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MEDIA RELEASE

ArgusConnect awarded for outstanding contribution to NT eHealth

Secure clinical messaging provider ArgusConnect has been awarded a '**Service Excellence Award**' for its outstanding contribution to eHealth in the Northern Territory.

Applauded by the Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services for its long-running commitment to the Territory eHealth program, ArgusConnect's most recent success has been its key role in the development and trialling of groundbreaking infrastructure for the electronic delivery of prescriptions from GPs to pharmacies.

Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (ETP) is an Australian first and provides a means for pharmacies to receive prescription data electronically.

The benefits of the system include saving time and eliminating errors by pharmacists who no longer have to type in script details and preserves the ability for patients to visit whichever pharmacy they choose. It also eliminates forged doctors' signatures through the issuing of an electronic version of a doctor's signature that cannot be replicated. A host of patient safety benefits are expected to be delivered through the ETP infrastructure, such as the ability of pharmacists to dispense medicines if the paper script is lost.

Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services Chief Information Officer and Director of the 'eHealth NT' Program, Mr Stephen Moo presented the award to ArgusConnect at the ETP technology launch last month.

Mr Moo said the ETP initiative was groundbreaking because it was the first successful, live electronic sending of standard GP scripts with digital signing that conformed to the requirements of Medicare Australia and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

"The significance of this should not be underestimated," Mr Moo said. "This is a project that has been supported by the Commonwealth and Territories and is the first step towards putting in place improvements in communication of prescriptions by using secure electronic communication."

The ETP project was funded by the Australian Government's Department of Health and Ageing and is a key project under the Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services' 'ehealth NT' Program. ETP is being delivered in partnership with the Top End Division of General Practice.

The Service Excellence Award also recognises the other contributions that the Ballarat based ArgusConnect has made over the past 4 years to eHealth in the Northern Territory. These include widespread implementation of Argus which enables secure clinical messaging between healthcare providers into GP, specialist, allied health and community health facilities across the Northern Territory, introduction of Argus into the Northern Territory public health system to enable sending of discharge information and referrals between hospitals and healthcare providers, and the rollout of Argus in Aboriginal health clinics in remote NT connecting them to a central Secure Electronic Health Record facility operated by NT Health.

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