

Discovering the cultural and social shift necessary for the adoption of ubiquitous technologies in a small rural healthcare setting.

The Plan

The setting



The setting

Julia Creek

550 town residents

1200 out of town dependents

Seasonal Itinerant population

Main industries

Grazing,
Mining and
Tourism



Julia Creek Hospital

10 beds

3 Aged Care
1 Palliative Care
1 Paediatric
5 General Medical

Outpatients Department

Emergency Resuscitation Room

X Ray Department

Dispensary

The staff

- One Director of Nursing
- One Medical Superintendent
 - Currently on leave
 - Locums stay 2-4 weeks each
- 10 Nursing Staff
- 5 Operational Staff
- 1 Administration Officer
- Physiotherapist 2 days per week
- Visiting specialist and therapists.

The technology

- Five computers (all desktops)
 - One for DON
 - One for Admin Officer
 - One for All Nurses
 - One for Med Super and visiting specialists and therapists
 - One in training room for general use and videoconferencing
- Queensland Health Intranet and network access
- Analog PABX –based telephone system

Issues

- Staff not generally busy throughout shift.
- PABX does not support keypad navigation when choices offered.
- Computers not available in any patient care areas.
- Staff not trained in using corporate systems.
- Not all corporate systems available to staff.
- Low bandwidth makes network access slow.

Other factors

- End of power grid
- Seasonal variations
 - Flood
 - Plague
 - Cold/heat
 - Humidity
- Transport costs
- Specialist availability

The dream

- Telecommunications develop to allow Mobile wireless access within the hospital.
- Mobile devices (laptops/PDAs/smartphones) replace desktop PCs
- Staff adopt electronic documentation and access to information.
- Patient care improves.

What does technology have to do with better patient care?

- Access to best available evidence just in time.
- Point of discovery lodgment of data is more timely and more likely to be accurate.
- Ability to coordinate care better using standardized pathways.
- Better Medication Management with fewer errors.
- Improved reporting leads to better remuneration and access to more resources.

The Proposal

- Diarizing the difficulties encountered by staff and comments made in relation to documentation rules and access to information
- Comparing changes in behavior and attitude following implementation of a hospital-wide mobile solution.
- Developing a tool to measure the social and cultural shift forced by the implementation.
- Determining the social and cultural mores that need to be targeted to ensure a successful technology implementation.

Thank you

Questions?