

# Coviu leads creation of AI digital toolkit to transform wound care

**Technology collaboration with CSIRO, The University of Sydney, Australian Unity, Western NSW Primary Health Network & The University of Technology Sydney backed by Federal Government's Medical Research Future Fund**

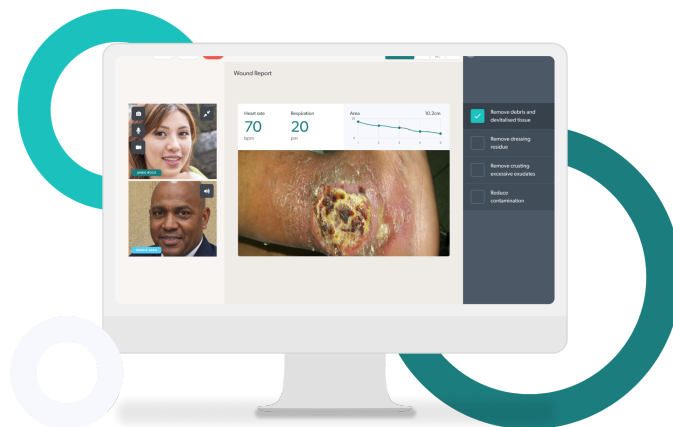
**Sydney, Australia – 7 December 2021** – Coviu, Australia's leading telehealth solution and CSIRO spin out company, is developing a comprehensive digital toolkit for telehealth wound care alongside CSIRO, The University of Sydney, Australian Unity, Western NSW Primary Health Network and The University of Technology Sydney.

Coviu's telehealth platform has been critical during the COVID-19 pandemic as thousands of health professionals turned to virtual consultations to help patients remotely.

The new suite of digital tools will provide a one stop shop for clinicians caring for wounds - a silent epidemic. The cost of chronic wounds is equivalent to [more than \\$3.5 billion](#), approximately 2 percent of national healthcare expenditure, with [more than 400,000 Australians](#) estimated to suffer at any time.

Mobile imaging, powered by artificial intelligence (AI), will allow practitioners to remotely analyse and monitor wounds over time. From a video feed, clinicians will assess vital sign metrics, such as a patient's heart and respiratory rate.

With remote access to a greater breadth of wound data at the click of a button the information will help practitioners make decisions about how to manage wounds, including raising red flags when there are significant changes which might indicate infection, the body's reaction to the wound or a reaction to medication.



## Help in Aged Care

The challenge is especially widespread in residential aged care facilities as older people are more susceptible to chronic wounds due to their comorbidities and age associated factors such as frail skin. There is often a lack of expert and specialist wound support across the aged care sector but this is particularly heightened in rural and remote Australia where there are health workforce shortages and health access challenges.

Dr. Annie Banbury, Clinical Research Lead at CoviU, said: “The wound care digital toolkit gives us an enormous opportunity to make a difference to the health and quality of life of aged care residents. It will support clinicians, such as GPs, to make data informed clinical decisions for wound care during a telehealth video call. It will also allow more clinicians to provide high quality wound care to residential aged care settings. The toolkit will continue building CoviU’s AI digital tools to support health care providers”.

“The toolkit will bring together organisations with a range of expertise - from creating the AI solution with wound care experts, to its implementation in residential aged care. For this project, we have CoviU, leading research institutions, aged care providers and specialists in rural health and health economics. To have the backing of the Federal Government’s Medical Research Future Fund is fantastic - we can’t wait to get started.”

Associate Professor Georgina Luscombe, at The University of Sydney School of Rural Health, said: “This funding will give nurses, doctors and allied health professionals the digital tools to better assess and treat wounds. This is particularly needed in rural and remote areas where there is a lack of specialist wound care services. Since rural populations tend to be older and face healthcare access challenges, telehealth has great advantages in the support of rural residents of aged care facilities. Delivering care virtually means reducing the need for frail elderly to be transported to healthcare, and for clinicians to enter facilities – an advantage that the Covid-19 pandemic helped us appreciate.

The technology is being co-designed with consumers and clinicians, and testing will involve residential aged care facilities in Victoria and NSW. Part of this testing involves assessing how the technology can best be rolled out and integrated into routine healthcare. This project has the potential to support our health workforce and benefit communities right across Australia.”

Dr Salvado, Head of Imaging and Computer Vision at CSIRO, said: “User-centred design and rigorous clinical validation are at the heart of this project. Our multidisciplinary team will bring new AI computer vision technologies into a clinical setting and create products that will address often overlooked and preventable health issues.”

Development for the Digital Wound Care toolkit will begin in 2022 and be available through the CoviU platform in 2026.

Find out more about this project and the Federal Government’s Medical Research Future Fund [here](#).

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## About CoviU

CoviU is Australia's most trusted video telehealth solution, powering secure and feature-rich video consultations. In 2020, 60,000+ CoviU users offered over 3 million healthcare video consultations across the country. To date, CoviU has delivered over 5.5 million healthcare video consultations to 65,000+ users, partly via the Healthdirect video call platform which is a CoviU customer.

CoviU aims to improve healthcare accessibility for all, and allow both patients and providers to discover the benefits of video consultations such as cost and time savings, reduced no-shows, improved patient satisfaction and greater flexibility.

CoviU is a spin out company of CSIRO.

## About Western NSW Primary Health Network

Western Health Alliance Ltd (WHAL), trading as the Western NSW Primary Health Network (WNSW PHN) is one of 31 Primary Health Networks across Australia, established to support frontline health services and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of primary health care.

## About Australian Unity

Established in 1840, Australian Unity is a member-owned wellbeing company with 400,000 members and more than 700,000 customers. Our range of health, wealth and care products and services provides member, customer and community value that is supportive of personal and community wellbeing.