



Researchers, aged care residents, and industry collaborate to improve safety with real-time medication updates

A research collaboration between academics at Macquarie University and industry partner BESTMED is leading to the roll-out of digital tools to improve medication management in aged care.

BESTMED announced today the release of its BESTMED Connect module which will add a new safety net for managing medications for people in aged care whilst reducing the administration burden for aged care providers.

Aged care residents, their families and carers will have access to their live medication list for the first time with this new computer system developed by researchers at the Australian Institute of Health Innovation, Macquarie University, in collaboration with Australia's largest electronic medication management system provider, BESTMED.

The research and development underpinning BESTMED Connect is led by Professor Johanna Westbrook and Associate Professor Magda Raban from the Australian Institute of Health Innovation as part of a highly applied project to directly improve medication safety in residential aged care funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council Medical Research Future Fund.

Associate Professor Raban said research collaborations such as this that lead directly to improvements for aged care residents through commercialisation by industry are essential if we are to address the urgent need to improve medication safety.

Residents, and their families and carers will receive real time notifications whenever new medications are prescribed, adjusted or discontinued, she said.

The research project is also developing clinical decision support to improve antibiotic prescribing for urinary tract infections (UTIs). UTIs are among the most common infections treated with antibiotics in residential aged care, yet research has shown less than 10% of cases meet the guidelines for antibiotic prescribing.

“New computerised clinical decision support will provide immediate guidance to prescribers on the type of antibiotic and duration of treatment,” Associate Professor Raban said.

Professor Johanna Westbrook said this research is directly meeting the needs of the aged care sector and consumers who are seeking higher quality services.

“By working with innovative industry partners such as BESTMED we can rapidly develop novel systems that can be implemented at scale. These systems will also provide timely support for aged care providers to meet the standards mandated by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission,” Professor Westbrook said.

To request an interview with Associate Professor Magda Raban, please contact chrissy.clay@mq.edu.au