

Dubbo Aged Care Facility leads the way in technology with the implementation of Panasonic Toughbook H1



Dubbo RSL Aged Care Association Ltd in Dubbo and Wellington, NSW has purchased 28 state-of-the-art Panasonic Toughbook H1 Medical Clinical Assistant (MCA) devices, to improve administration processes, reduce paper-based documenting and allow staff to spend more time caring for their patients.

Built in 1989, the Aged Care Facility has grown from a 40 bed hostel facility to a 187 hostel facility and high care unit across 2 sites, with 148 self care units and a total of 250 staff.

In March 2008, the facility embarked on a resource and information management review aimed at improving administrative processes. The review found that nursing staff wasted valuable time on paperwork, documenting patient care and medical administration; valuable time that could be better spent attending to their patients' physical and emotional needs.

The facility required an end-to-end solution and approached a specialist Aged Care software company, iCare Solutions, to assist. They choose iCare's Clinical Care and Medication Management Solution to improve the level and quality of care of residents, by allowing nursing and care staff to have a single, electronic view of an aged care resident's health care information.

After researching various hardware solutions including traditional notebooks and Mobile Clinical Assistants (MCA), Panasonic's new H1 MCA stood out from the crowd. Its rugged and ergonomic design, as well as its extended battery life and ability to be sanitised with hospital-grade disinfectants, meant it was a perfect solution for the facilities.

Bulky desktop computers were eliminated as they would have taken up considerable space at the staff's terminals. By contrast, the H1's compact, lightweight and slim design was a significant space-saver, and meant easy portability around the facility. The resource recommendation was one device for every two nurses on duty, bringing the total to 28 H1 units for the facility.

Damian Moore, Dubbo RSL Aged Care Association Ltd said "The Panasonic Toughbook H1 ticked all the boxes when deciding on the solution. It enables staff to document a patient's progress in real time and administer medication safely at the bedside. Previously, nursing staff would write patient notes at the end of their shift, so some points may have been forgotten or changed. Now information can be recorded as it is happening, improving speed and accuracy."



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Nurses will primarily use the H1 to document a patient's progress in real time. The rugged and light-weight design means that staff can easily carry the H1 with them on a ward round. With the choice of a carry handle as well as a hand-strap and the versatility to use the device vertically or horizontally, nurses can decide what is comfortable for them. Tasks can be sent to the device so staff can see what needs to be completed for that day.

Images captured by the H1's integrated 2.0 megapixel camera can be used to verify the patient's identity, as well as accurately documenting the progress of healing, for example skin conditions or bruises.

The H1's fully-sealed design is completely resistant to liquids – so nurses are not concerned about the product getting wet if used near a shower or bath; plus it can also be easily disinfected and wiped down as its smooth surface means there are no difficult areas to clean.

With an extended battery life of 6 hours, it is perfect for staff on the move. The dual hot swappable batteries mean higher productivity with no downtime. A near-exhausted battery can be replaced while the device is still running, so it never needs to be powered down.

The H1 will also be used in the safe administration of medication using iCare's Medication Management System. The H1 can be easily carried or attached to the medication trolley while operators attend to a patient's needs. After verifying the patient's identity via barcode reader or image on the device, the correct

dosage and medication is dispensed. Images of the pills and medication are also viewable on the H1 to ensure they match the medication being prescribed. With the handy touch-screen LCD, staff can sign to confirm that the process is complete. With the H1's advanced wireless capabilities staff can always be connected.

Damian continued, "Staff are extremely excited about the new system. During training they have already seen the benefits and impact these new products are going to have – from increased time spent with patients to the improved safety and accuracy of patient care."

About Panasonic Toughbooks

Panasonic Toughbooks are used extensively worldwide by the military, utilities, heavy industry, emergency services, field workers, mobile professionals and organisations where durable mobile computing is critical to maximising productivity and uptime. In Australia, Panasonic Toughbook customers include Ambulance Victoria, Queensland Ambulance Service, Tasmanian Ambulance Service, Coca-Cola Amatil, Telstra, Blue-Scope Steel, Centennial Parklands, Yarra Valley Water, Aurora Energy, National Foods, and Mitsubishi Motors.



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