42nd Australian
Private Hospital
Association Congress

2-4 April 2025

"HEALTH MEETS HOLLYWOOD" SUMMARY REPORT

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ABOUT THIS REPORT

At the 42nd Australian Private Hospital Association (APHA) National Congress, Pacific Commerce hosted an interactive breakfast session titled "Health Meets Hollywood". This session employed guided table discussions, encouraging delegates to draw inspiration from popular medical television dramas such as Grey's Anatomy, ER, and House M.D., to explore the potential of automation, digital transformation and sustainability in a hospital setting, free from the limitations of cost, red tape and regulations.

This report summarises the top FIVE insights and ideas that emerged from these blue sky conversations. We hope they will spark fresh ideas and inspire actionable improvements in your hospital operations.

THE
FIVE
KEY TAKEAWAYS

AUTOMATION TO SUPPORT STAFF, NOT REPLACE THEM

A strong theme across all tables was that technology should reduce the burden on staff, not eliminate roles. There was genuine excitement about automating repetitive processes, especially if it helps free up staff to focus more on patient care.

- Pre-filled systems to cut down double entry.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered tools to monitor changes and alert staff.
- Automation for basic but time-consuming tasks like scanning and logging.

Delegates highlighted the importance of keeping human checkpoints in automated workflows to maintain safety and quality.

FOCUS ON SMALL, ACHIEVABLE WINS

The discussion highlighted several practical, low-disruption digital solutions. These initial steps were viewed as valuable catalysts for broader digital transformation efforts. Key suggestions included:

- **Streamline documentation:** Implement ambient listening technology.
- **Automate patient flow:** Automate admission and discharge processes.
- **Track key metrics:** Deploy dashboards for resources, energy use and compliance.

SMARTER INVENTORY & PROCUREMENT

Delegates strongly advocated for leveraging AI to enhance inventory management and minimise waste. Key opportunities identified included:

- **Intelligent stock management:** Predicting expiry dates and facilitating inter-departmental stock sharing.
- **Waste reduction:** Avoiding over-ordering, particularly addressing outdated "COVID overstock" practices.
- **Automated replenishment:** Utilising AI to monitor stock levels and trigger automated reordering.
- **Strategic procurement:** Exploring group purchasing to lower individual item costs and improve economies of scale.

There was also strong interest in ensuring sustainable and ethical sourcing.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A STRATEGIC TECHNOLOGY ROADMAP

Delegates across multiple groups emphasised the importance of a well-considered technology action plan. The key takeaway was that hospitals should move beyond reactive adoption and instead develop a strategic roadmap, built with active staff involvement, to ensure that technology investments address the most impactful areas for improvement.

Initial steps towards building this successful technology roadmap may include:

- **Gathering comprehensive staff input:** Conduct surveys, focus groups and individual interviews across all departments and roles to understand current challenges, pain points and desired technology solutions from the user perspective.
- **Defining clear goals and priorities:** Based on staff feedback and organisational objectives, establish specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) goals for technology implementation, prioritising those with the highest potential for positive impact on patient care, efficiency and staff satisfaction.
- **Conducting a current state assessment:** Thoroughly evaluate existing technology infrastructure, identify gaps and inefficiencies and document current workflows to provide a baseline for future improvements and inform the selection of appropriate technologies.

ETHICAL INTEGRATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The discussion explored the promising applications of AI in healthcare, including demand forecasting, staff optimisation and the anticipation of health trends.

Delegates were united in their view that the integration of AI must be approached ethically, ensuring it supports and enhances human expertise rather than supplanting it, particularly when decisions involve patient safety and the integrity of care delivery.

Initial steps towards creating this ethical framework can include:

- **Establishing a multi-disciplinary ethics board:** Form a dedicated committee comprising clinicians, ethicists, patients, legal experts and AI specialists to oversee the development, implementation and evaluation of AI systems, ensuring alignment with ethical principles and societal values.

- **Prioritising transparency and explainability:** Mandate that AI algorithms used in clinical settings are transparent in their decision-making processes and capable of providing clear explanations for their outputs, allowing clinicians to understand the rationale behind AI-driven recommendations and fostering trust.

- **Implementing robust data governance and privacy measures:** Develop comprehensive policies and procedures for the collection, storage and use of patient data used to train and operate AI systems, adhering to the highest standards of data privacy, security and confidentiality and ensuring compliance with all relevant regulations.

ABOUT PACIFIC COMMERCE

We help Australian healthcare organisations achieve significant supply chain procurement efficiencies and cost reductions through intelligent automation and digitisation. Leveraging over 25 years of experience across private and public sectors, and underpinned by our ISO27001 security and privacy certification, we are a trusted partner in transforming workflows to save you time, money and contribute to a more sustainable future.

OUR SOLUTION

Our intelligent document automation and digitisation platform eliminates manual touchpoints in your procurement workflows.

- **Scan –** digitise all incoming documents, from purchase orders to invoices to patient forms.
- **Extract –** use AI to read, classify, and extract key data from any format.
- **Convert –** automatically structure and map data into formats compatible with your systems.
- **Approve –** route documents through smart approval workflows with full audit trails.
- **Automate –** triggers downstream actions based on approved data, further reducing manual work and accelerating processes.

WHY IT MATTERS IN HEALTHCARE

Through the digitisation and automation of repetitive administrative procurement tasks, you can save *time* and *costs*, allowing your team to refocus their energy and expertise on what truly matters: **PATIENT CARE**

Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to read this report. If you have any questions or would like to discuss how we can help you automate and digitise your supply chain procurement processes, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

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