

Breaking down health information silos and helping to close the gap

Extensia by Hills solves one of healthcare's great challenges by connecting healthcare providers with the patient information they need to see throughout the care journey – easily and securely.

When a woman in a remote region of Queensland went to have her eyes tested at the IDEAS Van – a world-first, high-tech facility in a purpose-built semi-trailer – she knew it might save her sight but never imagined it would save her life.

Her retinal images assessed by specialists in Sydney, however, showed that she might have a problem with her carotid artery. The woman was tracked down quickly

and an ultrasound at the IDEAS Van revealed she had carotid artery thrombus. She was immediately sent to Brisbane where two operations saved her life.

Extensia by Hills' provided the care teams in Sydney, Brisbane and remote Queensland with real-time access to her critical clinical information, test results and imaging.

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CASE STUDY: DELIVERING CONNECTED CARE IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

The iconic IDEAS Van rumbles across vast stretches of Australia, transporting \$1 million worth of state-of-the-art technology into areas with poor access to specialist services.

With 94 per cent of Indigenous vision loss preventable or treatable, the world-first mobile ophthalmology and optometry treatment centre in a semi-trailer aims to spare Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders from diabetes-related blindness.

Developed with a \$5 million Close the Gap grant, the IDEAS Van offers a clinical grade telehealth system and suite of diagnostic and treatment equipment.

To allow the clinical team to access medical records, test results and other patient information, Extensia, which has recently been acquired by Hills, provided a bespoke connected health information system created in consultation with the Indigenous community and clinicians.

As part of the

IDEAS Van program, 21 Aboriginal Medical Services received retinal cameras and health workers were trained to screen patients. The images were uploaded into a secure platform and graded at the Centre for Vision Research at Sydney's Westmead Millennium Institute, identifying the patients who needed specialist treatment. Then, when the IDEAS Van rolled into a regional hub, patients were able to consult the onboard specialist team.

Through Extensia's RecordPoint platform, which operates as a central hub for health information sharing and management of coordinated care, the clinicians were able to access curated medical histories for their patients (in accordance with patient privacy).

During consultations, clinical notes and images were loaded into RecordPoint in realtime. Specialists in Sydney were provided with access to images and clinical notes to enable them to provide advice to the local care teams.

Diabetes is a significant cause of chronic disease in Indigenous communities, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders almost four times more likely than non-Indigenous Australians to have diabetes or be pre-diabetic. Those aged over 40 are also six to 10 times more likely to suffer blindness than other Australians. In some remote communities, 50 per cent of the Indigenous population lives with diabetes.

"Remote communities have fewer health providers and a high turnover, making care coordination a major challenge," Hills CEO David Clarke said.

"Extensia has a privacy-by-design platform so consumers who wish to share their information can do so with their selected providers. In the case of the IDEAS Van, access to real-time information not only saved sight but also at least one life."

With RecordPoint, authorised practitioners have real-time access to their patients' records and test results throughout the health ecosystem, including hospitals, GPs, specialists, allied health, radiology, pathology and health apps. The platform also provides rigorous data security, user authentication, access control and audit trail views for healthcare providers and patients.

The IDEAS Van project showcased the value of RecordPoint in improving Indigenous health outcomes and its potential to contribute to the nation's efforts to close the gap.

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