

SUMMIT SPOTLIGHT 2025

# Record-making healthcare transformation

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**DR TERESA ANDERSON AM:** Hi everyone. It's so wonderful to be here with you today to talk about our little programme. The Single Digital Patient Record, as Phil said, is not just a digital programme. It is a health transformation programme. And it is the largest that we've done in New South Wales Health, probably in Australia.

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**DR TERESA ANDERSON AM**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SDPR IMPLEMENTATION AUTHORITY, NSW HEALTH

**DR TERESA ANDERSON AM:** It is going to transform how care is both provided and how it is received by our patients, how it's experienced by our patients and the community and our clinicians. It will provide benefits for the broader community, but very specifically our patients and our clinicians.

And because of its size and scale it means that we need everybody involved in helping us on this journey. I liken it to an octopus and a Rubik's Cube. An octopus because it literally has tentacles in every part of New South Wales Health. And a Rubik's Cube because we are solving complex problems every day. It is bringing our healthcare system together. To have in one place, as Phil said, a whole patient's journey no matter where they seek care. And what this does is bring a more consistent, safe and informed healthcare journey for our patients.

New South Wales Health is one of the largest public health systems in the world. We have over 178,000 amazing healthcare staff. When we fully implement the Single Digital Patient Record around 160,000 of those staff will be using the Single Digital Patient Record as the main workhorse for our health system where we record all that health information on our patients.

It is big. If we just think about the numbers. 228 hospitals being managed by 17 local health districts and specialty health networks. Over 100- 600 community health centres and 150 pathology labs. So the scale is big. It's scary. I think it's scary. But it's the most exciting programme. Because this Single Digital Patient Record will do something we haven't had before and it will cover ambulatory care, inpatient care, speciality care, out of hospital care. It's mobile enabled. It's interoperability is important and many of you in the room are partners of ours.

We have Epic as our foundation platform. But it isn't the Single Digital Patient Record. It is the very many clinical and non-clinical systems that need to integrate with it. Our imaging systems, our cardiovascular systems, our monitoring systems, our anaesthetic equipment. All of this together is the Single Digital Patient Record. And many of you in this room will play a role. AWS is our hosting partner. And AWS and it was great being at the keynote this morning with Francesca talking about the building blocks AWS has been building to be able to have the capacity to take us as we're implementing the Single Digital Patient Record and the team have been fabulous. Our Epic team is also working with us. It will be the biggest instance of a Single Digital Patient Record that Epic have implemented. And we can do this because this is all about partnership. We are working with the whole system and taking it in five tranches, bite size pieces, so that we can make sure that we implement in a sensible and systematic way starting in March '26 the first go live and the last in 2028.

Our governance structure reflects NSW Health and our partnerships. We are partnering with all of the local health districts and specialty health networks, all the pillars, all the branches, and they are represented in how we're configuring the Single Digital Patient Record.

One of the first things people usually comment on when I say we're doing this Single Digital Patient Record is most IT systems fail. The second is how do you get clinicians to agree. Well this is the holy grail. This is what our clinical community has wanted for a very long time. And all of our local health districts, specialty health networks, pillars and branches and our partners are represented in this. And over 600 frontline clinicians and staff are coming together every week to help configure this Single Digital Patient Record. It is one of the most exciting health transformation programmes. It is a little bit scary. But it's all about governance. Phil.

**PHIL LE-BRUN:** Wonderful. I love the fact you say it's scary and what an incredible opportunity to touch every single citizen. I had a few questions for you. How does this work across so many systems? The complexity you have to deal with.

**DR TERESA ANDERSON AM:** Absolutely. It is complex and I think recognising that at the beginning and having a governance structure that represents that complexity. So we have really strong strategic, operational and configuration governance. So we're bringing everyone on this journey with us and it was great seeing that Andrea's presenting. Unfortunately I won't be staying. But change management is absolutely critical to this. We have so many arms, like the octopus, of this programme that include our data management, data governance, legal. Obviously cyber security. I'm always asked what you think about cyber security. That always scares me that people think we might not have thought about it.

**PHIL LE-BRUN:** You have thought about it.

**DR TERESA ANDERSON AM:** I have.

**PHIL LE-BRUN:** Yeah.

**DR TERESA ANDERSON AM:** But it's also that transformation that needs to occur in local health districts about how they operate. And I get to go to these working groups and councils and I can tell you the goodwill that is there because people know what the end state is. And it's absolutely excellent patient care that is supported by this electronic medical record. Understanding the risks and putting in place really comprehensive strategies to manage those risks. One of them is when you go from nine different electronic medical records to one single instance of electronic medical record, the largest one, the largest EMR hosted on an AWS platform in the world, you have to understand those risks and you have to put into place really comprehensive strategies to address them.

**PHIL LE-BRUN:** Fantastic. I've got so many questions for you but given the time. We've got 700 leaders in the room all looking at you enviously undertaking this transformation, I think. What practical advice can you share with the folks that they can take back into their own workplace when they're thinking about their own evolution as an organisation?

**DR TERESA ANDERSON AM:** Yeah. When you look at this, I've had people say oh my god one why hasn't New South Wales Health done it before. Well because there hasn't actually been a technology solution big enough to take us. We are big. You know if I just think of Amazon, when we started this journey Epic had a metric called G refs, global references per second. To take all of New South Wales Health you need 185 million G refs, transactions per second to manage the records for eight million people. When we started they were at 30. We're now at 135 so I'm sleeping better. And soon we'll be at 185 million G refs. So one of the keys is how do you give confidence to the system, how do you give confidence to our patient and to the community, and very importantly to our clinicians. And it's by using data. It's by the human resources that we have. Our people are our most important resource. And not only within the implementation authority, it's also within all of those amazing local health districts and specialty health networks, the pillars, the branches, our partners in AWS. I think one of the key things for leaders is how do you build off the strengths of other people, how do you gather them. I gather them on my phone, and once I have you I never let you go. My phone is my most valuable possession because the phone, a friend requirement in a programme like this, the 'oh my god we need some help', is absolutely critical. We can't do this alone. And it was great seeing this morning's presentations, those building blocks, but a general theme of partnership. This is all partnership.

**PHIL LE-BRUN:** Fantastic. Well remind me not to give you my business card. Wish you the best of luck with this amazing transformation and Teresa thank you so much for spending time with us today.

**DR TERESA ANDERSON AM:** Thank you. Thank you everyone.

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