Precedence rolls out Health Care Homes risk stratification tool

Precedence Health Care has rolled out the risk stratification tool it has developed under contract to the Department of Health to the general practices and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services taking part in the Health Care Homes initiative.

The tool, which can also be configured for practices not involved in the trial, was rolled out to the first 20-odd practices taking part in the two-year trial in October, with the remaining 180 going live on December 1.

It has been built using Precedence's cloud-based cdmNet coordinated care platform, with the algorithm for predicting the level of risk developed by CSIRO using data from general practices and public hospitals in Victoria.

It uses smart predictive technology to determine which patients in a practice are most likely to have a potentially preventable hospitalisation in the coming year and then automatically pre-fills a questionnaire with available clinical data.

If the algorithm identifies the patient as potentially eligible for the Health Care Home, an alert will pop up to notify the GP or practice nurse.

Precedence CEO Michael Georgeff said the technology would help make sure that those in need are identified early and get the right level of care at the right time.

"Digital health technologies are the beginning of a new approach to healthcare," Professor Georgeff said in a statement. "They can be of enormous help to practices that

already struggle with the complexity of managing their growing population of chronically ill people.

"The risk stratification tool scans the complete history of any patient who visits the practice, including checking all their medications and previous pathology tests. Even if their visit is simply to collect a new prescription, or get a flu shot, the system will be looking for other conditions that could signify a more serious problem."

However, the system's advice can always be over-ridden by the patient's GP, if there is a demonstrated clinical need.

"While the computer may be smart, it is only an assistant to the GP, who is much better at really understanding their patients' needs," Professor Georgeff said.

"The system will help identify people who are in need of more personalised care, no matter whether or not they have access to Health Care Homes."