

# PARTYLINE

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**GETTING TO GRIPS WITH THE NDIS IN REMOTE AREAS**

**Big health reforms underway in regional WA**

**Good news on binge drinking & smoking rates**

**CELEBRATING**  
**50**  
**ISSUES**



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## Staying Strong Telehealth Project: enhanced aged care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

**N**ot-for-profit aged care and disability organisation, integratedliving Australia, is breaking new ground with its Staying Strong telehealth project, an Australian Government pilot.

The \$2.1 million project is funded under the NBN Enabled Telehealth Pilots Program and addresses chronic disease management in rural and remote communities.

It is helping to deliver a new model of care through telehealth monitoring of vital health signs for 120 older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across New South Wales and Queensland.

The service is being provided to participants in Armidale, Coffs Harbour, Toowoomba and Goodna. It is delivered both in-home and through telehealth hubs at local Aboriginal Medical Centres which provide a safe and welcome environment for older community members to learn about and use the telehealth service.

Registered nurses employed by integratedliving work with participants and their GP to develop individual health and monitoring plans based on health needs. Using monitoring software and vital sign peripherals, participants monitor their own vital health signs. Data is then transmitted to the triage manager database which prioritises readings for clinical triage. If a reading is outside the monitoring plan range, the triage manager will raise an alert and the nurse will coordinate the appropriate response, in consultation with the participant and their GP or health service.

integratedliving Project Manager, Indra Arunachalam, said the project has shown an increase in timely and accurate diagnosis, as well as a notable increase in patient awareness and self-management.

“Older Indigenous Australians are quite confident using technology. With good internet connection, telehealth monitoring can deliver successful health outcomes for people living in rural and regional Australia,” said Ms Arunachalam.

“When I joined the Staying Strong Project my early telehealth readings identified I was experiencing weekly hypoglycaemic episodes,” said Participant C, living with Type 1 diabetes.

“I now take several readings a day and am able to self-identify potential hypoglycaemic attacks and take steps to prevent them.”



The success of the Staying Strong Project has led integratedliving to proceed with a rollout of telehealth services to 13 regions in Queensland, New South Wales, Tasmania and the ACT. Implementation of this new program has been made possible through funding from the Australian Government's HACC Program.

A final report for the Staying Strong Telehealth Project will evaluate the enablers and barriers to using telehealth, as well patient health outcomes and improvement to quality of life.

For more information on the Staying Strong telehealth project visit [www.integratedliving.org.au](http://www.integratedliving.org.au) or contact the Project Manager, Indra Arunachalam at [indra@integratedliving.org.au](mailto:indra@integratedliving.org.au)

For further information on Tunstall telehealth solutions, additional clinical research and trial projects visit [www.tunstallhealthcare.com.au](http://www.tunstallhealthcare.com.au)

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