

# Delivering digital patient pathways at The Royal Adelaide & The Queen Elizabeth Hospitals

## The Challenge



With over 984,000 patient encounters per year and increasing demand for health services, Central Adelaide Local Health Network (CALHN) needed to find new ways of delivering world-class care to South Australians. The majority of care provided to patients before and after an in-person encounter was delivered by staff through paper forms and phone calls. As a result, healthcare staff were manually:

- collecting information from patients prior to their admission on paper forms.
- screening pre-admission assessments against clinical and administrative protocols.
- contacting patients by phone calls or letters to provide patients with the instructions about their preparation and the next step in their care journey.

This resulted in:

- A significant proportion of CALHN's workforce capacity being spent on collecting and sending information to and from patients via paper forms and phone calls.
- Delays and cancellations on the day of admission due to lack of advance visibility to the patient progress, clinical risk and preparation, or whether they are even able to attend at all.
- People having a poor experience of care and a low likelihood of retaining the information provided to them about their care.

## The Solution

In FY20, CALHN engaged Personify Care to co-design, test and launch digital patient pathways for CALHN patients across multiple sites (Royal Adelaide Hospital, The Queen Elizabeth Hospital and SA Dental). The initiative was supported by Go2Gov - a program delivered by the Office of the South Australian Chief Entrepreneur and Department for Innovation and Skills to solve government challenges by linking government agencies to innovative companies.

The initial phase sought to:

- Co-design and go-live with digital patient pathways for CALHN patients
- Use Personify Care's real-time screening to target appropriate levels of care
- Evaluate the benefits of real-time digital patient pathways (at scale)

### PATIENTS

Better informed, improved experience, improved access to appropriate care



### STAFF

Reduce administrative burden, improved patient visibility, efficient high-quality care



### ORGANISATION

Reduce cost, focus on high value care, enable clinical best practice

Digital patient pathways based on existing clinical and administrative protocols were deployed to address a number of these challenges, whilst simultaneously supporting staff to deliver high-value care and improving the patient experience.



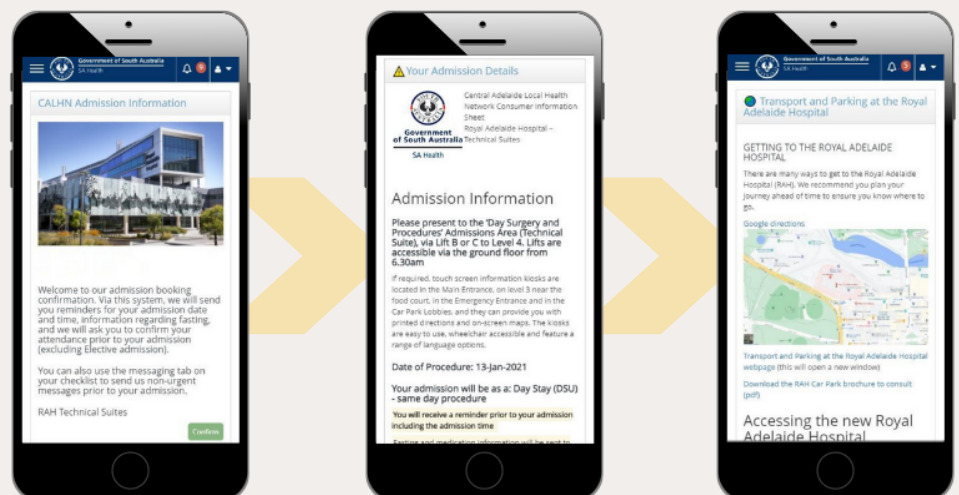
The roll out of the digital patient pathways is being carried out in a phased approach to ensure the patient and organisational benefits across the entire patient journey including:

- Referral Screening, Pre-admission and Perioperative care pathways.
- Outpatients and Waitlist management pathways.
- Discharge planning, care transitions and specialty specific pathways (planned)

This has enabled CALHN teams to:

- Screen patients into varying priority levels based on existing clinical protocols.
- Collect and screen patient health histories prior to a specialist consult or admission.
- Efficiently identify pre-admission and pre-consult clinical risks.
- Deliver personalised patient education to patients based on approved clinical processes.
- Digitally confirm appointments and admissions – reducing no show rates
- Receive digital signatures, e-consents and conduct integrated telehealth consults.
- Capture patient reported experience and outcome measures (PREMs and PROMs).

#### Patient Experience - Royal Adelaide Hospital Perioperative Pathway



## The Results

Using Personify Care's novel technology to rapidly convert CALHN protocols (within 4 weeks) into digital patient pathways has demonstrated within the first 7 months:

- + High Patient Adoption** 83% patient adoption rate across 8 pathways at the Royal Adelaide Hospital and The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, with patients accessing care via digital pathways.
- + Reduced Elective Surgery Cancellations** 28% reduction on day of procedure at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. 9.38% reduction in cancellations on day of procedure at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital (within 7 weeks).
- + Reduce Workload** 85.1% of the Royal Adelaide Hospital patients no longer require manual follow up pre-admission from clinical and administrative staff.
- + Better Informed Patients** 91% of patients agreed that "using this service answer(ed) questions (they) would have otherwise called (their) healthcare team about".
- + Staff Acceptance** Overwhelmingly positive feedback. 82% of surveyed staff are either "likely" or "extremely likely" to recommend to colleagues. "I find it quick and easy to use." "More patients can be seen faster".
- + Real Time Visibility to Patient Experience** In line with NSQHS Standard 2, capturing patient feedback via digital patient pathways providers real-time visibility to patient experience data.
- + Direct Access** Patients screened for eligibility at referral - 40% of patients able to access care without manual follow up.
- + Reduced Cat-1 Wait Times** 71% reduction in wait times (from 12 weeks to 3.5 weeks) for Category 1 Gastroenterology procedures at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital.
- + Self-funded through direct efficiencies** 159% net Return on Investment within 7 months.

*"Personify Care has enabled us to rapidly implement new patient pathways within four weeks, without needing to change existing clinical protocols. These pathways are already freeing up our teams to deliver high-value care, identify risks earlier, and implement new models of care for better health outcomes for South Australians in the future."*

**PAUL LAMBERT**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR  
DIGITAL DESIGN AT CALHN