



Australian Government  
Department of Health and Ageing

# eHealth in Australia

## Information Technology in Aged Care '08

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# Agenda

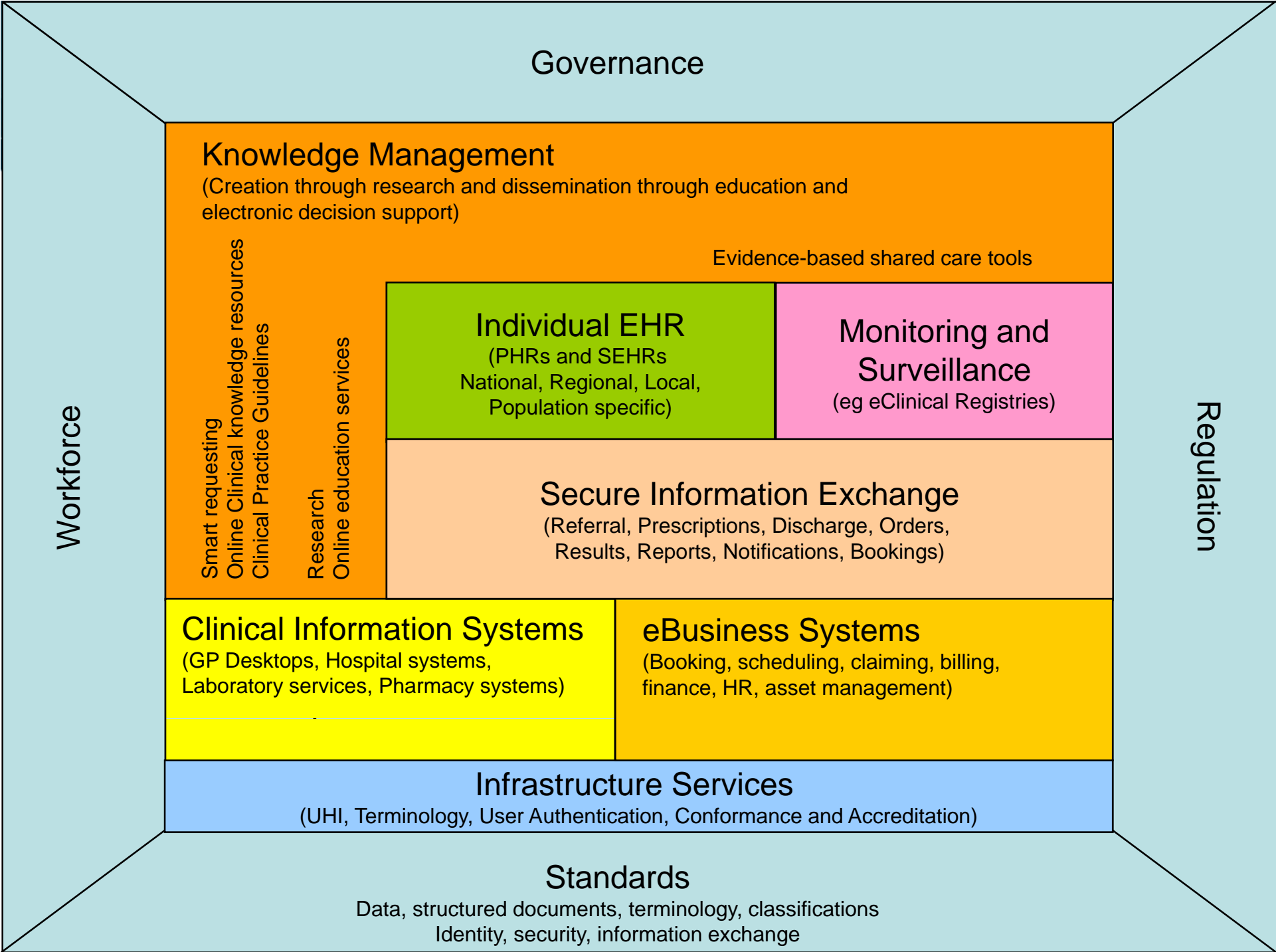
- An overview of eHealth
- Challenges and Issues
- Key Priorities
- Current eHealth Activity
- ePrescribing



## Why eHealth?

eHealth is an enabler not an end in itself

- Improved safety and quality outcomes
- Improved clinical and administrative decision-making
- Optimal health care delivery
- Health system efficiency





## Challenges and Issues

- Enabling the whole system including allied health and primary care
- Supporting a consumer focused approach
- Primary care systems that can reliably handle electronic transfer of information
- Change management and business processes
- Technology is sometimes ahead of the required change process. (i.e. digital diagnostic imaging)
- Clinical services within RACFs and connectivity to primary and acute care



## **Key Priorities for a national approach to eHealth**

- Governance
- Regulation
- Workforce
- Unique identifiers
- Data & terminology standards
- Exchange of clinical information
- Individual Electronic Health Records



## Current eHealth Activity

- The National E-Health Transition Authority (NEHTA) has the task of developing standards and key infrastructure
  - i.e. UHI, supply chain, standards and terminology, IEHR
- Regulation – Privacy, UHI, oversight
- Incentives for technology uptake
  - eg PIP
- Research, development and prototyping implementation of the IEHR, point to point messaging enabling clinical communications
  - i.e. ePrescribing, web based care planning, IEHR trial
- AHMAC has approved the development of an eHealth Strategy and implementation plan to be managed by the National E-Health Information Principle Committee (NEHIPC)



## ePrescribing

- Commonwealth legislation changed March 2007
- Matching amendments to State and Territory and legislation (6 of 8 to date)
- NT trials informing long term implementation strategies
- Consultancy in ePrescribing Dispensing of medicines
- NEHTA medication management package
  - SNOMED Clinical Terms ® Australian Medicines Terminology
  - Data, data structures, exchange formats



## **ePrescribing and Dispensing Consultancy**

- Need to inform the delegate on the requirements necessary for approval under the legislation
- Key principles are PBS compliance, consumer choice, privacy, equity and access, and contributing to the quality use of medicines
- Stakeholder engagement with workshops focused on Aged Care, Private Hospital and Community prescribing
- Staged incremental approach
- Potential to input national medicines policy
- Current medication list
- Currently reviewing final report



## NT ePrescribing Trials

- Residential Aged Care Facilities
  - Prescriptions generated on site, electronically, digitally signed and sent to pharmacy for dispensing
  - Related medication charts are also generated on site, signed and sent electronically

Outcome – reduction in owing scripts, time savings for GP, better, more timely medication charts for RACF staff
- General Community
  - Involves the Medical Centre electronically sending prescriptions to Pharmacies
- The future?
  - Possible prescribing from electronic medication charts in RACF's
  - Clinical desktops required



## In Conclusion

*eHealth is an **enabler** of improved health service delivery, not an end in itself*

National eHealth Strategy will determine the next steps



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**Questions ?**