



**Media Release**

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**IT in Aged Care Awards Reward Excellence.**

The IT in Aged Care awards announced in Sydney at a gala dinner this week, recognise excellence and achievement in aged care providers and software suppliers.

Aged Care providers are increasingly recognising that IT can be a powerful tool to offset some of the difficulties in securing the right staff with the right skills; in coping with the complexities of the Federal Governments Aged Care Funding requirements and in slashing time staff spend on paper based record keeping.

The awards also show that IT adoption in aged care demonstrates enormous advances in the quality of care and service provision being offered to residents in the sector.

The ICT Company of the Year award went to iCare, an Australian based company that has successfully taken its locally developed clinical care and medication management software to the UK aged care market.

iCare's CEO, Chris Gray said the award came at a wonderful time and will help build the company's reputation across the UK. 'Being recognised by your peers as the Australian ICT Company of the Year is a major marketing coup for us as we expand our Australian and international sales efforts,' he said.

The award for software implementation in facilities of fewer than 150 beds went to a very small aged care provider in the NSW coastal city of Kempsey where the IT package has had a huge impact, reducing costs and increasing efficiency.

'There is no doubt' said Rod Young, the CEO of Aged Care Association Australia (ACAA) 'that government needs to ensure that the right financial supports and systems frameworks are in place that will continue to attract investment from aged care providers to continue to deploy IT solutions that maintain quality services at high levels of efficiencies.'

The awards are run under the auspices of ACAA, ACSA (Aged & Community Services Australia) and HISA (The Health Informatics Society of Australia.)

The winner of the over 150 beds best software implementation went to Barwon Health, a Victorian based regional healthcare provider. The service provides Acute, Sub Acute, Palliative Care and Residential Care services across the Geelong region.

'Australia's healthcare system will not cope with the increasing demands being placed on it by our ageing population, unless we follow the examples of the UK, Canada and other countries by the widespread development and use of new technology.'

The CEO of ACSA, Greg Mundy said 'the only way our community will cope with our ageing population time bomb is through the adoption of new technology, supported and encouraged by federal government initiatives.'

### **Contacts**

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### **Background Information on Cedar Place and the Award.**

Cedar Place had a Quality Management System in place that generated an enormous paper trail; staff were spending more and more time manually documenting resident care and financial claim records.

The successful implementation of the iCare software package has transformed the way staff operate, saving time and money and reduced staff turnover.

After eight months of operation of the iCare software, Cedar Place staff comments include quotes like these:

- 'Never thought I could do it'
- 'I am so chuffed that I can now use a computer'
- 'Could not do without the new computer system'
- 'Frees us up to be nurses'

The adoption of new technology is one of the only ways smaller facilities like Cedar Place will survive into the future.

### **Background Information on Barwon health Award.**

Sue De Gilio, CEO of Barwon Health says that the benefit to staff and patients from the adoption of the new technology is far reaching.

"We have numerous sites, which presents problems with accessing patient's records. This system not only ensures that clinicians can access patient records anywhere, anytime; it also protects the patient's medical history."

"By having all a patients details in one location, care planning is made so much easier and staff are not tied down with administrative tasks, freeing them up to spend more time actively caring for patients," she said.

Sue De Gilio added that the project has the added benefit of reducing the need for vast amounts of storage for hard copy patient records.

"Racks and racks of paper records are fast disappearing as more and more areas are digitized, helping to reduce our carbon footprint," she said.

The new technology installed at Barwon Health has slashed thousands of hours off the time spent entering and storing resident and patient health records.

### **Background Demographic Statistics.**

#### **W.H.O**

1 billion people are overweight.

860 million are chronic disease patients.

600 million are over 60 years of age.

75 to 80% of healthcare budgets are being spent on chronic disease management.

The world is short of health professionals, doctors, nurses and allied health providers.

By 2045 there will be 7 million Australians over the age of 65.

One in four will be thinking about retirement and whether they stay at home or move into a retirement village.