



The Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP

**Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care
Minister for Indigenous Health
Member for Hasluck**

MEDIA RELEASE

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\$5 MILLION FOR AUSTRALIAN INNOVATION TO REDUCE DEMENTIA PAIN

A national trial of world-first artificial intelligence technology promises to reduce the pain suffered by people living with dementia, thanks to a \$5 million grant from the Morrison Government.

“This is Australian innovation to help some of our most vulnerable Australians,” said Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Ken Wyatt AM.

“Accurately identifying the pain felt by people who have communication challenges can be difficult and with more than 50 per cent of residents in aged care homes living with dementia, there is a widespread risk of under-treated pain.”

The PainChek® app was originally conceived at Western Australia’s Curtin University and then further developed by listed Australian digital health company PainChek Ltd (ASX:PCK). It provides caregivers and health professionals with an efficient, smartphone-based system that applies artificial intelligence to determine a person’s pain using facial recognition analytics.

PainChek® CEO Philip Daffas said the Morrison Government funding would allow broader application of the app, to strengthen analysis of its effectiveness.

“This is welcome, given the significant benefits being reported at the dozens of residential aged care centres that already use PainChek®,” Mr Daffas said.

“It will provide equality of access to all residential aged care homes and their residents living with dementia and fits with our extensive clinical studies which have been conducted on people living with moderate to severe dementia.

“This will help refine how the app can be integrated into everyday clinical care, where PainChek® effectively gives a voice to people who cannot verbalise their pain.”

Unidentified pain can contribute to behavioural and psychological symptoms and incorrect prescription of antipsychotic medication.

“Better pain identification and better medication management means a better quality of life for people receiving aged care,” said Minister Wyatt.

“This trial will complement the reforms already announced by the Morrison Government to improve medication management and provide a record boost to dementia prevention, treatment and support.

“Under the Medical Research Future Fund, our Government is providing \$185 million over the next decade to establish a Dementia, Ageing and Aged Care Mission, building on our five-year, \$200 million Boosting Dementia Research initiative.”

The 2019-20 Budget also included an investment of \$7.7 million to reduce the misuse of medicines in residential aged care.

This investment includes the establishment of a new unit of clinical pharmacists within the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission which will work directly with residential aged care providers to drive best practice use of medicines.

This is in addition to the Morrison Government’s support for the *Pain in Residential Aged Care Facilities: Management Strategies* publication launched early this year to help Australia’s aged care workforce to identify, assess and manage pain felt by people in their care.

PainChek® has regulatory clearance in both Australia and Europe.

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