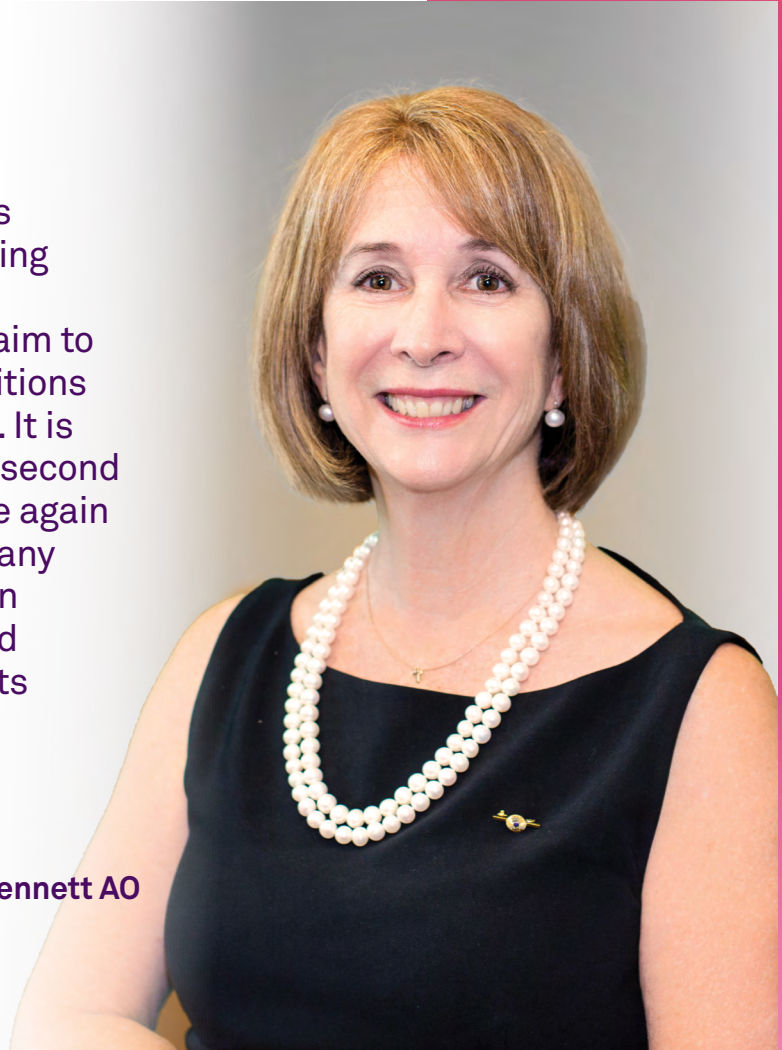
What's your advice to anyone working in digital health?

Surround yourself with like-minded people and mentors to help support and guide you; do not be afraid to put yourself forward and self-promote – tell the world what you're proud of! Find yourself a 'hype' girl (or guy!) that will be your personal cheerleader, to uplift you when you are doubting your capabilities. If you're a person of colour, find your people and be a support for one another.

“

Honouring the contributions of brilliant innovators, aspiring visionaries and exceptional entrepreneurs, the awards aim to inspire women in their ambitions and to foster future leaders. It is a privilege as a judge in the second year of this initiative to once again discover and highlight so many impressive stories of women from around the country and celebrate their achievements in many dimensions of digital health.”

Emeritus Professor Christine Bennett AO
Brilliant Women in Digital Health
Awards Judge





Erin Nunan

Partner, Director and Program Manager,
Beyond Essential Systems

MELBOURNE, VIC
WURUNDJERI, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?

Efficient, inquisitive, honest

A health system specialist, Erin Nunan has worked in international development for 15 years in the Pacific, Asia and Africa. She has overseen the creation of Tupaia, an open-source data aggregation, analysis and visualisation platform to map healthcare systems in low and middle-income countries. The free tool has been deployed in more than a dozen countries in the Pacific, supporting health and emergency projects. In Samoa, for example, Tupaia was used to map its COVID-19 vaccine program, revealing each household with unvaccinated adults in real time. In Papua New Guinea, it supports the malaria program to map data in rural areas. The award-winning software has brought professionalism and quality to under-resourced regions.



Small countries with health systems reliant on aid are often dragged in whatever direction the donors feel is the priority of the moment. I hope to see digital health spread across the Pacific in a sustainable way.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

The aim is to support health workers through increased access to information for decision-making so they can more efficiently report and view data. People working in health in the Pacific are very hard workers, often wearing multiple hats. We hope our platforms reduce some of their daily data processing burdens.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

Small countries with health systems reliant on aid are often dragged in whatever direction the donors feel is the priority of the moment, and this is especially true in the digital health space. We need to ensure there is evidence that supports a particular advancement before asking it to replace something that works. I hope to see digital health spread across the Pacific in a sustainable way.

What does good leadership look like to you?

A good leader is one who has considered all the players, and what each piece of the puzzle looks like for them. Imperative to good leadership is putting trust in those around you. Our company is made up of so many brilliant people, and we are lucky enough to work with leaders from within the health sector across multiple Pacific Island countries. When we take on advice from a range of people who are building the platforms or using the platforms, we get the best results. I think this is what makes us so successful - no one person leads.

What career advice would you give your younger self?

Don't set out looking for a 'career'. Studying a health-related field (pharmacy in my case) gives you a great broad base to do so many things with. Don't feel trapped by the often one or two pre-determined career paths within a field, there are always new and interesting things on offer.



Dr Michelle Perugini

Co-founder and CEO,
Presagen

LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA, USA
OHLONE NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES

3 words to describe yourself?

Humble, driven, passionate

With a background in medicine, technology and entrepreneurship, Michelle Perugini's contribution to digital health is not only life-changing, it is life-giving. The first product launched by her company, Presagen, provides the AI technology for selecting promising embryos during IVF procedures, vastly improving pregnancy outcomes. While IVF has been around for more than 40 years, the overall success rates are still relatively poor. Life Whisperer analyses embryo images to assess their likelihood of being genetically normal, helping clinicians decide which embryos to transfer to the patient first. The product is the first in market and is being used in IVF clinics globally.



I feel like we are on the verge of a new era in IVF, one that is enabled with AI and other advanced technologies – it's an exciting time for the field.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

I feel like we are on the verge of a new era in IVF, one that is enabled with AI and other advanced technologies – it's an exciting time for the field. At Presagen, we are proud to have developed a world-leading product which has authorisation to sell in 42 countries. Because of the scale of the technology we have built, we are already improving access and affordability, and increasing success rates for IVF patients globally. This means more families with fewer cycles, and less trauma and financial burden for patients. For clinics, it gives them a separate set of eyes to validate and improve their embryo evaluation processes. The AI can see complexity that they cannot visualise with the human eye.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

I have always had a passion for biology and technology, and a desire to combine the two for massive global health impact. It's like a superhighway of data that connects patients and clinics. I feel so fortunate to be leading a company focused exclusively on improving women's healthcare outcomes globally. What drives me is the ability to change the historical mould, providing women with the specialised healthcare they need and deserve.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

At Presagen, we have developed a unique global collaborative approach to AI and digital health that has never been done before. This allows clinics of any size, anywhere in the world to collectively contribute to the development of AI that can then be delivered at low cost to clinics and patients globally. This approach ensures diversity of data, to ensure the AI is scalable and represents all different patient demographics. My hope for digital health is that it will enable global leading technology like AI to be able to reach those communities and developing nations that are poorly served by traditional healthcare.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health?

Confidence, confidence, confidence. It is a core skill that allows you to overcome any criticism or failure.

“

Reading this year’s nominations was a privilege. The innovations, inspiration and insight on show was amazing. This is an opportunity to promote our successes, which can so often be overlooked, as well as embrace gender diversity in Australia’s health and aged care sectors.”

Professor Jane Halton AO PSM
Brilliant Women in Digital Health
Awards Judge





Katherine Robinson

Global CEO,
Miroma Project Factory

SYDNEY, NSW
WARRANG, EORA NATION

3 words to describe yourself?

Creative, quirky, tenacious

Miroma Project Factory, led by Katherine Robinson, creates digital solutions to nurture healthy behaviours. Notable projects include helping young people on the autistic spectrum to transition into working life, and platforms that prevent fall risks among the elderly. Some of Miss Robinson's most prominent work involving difficult audiences is the mobile app Avow. She and her team worked with the NSW Behaviour Change Unit and Department of Communities and Justice to deliver a world-first app targeting domestic violence offenders, where sensitively applied behaviour change techniques gently guide low-medium risk perpetrators to adhere to their apprehended violence order conditions and attend court through tools and resources to raise their capacity and motivation.



LIV: for Dementia helps people to remain living independently by providing easy access to supportive communities, information and local services, reducing their isolation.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

I am especially proud of winning an innovation award for Learn Seek Match, a unique proposition targeting remote, systematic generational unemployed 17 to 24-year-old girls in regional NSW, empowering them to gain confidence in making informed decisions around potential careers in STEM. Most recently, as part of a government initiative to make it easier for people living with dementia to remain at home longer, we developed LIV: for Dementia. LIV helps people to remain living independently by providing easy access to supportive communities, information and local services, reducing their isolation.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

Initially, I commenced my career in marketing and communications, looking at human behaviour and how to influence actions in selected groups. Ultimately my desire to create positive change for the communities around me positioned me in digital health and wellbeing. It is not always easy working with vulnerable cohorts; many hard decisions boil down to what we stand for, how we respond to others and what we prioritise.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

Cliché, but my father David Robinson. Despite the occasional butting of heads as we debate over the dinner table, I continually go back to him for pragmatic advice and an excellent deep dive into the nuances of commercial contracts. His vast industry-agnostic knowledge never ceases to amaze me; from pirates to pipelines, he has a pearl of wisdom for all occurrences.

What does good leadership look like to you?

A good analogy for me is 'be an umbrella' for your team. Sometimes they require a walking stick when the weather is great, and will need you to hold up the sky when it's raining cats and dogs. Often best passed to another when not required, and you should always have one for emergencies in the boot of a car.



Dr Anna Singleton

Early Career Researcher,
University of Sydney

**SYDNEY (RICHMOND), NSW
DARUG, EORA NATION**

3 words to describe yourself?

Ambitious, creative, light-hearted

Dr Anna Singleton is the creator of a health and wellness program used by hundreds of breast cancer survivors. Her PhD thesis was inspired by her best friend who survived the illness. Dr Singleton co-designed the text messaging program with survivors in partnership with the Westmead Breast Cancer Institute and Breast Cancer Network Australia. EMPOWER-SMS sends survivors text messages about exercise, emotional wellbeing, medication and general breast cancer information. The messages are semi-personalised and designed to be appropriate for individuals with low literacy. The award-winning digital intervention was delivered to 845 women during COVID lockdowns and is now being adapted for survivors in remote and indigenous communities in Canada. An internationally published advocate for upskilling survivors, Dr Singleton hopes to make her digital health program available free in the future.



EMPOWER-SMS has helped more than 1,000 Australian breast cancer survivors so far. These women shared insights into the most challenging times in their lives to improve the cancer journey for future patients.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

EMPOWER-SMS has helped more than 1,000 Australian breast cancer survivors so far. I am proud of this work because women with breast cancer drove the design, testing and refinement of the program. These women shared insights into the most challenging times in their lives to improve the cancer journey for future patients.

What is your hope for digital health?

That it can assist the amazing work of our healthcare providers by supporting continuity-of-care and health promotion to patients between medical visits. I also hope digital health can alleviate workloads for health care providers and provide equitable support for everyone in need.

What is your advice to people working in digital health?

Always co-design new strategies with patients, healthcare providers and relevant partners. Work with researchers to evaluate if your idea is useful, sustainable and can have widespread impacts. Consider how your idea will be funded long-term. There is nothing worse than seeing an amazing digital health program die after the trial phase.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

My PhD supervisor Professor Julie Redfern changed my life. Before I met her, I was planning to leave academia. Julie taught me to 'get to the guts of it', push the boundaries and take every rejection as an opportunity to improve (there have been many!).

What career advice would you give your younger self?

Speak up. Your ideas are valid, important and worthwhile. Email your idols. They will love to hear from you! And it may open doors you did not expect.



Professor Helen Slater

Professor (Clinical Researcher in Musculoskeletal Pain), Curtin School of Allied Health, enAble Institute, Curtin University

PERTH, WA
WHADJUK NYOONGA COUNTRY

3 words to describe yourself?

Caring, creative, values-driven

A clinical pain researcher, Professor Helen Slater co-leads a team focused on helping people access the right care at the right time. With chronic pain affecting one in five Australians, Helen implemented Australia's first consumer-focused digital resource to support people living with musculoskeletal pain to access care. painHEALTH has received 40 million hits and more than 2 million visitors from 150 countries. She leads an international team working on a similar digital health initiative with, and for, young people living with pain. This new initiative matters as health services are often not tailored to young people's specific needs, meaning they fail to access the right care. Professor Slater's innovative work will build AI into the new digital platform, youngpainhealth, enabling personalised 'virtual' right pain care and coaching so young people can take their health into their own hands.



Exploring new ways to use digital health to tailor care is key so that regardless of where you live, you can access personalised care in real time in your natural environment.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

The focus is making pain better recognised, accessible and addressed in a timely way with value-based care – painHEALTH is one example. This digital platform was Australia's first website co-designed with people living with chronic musculoskeletal pain to help support others. The platform has been accessed by over 150 countries and is used by people living with pain, as well as in Australian health workforce training programs (universities, colleges, professional associations), and is referenced in musculoskeletal clinical guidelines and care standards as a preferred resource.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

We have a big country and care disparities remain a big issue. There's a real opportunity to leverage digital health and more intentionally target the quadruple aims for care that improve: health outcomes that matter to patients; experiences of receiving care; experiences of providing care; effectiveness and efficiency of care. Exploring new ways to use digital health to tailor care is key so that regardless of where you live, you can access personalised care in real time in your natural environment.

What does good leadership look like to you?

Wanting to work with someone again and again because you see their strong vision, commitment, authenticity, empathy, values, sense of humour/fun, creativity, organisational skills, humility. You know how they will support you and the team to achieve the vision and enjoy the work along the way.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health?

Do it! There are so many opportunities to make a real-world impact and difference in health and care. Look for great mentors with strong leadership skills who can support you in your goals and who you can learn from. Be brave, have courage, be curious and don't worry if things don't always work out, they can provide great learning opportunities.



Associate Professor Clair Sullivan

Head, Digital Health Research Network,
University of Queensland

BRISBANE, QLD
MEANIN, TURRBUL AND YUGGERA COUNTRY

3 words to describe yourself?

Collaborative, shy, results-driven

Originally a specialist endocrinologist, Clair Sullivan's varied career led to her appointment as inaugural head of the University of Queensland's Digital Health Research Network, where she leads more than 30 academics. A rare example of a digital health leader who is still a practising clinician, Associate Professor Sullivan is in a unique position to earn stakeholder support from frontline staff and patients. Among her many achievements in accelerating the state's digital transformation has been assisting with the successful state-wide roll-out of integrated electronic medical records. She is currently re-engineering how Queensland Health and the university sector collaborate on secondary use of data.



Digital health is very much a team sport – it needs contributions from clinicians, information technology specialists and clinical informaticians among others to be successful.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

My main contribution is assembling teams of people far smarter than me and uniting them to a common goal. I enable talented people to create wonderful new knowledge and ways of working.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

I chose to work in healthcare because I wanted to make a difference in people's lives. I was very quickly attracted to digital health because I saw it as the healthcare of the future. Digital healthcare offers opportunities for seamless and cutting-edge research, for faster translation of research findings into clinical practice and, ultimately, better outcomes for individual patients and the whole health system. I also thrive in collaborative work environments. Digital health is very much a team sport – it needs contributions from clinicians, information technology specialists and clinical informaticians among others to be successful.

Why is your hope for the potential of digital health?

It is a key solution to the problem of unsustainable healthcare. Health systems everywhere are straining under rising costs, increasing demand and growing wait times. The data needed to make complex healthcare decisions is stored in both paper and electronic records, making it hard to access and connect. Digital health is increasingly recognised around the world as the backbone of optimal healthcare delivery, opening new ways to deliver care to more people, more efficiently.

What does good leadership look like to you?

It is collaborative, visionary and empowering. I believe that every endeavour is made stronger by co-creation and co-delivery. A good leader can clearly visualise and articulate a better future, and can motivate other people to share the vision. The best leaders inspire and enable others to develop their skills, to fail forward, and to reach for their own dreams.



Dr Janice Tan

GP; Regional Medical Director, Telecare;
Clinical Consultant, HealthShare

ROCKDALE, NSW
GWEAGAL, BIDJIGAL AND GADIGAL,
EORA NATION

3 words to describe yourself?

Optimistic pessimist, tenacious, curious

As a regional medical director at Telecare, Dr Janice Tan is helping to grow the largest virtual specialist and allied health clinic in Australia. Telecare links health professionals with patients in underserved and rural communities. Dr Tan led the development of a peer support program for mental health clinicians, offering Telecare professionals a chance to connect in an otherwise extremely isolating field of medicine. In her advisory role at Healthshare, Dr Tan has been crucial in injecting a clinical perspective to all aspects of the business, including its pre-consultation questionnaire which has been completed by 3 million patients. The Malaysia-born GP also sits on the Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Advisory Board for the Central Eastern Sydney Primary Health Network. The group recently released the While you Wait digital resource, providing strategies to manage patients' mental health while awaiting psychologist/psychiatrist care.



COVID-19 delivered digital health as a potential solution by showing how models such as telehealth and e-scripts have easily made healthcare tremendously more accessible.

Why do you think it's important to have an initiative like the Brilliant Women in Digital Health Awards?

It allows other women wanting to venture into the emerging frontier of digital health to think 'I can do this too'. This was certainly me last year looking at the 2021 award winners, some of whom are people I ascribe to be my role models!

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

I seek to provide my real-life experience as a GP when working as a digital health adviser to organisations. By striving to become a champion of clinician co-design, this allows these companies to design services and products that are relevant to the current primary care system. I am proud (but also grateful) to have been able to forge my path to a seat at the table to push primary care's voice on the agenda.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

Working in major hospitals' emergency departments, I saw first-hand where the health system let people down. This motivated my move into general practice and the pursuit of higher education in public health to better understand where these shortfalls are. The COVID-19 pandemic then delivered digital health as a potential solution by showing how adoption of models such as telehealth and e-scripts have easily made healthcare tremendously more accessible for others.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health?

The digital health space in Australia is small but very much welcoming. Start building your networks and reaching out to people who are currently in the space. Almost all of us are more than happy to have a chat and help out.



Dr Natalie Thorne

Stream Lead, Genomics Information Management, Melbourne Genomics Health Alliance

WARRAGUL, VIC
GUNAİKURNAI COUNTRY

3 words to describe yourself?

Passionate, visionary, reflective

Dr Natalie Thorne has two big passions: to ensure that genomics is embedded in digital health and to mentor others to work with genomic data in the most effective way. Genomics can provide answers and change lives. Her work on the technology front has involved developing a global-leading clinical system that makes complex genomic data interoperable across the healthcare system. On the people-management front, she has trained medical scientists to interpret genomic data, she has developed the curriculum for Masters subjects on variant interpretation, and she has created policies and procedures to ensure patients' privacy and consent. Through her role at the Melbourne Genomics Health Alliance, Dr Thorne has been instrumental in delivering genomic education to more than 1,500 professionals, cutting the time it takes to deliver genomic tests to patients.



To usher genomics into mainstream care, a health informatics lens is required to understand how to implement IT systems and how to make change happen.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

I have shown how to bring genomics, a largely research-dominated field, into the digital health world. I lead the team which has developed a clinical system for genomics. It's been in production for four years and five labs use it in Victoria. It's considered a national exemplar for interoperable infrastructure for genomics.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

I am a bioinformatician and expert in genomics. To usher genomics into mainstream care requires understanding how to implement IT systems, how to make change happen – it requires health informatics. Digital health is where we make things happen for patients and clinicians. It is where our future healthcare system is. I'm bringing my bit of expertise – genomics – into this space and working hard on this piece of the puzzle.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

Joined up, connected, interoperable, workable healthcare. One day, I want to be able to throw out the folders of reports and clinical notes that I have on my kids. One day, I want for all of us to be able to seamlessly interact with healthcare providers because the technology is allowing them to do their job, and allowing patients to operate with the healthcare system in a way that is intuitive.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health?

Seek out mentors. Make a commitment to develop as a leader. Identify what skills you next need in your toolkit. Be honest about why you are doing what you're doing. I do my best when I care deeply about the purpose of my work. Without that it's hard to sustain the conditions required for making change happen. You need confidence, support of others and the right team around you.

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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 Ngiare Brown AM
Brilliant Women in Digital Health
Awards Judge





Niamh Tobin

Chief Product Officer,
Genie Solutions

BRISBANE, QLD
MEANIN, TURRBUL AND YUGGERA COUNTRY

3 words to describe yourself?

Empathetic, nurturing, driven

Genie Solutions provides practice management software in Australia, with almost 5,000 practices as customers. Niamh Tobin's role involves leading the product and design teams who create experiences for Genie Solutions customers. The company's cloud platform has grown rapidly under Niamh's leadership. The adoption of cloud-based technology is key to the digital transformation of healthcare, providing the opportunity to facilitate better clinical workflows, better patient experiences and improved interoperability on a much broader scale.



Digital health in Australia is undergoing a transformation right now and there is huge opportunity for impact... Improving the health ecosystem and having a meaningful impact on the lives of patients, medical professionals and their families is so rewarding!

Why do you think it's important to have an initiative like the Brilliant Women in Digital Health Awards?

I am fortunate to work in a team where women are well represented and celebrated for their contribution – this is not always the case across the wider digital health community. Initiatives like this are important to recognise female leaders and encourage other brilliant women to explore careers in digital health. The problems we face here are complex; having diversity of perspectives and approaches to problem-solving is so important in making progress towards better health outcomes.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

I always knew my purpose in life was caring for people. Early in my career, I worked in a variety of hospital-based environments and this provided me with first-hand experience of how digital health can support and hinder patient-centred healthcare. I appreciate now that I can have a much greater impact on patient care through digital health.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

I am most proud of my leadership contribution to digital health and love focusing my energy on empowering teams to imagine and design a better future for health through technology. The interoperability and user experience challenges we face are complex. Diversity of thought, creative thinking and divergent approaches to problem solving are critical if we are going to provide better experiences for users of the health ecosystem.

What career advice would you give your younger self?

A little cliché but it is that your career – like life – is really about the journey, not the end goal. I never could have imagined where my career has brought me. I recently became a mother and found myself anxious to figure out who I was as a leader and a mother. Now I am at peace that this will be an ever-evolving process, one where I am constantly learning and adapting in my roles. There will be weeks when I get the balance between the two right and others when I don't!



Dr Erica Tong

Chief Pharmacy Informatics Officer,
Alfred Health

MELBOURNE, VIC
NAARM, KULIN NATIONS

3 words to describe yourself?

Optimistic, resilient, resourceful

In 2016, Dr Erica Tong became Australia's first Chief Pharmacy Information Officer. In her role at Alfred Health, she led the implementation of electronic medication management. Alfred Health launched a number of first-in-country processes, including the deployment of electronic medical record (EMR) integrated automated dispensing machines and infusion pumps. Innovations she is leading will have impacts beyond Australia, for example achieving closed-loop medication management without unit dose medication packing has significance for all regions where unit dose packed medications are not available, including Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom and much of Europe.



I'm hopeful for the day when a junior medical officer at 3am in the emergency department doesn't have to rely on a crumpled piece of paper with a list of medications on it but will have access to the patient's allergies, investigations and prescribed and dispensed medications in real time.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

I'm proud that I navigated my way through developing a role for pharmacists in leadership in clinical informatics in a hospital setting. When I began my role as Chief Pharmacy Information Officer (CPIO) in 2016, there were no other pharmacists in similar roles in Australia. Many hospitals had chief medical information officers and chief nursing information officers, but despite how significant an undertaking transitioning to electronic medication management is, there were no chief pharmacy information officers in Australia. It's exciting to see that in 2022, there are now CPIO roles at many health services across Australia.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

I'm motivated to work in digital health because of the opportunity to make broad impacts on patient and medication safety through technology, for example: implementing clinician relevant clinical decision support, reducing transcription and manual selection through integrating systems and devices such as infusion pumps and automated dispensing machines with the electronic medical record, and utilising data to drive further improvements in the safety and efficiency of our complex medication processes.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

That we no longer refer to it as digital health because it has become an embedded part of how we deliver healthcare. I'm also hopeful for the day when a junior medical officer at 3am in the emergency department doesn't have to rely on a crumpled piece of paper with a list of medications on it but will have access to the patient's allergies, investigations and prescribed and dispensed medications in real time.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health?

Don't be afraid if you don't have advanced technical skills! Developing digital solutions for clinical workflows requires teams of people with varied experiences, both technical and clinical.



Dr Natalie Twine

Senior Research Scientist, Team Lead,
CSIRO

SYDNEY, NSW
WARRANG, EORA NATION

3 words to describe yourself?

Collaborative, enthusiastic, determined

As the leader of the Genome Insights team at CSIRO, Dr Natalie Twine is responsible for the development of cutting-edge genome analysis technology. Traditional genome analysis tools can't effectively process the enormous volumes of data that currently exist; the tools developed by Dr Twine solve this challenge by integrating cloud-computing approaches with distributed computing. The work enables identification of patients at risk of disease who would otherwise have been missed. A bioinformatics specialist, Dr Twine is also revolutionising how newborn genetic screening is performed in Australia; her technology reveals 10 times more inherited diseases than is possible with current systems.



It is often not transparent how to navigate your way into senior roles in STEM fields. The Brilliant Women in Digital Health Awards can provide women with valuable role models and examples of how to manage the tricky stages of their careers, as well as giving women a pool of mentors to turn to.

Why do you think it's important to have an initiative like the Brilliant Women in Digital Health Awards?

The 'leaky pipeline' in STEM careers has been widely documented – where women are progressively lost from science and technology related fields at each education and career stage. It is often not transparent how to navigate your way into senior roles in STEM fields. The Brilliant Women in Digital Health Awards can provide women with valuable role models and examples of how to manage the tricky stages of their careers, as well as giving women a pool of mentors to turn to.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

Technology I have developed delivers solutions to multiple high-profile health problems including machine learning software which has identified risk factors in diseases such as motor neurone disease (MND) and cardiovascular disease. This work has directly translated into clinical practice, with novel MND disease genes added to diagnostic tests worldwide. I am particularly proud of this achievement, seeing the transition from research ideas to technology development and implementation in the clinic is very satisfying.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

Digital health technologies are already moving healthcare from broad-based 'one size fits all' approach to a more personalised approach. As with any AI or machine learning model, technology that is developed for health is only as good as the datasets it was built on, and we know there is potential for biases to creep in. My hope for the future is that technology is built to be equitable for all, with diverse genetic and health backgrounds of patients taken into account.

What's your advice to anyone working in digital health?

Being in the forefront of innovation, the digital health sector is the perfect place for people with creativity, tech-savvy and a passion for improving the health of Australians. My advice is to build networks in the digital health community, join meetups and take risks.



Professor Johanna Westbrook

Director, Centre for Health Systems and Safety Research, Australian Institute of Health Innovation, Macquarie University

SYDNEY, NSW
WARRANG, EORA NATION

3 words to describe yourself?

Persistent, dedicated, inquiring

Professor Johanna Westbrook has generated an extensive body of research evidence on the effectiveness and safety of clinical IT systems. She has developed innovative methods to measure the effects on workflow and communications. An example is the Work Observation Method by Activity Timing (WOMBAT), which was commercialised and made available via the Apple Store. It has been adopted by research teams in 15 countries, including the American Medical Association, which uses the tool to measure the impact of electronic health records on US physicians.



Good information is at the heart of health care. I was motivated by the challenge of designing creative ways to measure how complex, dynamic interventions such as IT systems can impact care delivery and outcomes.

Why do you think it's important to have an initiative like the Brilliant Women in Digital Health Awards?

These awards are important in recognising the many and varied contributions that it takes to deliver health technologies. I am nominating to raise the profile of the role rigorous research plays in supporting evidence-based approaches to the design, implementation, optimisation and evaluation of health informatics interventions.

What is the impact of your contribution to digital health?

An important contribution has been to build an evidence base about the effectiveness of health information technologies to improve the safety and quality of care. Results from this research have been used nationally and internationally to inform changes in IT system design, use and implementation. I conducted the first controlled study of the effects of electronic medication management (eMM) systems in adult hospitals, demonstrating significant reductions in prescribing error rates. Building on this foundation, we have recently completed the largest and most comprehensive study of eMM in paediatric hospitals. Most recently, my team's work in aged care has driven changes in provider IT systems and highlighted the potential of informatics to monitor and improve care.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

Good information is at the heart of health care. I was motivated by the challenge of designing creative ways to measure how complex, dynamic interventions such as information technology systems can impact care delivery and outcomes.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

That it becomes more evidence based and we reap the benefits of greater applied, collaborative research.

What does good leadership look like to you?

Bringing out the best in your team. I work with a brilliant team of individuals devoted to advancing the role of health informatics and demonstrating the contribution of these innovations to support improved health service delivery and outcomes.



Professor Ping Yu

School of Computing and Information Technology, Faculty of Engineering, University of Wollongong

WOLLONGONG, NSW
DHARAWAL COUNTRY

3 words to describe yourself?

Curious, passionate, hard-working

Among Professor Ping Yu's many contributions to the digital transformation of health and aged care was a research report, endorsed by the federal government, which served as a springboard to implementing and improving IT systems in aged care. Her work has focused on co-designing, developing and evaluating digital health solutions with practitioners, and using health informatics education to develop the digital health workforce. She has completed more than 30 projects in collaboration with managers and clinicians, including a mobile app used by the World Health Organisation to collect disease surveillance data in Fiji.



Once you set up the plan to reach the goal, dive into the river, keep swimming, and never turn back until you get to the land.

Why are you passionate about digital health?

In 2002, when I started at the University of Wollongong, I immediately joined the Initiative for e-Health with the belief that I would prosper in this field because of my unique interdisciplinary training in biology and computing. I approached local aged care organisations, looking for practice-based projects. The students delivered a fantastic software application for an aged care organisation. However, nothing happened. The manager regretted that the organisation lacked the resources and infrastructure to implement our product. This setback motivated me to investigate the capacity and willingness of aged care workers to use IT to manage care information. The impact of this initial report motivated me to continue research to promote digital transformation in health and aged care.

What is your hope for the potential of digital health?

After the initial success of transferring paper records to electronic records, now we can open the door to a new artificial intelligence (AI) empowered digital health world. AI technology will also revolutionise health and medical education.

Who has been an important mentor to you?

In 2008, I invited Professor David Hailey to join my Industry Linkage research project as a co-investigator. We have been close collaborators and friends ever since. He has always been a reliable mentor with whom I can openly discuss complex issues, from industry relationship management to higher degree research student supervision and even 'office politics'. I appreciate the safe space Professor Hailey has provided me, and the constructive advice.

What career advice would you give your younger self?

I would tell my younger self: Ping, you are living at a good time. You have the opportunity to try your ideas with all your tools and methods. Keep learning from people and literature, and open your eyes and mind to new players and tools. Once you set up the plan to reach the goal, dive into the river, keep swimming, and never turn back until you get to the land.

“

Congratulations to all our award recipients. We're honoured to share and celebrate your achievements and their positive impact to the digital health sector and the health of our communities throughout Australia. What sets our award recipients apart is they have gone above and beyond their day-to-day roles to progress the digital health industry more broadly, whether that be through their leadership, governance roles, mentoring or in professional development capacities.

Elizabeth Koff AM



Telstra Health's commitment to diversity and inclusion

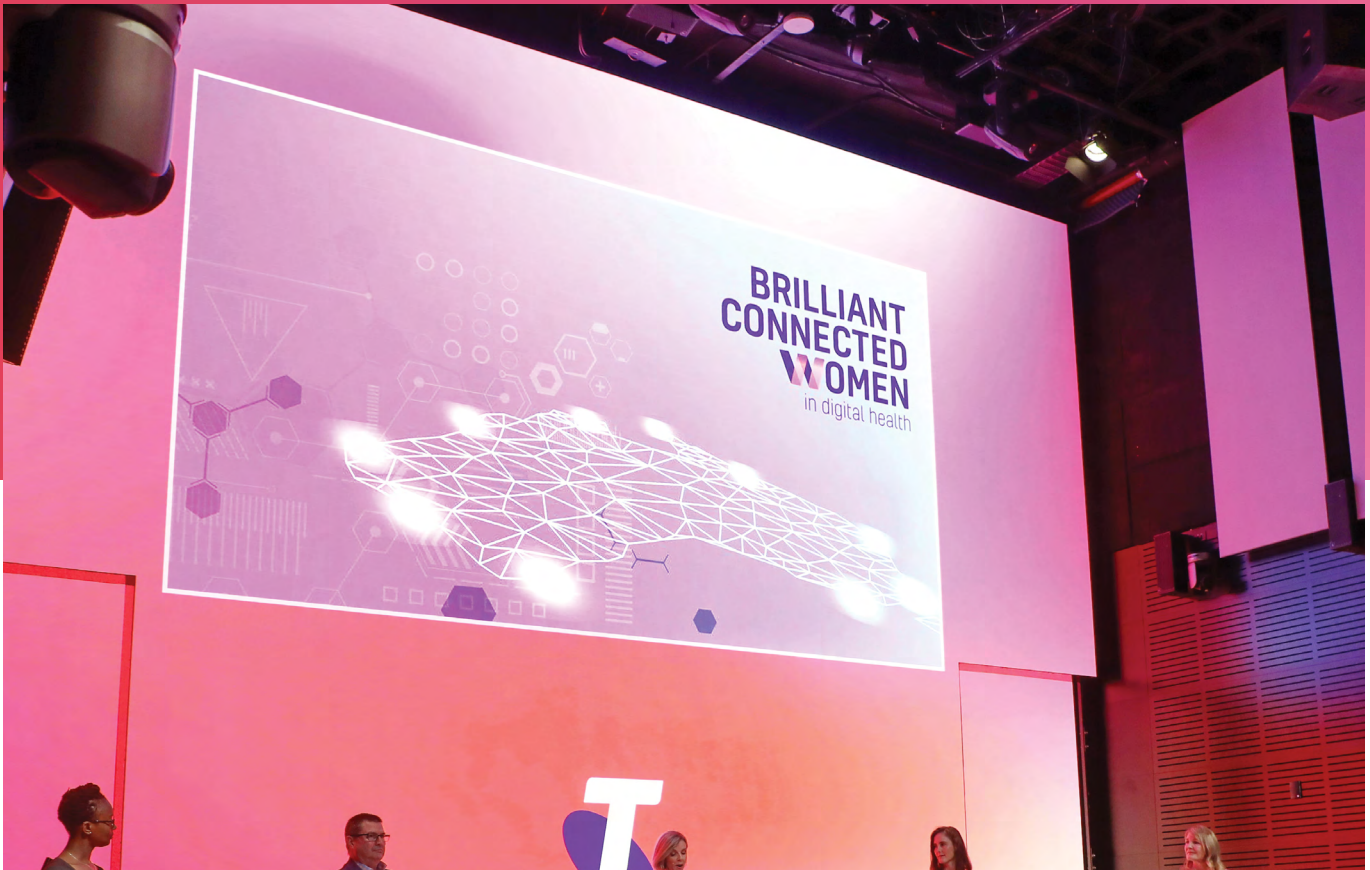
At Telstra Health, we recognise the value of having diverse employees who represent their unique perspectives. We're passionate about creating an environment that's inclusive and supportive, where everyone can truly be themselves. We know that diversity and inclusion fosters greater innovation and better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



Join the Brilliant Connected Women in Digital Health Network

The Brilliant Connected Women in Digital Health (BCWinDH) Network's vision is to bring together a community of like-minded individuals, both women and men, who work in or have an interest in digital health, and for them to share ideas, create new connections, inspire opportunities and celebrate the successes and outstanding activity of women in the sector.

By delivering regular events (virtual and in-person) with inspiring world-class digital health speakers, we aim to educate the broader community about the opportunities of digital in health and aged care, as well as explore the challenges women may face and how to be advocates for change.

It's free to join and participate in BCWinDH Network activities.

To join, visit www.telstrahealth.com/BCW

You can also join the conversation in the #BCWinDH Network group on [LinkedIn](#).

Follow Telstra Health and join the conversation

in  @telstrahealth

#BCWinDH #digitalhealth

**BRILLIANT
CONNECTED
WOMEN**
in digital health

 **Health**

For any enquiries or more information about the Brilliant Connected Women in Digital Health Network or the 2022 Brilliant Women in Digital Health Awards, email bcwdigitalhealth@health.telstra.com.

2022
BRILLIANT
WOMEN
in Digital Health Awards
RECOGNISING WOMEN IN
HEALTH AND AGED CARE

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