CASE STUDY

How St Andrew's streamlined operations, increased efficiencies and achieved compliance with eCase

St Andrews is a community-based, not-for-profit aged care organisation providing residential aged care, retirement living and community care services to over 600 people in the Ballina, Northern Rivers and Far North Coast region in NSW.

The Challenge

Joining St Andrews as CEO in January 2022, Todd Yourell describes the start of his tenure as being not so much a 'baptism of fire', but rather a 'baptism of too much water.' As with all of the Northern Rivers Area, flooding in February affected St Andrews with evacuations of residents from their aged care facility along with three of their retirement villages in Ballina.

The challenges didn't end there, however. Todd quickly discovered that he was unable to access information or reports about the daily activities of care in the residential facility. Although there was an existing care management system in place, it was not providing the oversight he required nor the functionality required by care staff.

"It had gotten to the point where records of showers or Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) for residents were being put on

a whiteboard, informing staff of what they needed to do that day," Todd said.

At this point, it was clear that St Andrew's needed to decommission their existing care management system and undertake a tender process. Adding to the urgency were the disappointing mid-year results of an Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission audit.

"The feedback from the Commission was that although it was very obvious that our carers were providing great care to residents, we were unable to produce the documentation to back that up," said Todd.

In addition to managing the reporting requirements and general functions of their residential aged care facility, Todd required a software system that would also work across St Andrew's retirement villages and community care operations.

"I wanted a system that would work across all three," said Todd, "because residents move into our retirement living, get home care or visa versa, and eventually track though to the aged care facility."

One of the early things that came to my attention was a potential resident who had left our retirement living village and had gone to another organisation as

they didn't know we had an aged care facility."

"The admissions team in the aged care facility also didn't know that people who were enquiring to come into the facility, had been with us in another format, as we had no history of them," he said.

The Approach

Once the decision was made to go to tender, Todd started to actively research and speak to suitable software vendors in the aged care industry.

12 organisations were invited to tender, resulting in six responses that were shortlisted to three, including eCase software by Health Metrics.

"I knew eCase because I've used it during a prior role at Tricare. Our facility manager at the time when we were reviewing the different systems was familiar with it as well," Todd said.
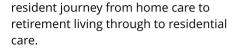
St Andrews decided to go with eCase as they identified the software as an advanced system to manage and document resident care and providing a better user experience that was easy for staff to follow. In addition, as a person-centred care management system, eCase is able to track the

StAndrews

⌖ **Ballina, NSW**

🌐 **standrew.com.au**

- 123 residential aged care beds
- 400+ home care clients
- 101 retirement living units
- 200+ staff

resident journey from home care to retirement living through to residential care.

"We really wanted a system that would manage residents within one single record architecture, which I didn't know existed until I spoke to Health Metrics. I wanted one system that would track people across our entire organisation and eCase provided that."

"There was also great enthusiasm from the Health Metrics' team and I knew there was going to be ongoing support put in place," Todd said.

Wanting to avoid having multiple systems that didn't 'speak' to each other, eCase's interoperability was another key advantage. eCase will integrate to PainChek and Checked In Care, a downloadable app available to residents' families to keep them informed of their loved one's activities and care.

"That's a real positive," said Todd, "when your mum comes into our facility, you can log into Checked In Care and see their care plan, what activities they've been involved in and you can communicate directly with us."

"We also use PainChek for non-verbal communicators. It provides great historical data for residents which you can compare over time to view progress."

The Solution

St Andrew's most pressing need was to implement eCase into their residential aged care facility.

Following this, eCase was introduced into St Andrew's retirement villages (101 independent living units over four sites) and scoping was undertaken to provide St Andrew's with the ability to generate eContracts and eQuotes as well as to easily undertake billing for services across their aged care facility and retirement villages. This included

additional billing for services such as hairdressing, newspapers, taxis and escorts to medical appointments.

"This will make things so much easier, as we can put in a note saying this person receives the newspaper, five days out of seven, and add the cost one time. Previously we have had to make individual entries on the financial system, which is not productive," Todd said.

"We want everything to work in the one system so we can see a complete record of people's financial records."

Next on the horizon is the roll out of eCase across the organisation's home care operations. St Andrews Community Care provides Home Care Packages, DVA Community Nursing, Veterans Home Care and private services such as meal preparation and clinical care. Their extensive team includes registered nurses, enrolled nurses, certified personal care workers, gardeners and domestic assistants and cleaners, available to provide services seven days a week.

Looking forward to this part of the project, Todd believes that the implementation will make significant changes to the back-end corporate services office.

"Just for Community Care alone, with tracking staff, rosters and billing

appropriately, we've got an FTE looking just after that, whereas eCase will do it all at the push of a button."

"It's not just how it's helping on the care side of things, it's how it helps in the corporate services back-end office that will also make a huge impact," he said.

The Results

With eCase in place, St Andrew's is ready for the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission to return for another audit.

"In a matter of only a couple of months with eCase in place, I can say I'd be really happy for the Commissioners to come in now because I can give them any documentation that they want to see," said Todd.

"With the systems in place, the work logs, the care plans and assessments in place, we're compliant, which is what we were not able to show previously."

"Now I can tell you what time people are having showers, what activities have occurred, things that I wouldn't have been able to tell you with the previous system," he said.

Todd adds that making the change to eCase has made the work of the care staff easier and people are getting "through what they need to do."

Where once care staff had been waiting until the end of shift before writing up their notes for the day, they're now doing 'point in time' care reporting directly to eCase via tablets, which saves a lot of time.

"They click on the resident's image, see their task and tick completed. It's a lot easier," he said.

"Staff have commented to me that it's really good we've got this accountability."

When asked if the whiteboard is still in place, Todd replied "there's no more whiteboard. That's a very good sign."