

Meet Priscilla



Hi, I'm Priscilla. As a doctor in emergency medicine, I know the importance of the 'collect once and use many times' approach with health information, but this is difficult to achieve in Ireland as hospitals, doctors practices, nursing homes and social care services all have separate health information systems. In addition, some health and social care records are still paper-based, so it can take time to get the right information to the appropriate health or social care professional in a secure manner. Put simply, we do not always have a full record of an individual's medical history when making decisions about their care.

As part of my training, I worked in Australia where they have a national electronic health record system, which means information can be easily shared between services and organisations, such as hospitals. This would be really beneficial for patients here in Ireland as we would have more accurate and complete information to hand when making clinical decisions about care. In an emergency, having the right information at the right time is crucial. We often need to make decisions quickly so we do not always have time to follow up with other professionals or services for the information that we need. Having a shared information system would also be cost-effective for the health service. If we had access to up-to-date information, it would prevent us having to do unnecessary tests such as X-rays and blood tests. We would spend a lot less time chasing information, allowing us more time to treat patients.