

Wally is 81 years of age and has a heart condition. Secondary problems associated with his condition include breathlessness, fatigue and fluid retention.

Wally suffers from ischemic cardiomyopathy; a narrowing or hardening of the small blood vessels that bring blood and oxygen to his heart.

When these are blocked or very narrowed, over time, the heart muscle does not work as well resulting in congestive heart failure. Wally's condition means that his heart has lost the ability to efficiently pump enough blood to supply his body with optimal levels of oxygen and nutrients.

As a result, Wally suffers symptoms including fatigue, weakness and shortness of breath. Wally also suffers from type 2 diabetes as a secondary concern.

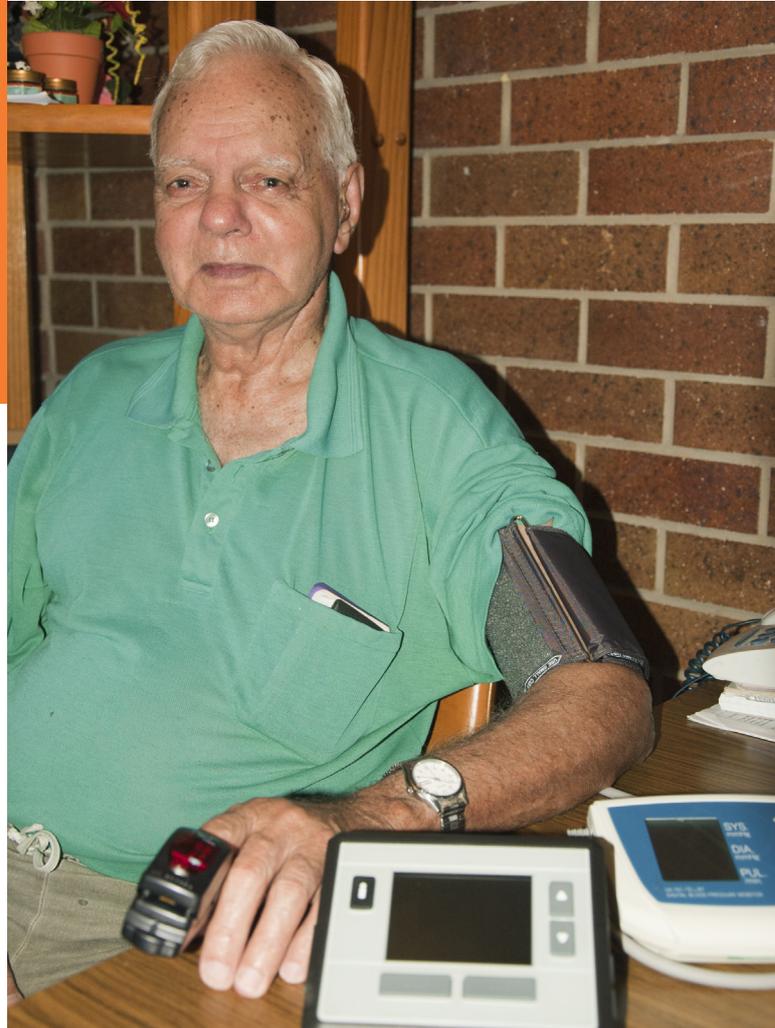
Wally was recommended by his clinician for the Heart Failure Service of RBWH Health Service District telehealth trial (a research program of RBWH HFS and the University of Southern Queensland). He was having his heart medications titrated and this change required close monitoring.

The solution

A Tunstall telehealth solution was installed in Wally's home, including an RTX monitor, blood pressure monitor, pulse oximeter and weight scale.

Wally was shown how to measure his vital signs using the RTX monitor and to answer a series of clinical questions to

Case Study- Wally's Story



determine his current condition. Wally's vital signs were monitored daily by a clinician who works closely with him and his wife to better manage his condition.

How it works

Telehealth allows a patient to manage their condition from home, reducing unplanned GP visits and decreasing the need for emergency hospital visits. Telehealth requires the patient to take their vital signs, such as heart rate, weight and blood pressure, and answer a series of health related questions on a regular basis.



We felt we had closer contact because of the technology. Telehealth gave us more ability to monitor his response to the medication changes, decreasing the number of visits we needed to do"

- Linda ; Wally's clinician

Telehealth provides the patient's doctor with ongoing information and trend data so that a decline in health can be identified and managed well before it reaches crisis point.

Vital sign details are transmitted to a monitoring centre immediately after the patients daily interview. The data is compared to the patient's 'normal' readings, and any abnormal readings are flagged for follow up and passed onto the patient's doctor. The doctor can then advise the patient what action needs to be taken, including adjustments to medication.

The results

Wally completed his telehealth interview and took his vital sign readings consistently every day.

Wally's clinicians found the daily telehealth interview helped to set a regular routine for Wally, encouraging him to be more consistent in monitoring his vital signs for symptoms of complications.

With the use of the telehealth equipment Wally's clinician was able to closely monitor his reaction to the changes in his medication. If his daily readings were seen to be outside of the safe parameters set then the monitoring

centre could immediately alert Wally's clinicians to the changes, allowing them to manage his medication titration more efficiently.

By monitoring Wally remotely, Wally's clinicians were able to prioritise their in-home visits and reduce the number of clinic consultations required.

The future

To manage Wally's condition, a focus will be placed on continuing regular monitoring of his vital signs and symptoms. This will allow his medication to be properly adjusted as required.

Wally now also understands the benefit and importance of measuring his vital signs on a regular basis. He found the daily monitoring to be a reassurance, and says because of it he learnt a lot about his condition.

Wally says, "It was a good experience. If I hadn't been in on the project, I would have worried a bit about my health. Everyone should try it, they'd be mad if they didn't".



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