

6th interRAI Research Network Knowledge Exchange

Speaker List:

The demographic, temporal, and regional dynamics of loneliness in long-term care in New Zealand: A secondary data analysis

Presenter: Bill Li

The study aims to explore factors related to loneliness, its geographic distribution, and changes in its prevalence over time in long-term care facilities in New Zealand. Multivariable logistic regression was used to identify factors associated with loneliness in the current cohort, and chi-square analysis was used to test for changes in the prevalence of loneliness, stratified by ethnicity, over time as well as significance of regional distribution between DHBs.

Integrating oral health care into nursing practice in Aged residential care facilities with interprofessional collaboration and education

Presenter: Keiko Oda

Oral care is important for the overall health and quality of life of older people (OP), and can reduce aspiration pneumonia occurrence. However, oral care remains a low priority for aged-care nursing staff (registered nurses (RNs) and support workers) owing to a lack of knowledge, effective training, and awareness of its benefits. To address this gap, a training protocol for home care and care home nursing staff called Nursing Oral Health Assessment Training (NOHAT) was co-developed by an interprofessional collaboration and education (IPC/IPE) we established between oral health and nursing professionals.

Evaluation the InterRAI DIVERT Assessment Tool for Predicting Unplanned Admissions and Identifying Opportunities for Preventive Interventions

Presenter: Helen Kenealy

The DIVERT score, from the interRAI Home Care Assessment (HCA) tool, indicates the risk of unplanned hospital visits, with higher scores showing a greater admission risk. This study aimed to identify areas for early intervention to prevent such admissions.

Introducing the interRAI SCaN to New Zealand

Presenter: Simone Newsham

Informal carers play a critical role in sustaining New Zealand's health and social care systems, yet their own wellbeing is often overlooked. This research leverages the interRAI SCaN tool to assess the health and social needs of informal carers, with a focus on identifying early indicators of support breakdown. By integrating SCaN data with insights from carer focus groups, the study aims to develop a responsive model of carer support. The research will explore both systemic and fiscal impacts, offering evidence to inform policy and service design that better supports carers and strengthens informal care networks.

Inequities in injury and housing tenure of older New Zealanders

Presenter: Leah Palapar

A substantial proportion of injuries occur at home, highlighting the importance of preventing in-home injuries. Persistently declining rates of home ownership in New Zealand means that older people will increasingly rely on rental accommodation in the coming decades. Rental properties are typically in poorer condition compared to owner-occupied dwellings. There are known ethnic disparities in both health loss due to injury and in home ownership rates, but how these issues compound one another and influence aged care service use following injury has not been fully explored.

This investigation will provide evidence to support long-term planning as the negative impacts of population ageing and changing patterns of home ownership in the country unfold over the coming decades.

Bridging the Gap: Using AI to Translate interRAI Assessments into Clinically Useful Narratives

Presenter: Peter Tang

Health professionals often face challenges interpreting interRAI assessments due to the specialised language, scoring systems (e.g., CHESS, CPS, ADL Hierarchy), and Clinical Assessment Protocols (CAPs). This presentation explores the use of generative AI to convert structured interRAI HC data into plain-language narrative summaries tailored for GPs.

This presentation will share the methodology, sample outputs, and reflections on integrating AI into clinical workflows. It invites discussion on ethical considerations, validation needs, and future opportunities to embed AI-driven summarisation into electronic health records and care coordination systems.

Resident outcomes of homelike models of care in Aged Residential Care

Presenter: Irene Suilan Zeng

In New Zealand, over 40,000 older people lived in Long-Term Care (LTC) facilities in 2022. There is an international move to de-institutionalise LTC. The move aligns with policy directives for person-centred and culturally appropriate LTC settings, including the development of homelike LTC facilities. Our study aimed to compare the impact of the homelike and traditional usual models of care in LTC on resident quality indicators (CAP: Clinical-Assessment-Protocols).

Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (AI/ML) discovery-to-output: surfacing new interRAI signals beyond Clinical Assessment Protocols (CAPs) and Outcomes

Presenter: Peter Tang

interRAI outcome scales and Clinical Assessment Protocols (CAPs) give a helpful snapshot at the time of assessment. With six-monthly Long-Term Care Facilities (LTCF) reviews and variable Home Care (HC) timing, important changes between assessments—and some ongoing support needs—can be missed. I propose a small AI/ML “discovery-to-output” approach that looks across assessments to surface under-discovered patterns and turn the useful ones into a simple traffic-light Change Flag. The goal is a transparent add-on that complements CAPs and focuses attention where change is happening.

Using the interRAI Check-Up Self-Report tool as part of a community aged care intervention

Presenter: Joanna Hikaka

Aotearoa is experiencing a significant demographic shift towards an ageing population, and by 2034, it's projected that around 23% of New Zealand's population will be aged 65 and over with a resultant increasing demand on aged care health and wellbeing services.

New models of aged care are needed, and how we develop new services is just as important as what we deliver. We will discuss methods of co-creation and present a model of care utilising a paeārahi (health navigator) role to deliver aged care services, including using a comprehensive interRAI assessment, service navigation and the act of ‘visiting’ as an act of care.

Clinician and patient summaries of interRAI assessments using AI

Presenter: Joanna Hikaka

interRAI assessments are mandatory for publicly funded home or residential care, covering over 300 items to evaluate physical and psychosocial well-being and guide care planning. However, the vast amount of data can overwhelm patients, families, and infrequent users. We aimed to develop AI methods to generate patient and clinician summaries for further testing in trials.

This presentation will focus on the methods used to develop interRAI summaries, examples of AI produced summaries, and the next steps of our research programme.

Enhancing Clinical Assessment for Individuals with Acquired Brain Injury

Presenter: Brigette Meehan

This session outlines a collaborative research project between HIRO, an Ontario-based head injury rehabilitation service, and interRAI. The research project will design and pilot a new, ABI-specific interRAI assessment tool through merging interRAI's assessment expertise with HIRO's specialized knowledge in acquired brain injury (ABI) rehabilitation. The presentation aims to introduce the research project, highlight the need for a specialized assessment instrument, detail the research findings and discuss potential considerations and value for New Zealand.

Who are we missing? Access to community care for Pacific elders

Presenter: Etu Ma'u

Despite higher rates of chronic disease, Pacific elderly in Aotearoa are less likely to receive funded community care and the cost of caring falls on families in the form of unpaid care. This is contributed to by fewer Pacific elderly receiving the interRAI assessment required to access funded services. It is likely that funded service use would be higher in Pacific elders if more were assessed and aware of available supports and services.

The primary outcomes of this project will quantify the level of unmet need and associated carer burden. Longitudinal follow up will assess the anticipated impact of service utilisation on improved longer term health outcomes and lower health care costs.

Health NZ Home and Community Support Services

Presenter: Jason Theobald

Health NZ is building an integrated, central analytics data platform. One of the first data sets included was interRAI. Home Care provider data has been added and linked with interRAI data to enable bulk funding of home and community support services using the interRAI case mix algorithm. Reporting includes Quality Indicators (QI) to help improve service quality.

The presentation will cover the HDP, the reasons for the change of funding, and a demo of the reporting that is used to enable the regions to calculate funding for providers.

From Hours to Outcomes: Shifting to an interRAI Casemix Framework for Home Support

Presenter: Charlie Maslin

Home and Community Support Services (HCSS) are essential to supporting older people to live independently. However, the previous task- and hour-based funding model often limited responsiveness and equity. To address this, a new national HCSS Casemix Framework was developed, grounded in interRAI data and shaped through broad sector collaboration.

This innovative, outcomes-based Framework marks a fundamental shift in how HCSS is planned and delivered. By aligning interRAI data, KPIs, and person-centred practice, it provides a scalable model for more equitable, responsive, and sustainable support, enabling older people to live well at home for longer.

Improving care for malnourished older adults

Presenters: Susan MacDonell, Amy Pettigrew Porter

Recent work in Aotearoa New Zealand has highlighted that the current undernutrition clinical assessment protocols (CAP) in both long-term care and acute care interRAI clinical assessments do not adequately identify older adults who are at risk of malnutrition. Furthermore, the undernutrition CAP in acute care shows a lower ability to predict undernutrition for Māori inpatients compared to non-Māori patients, highlighting likely inequities in malnutrition care. Where interRAI assessments occur in focused areas (hospitals or aged residential care facilities) such validation can be more easily co-ordinated and projects are being planned to undertake this work.

This workshop will be of interest to NASC assessors, home care providers, and other support organisations who work with older adults in the community.

From Sedation to Connection: Creating a Thriving, Resident-Centred Dementia Community at Cashmere Heights

Presenters: Mikaela Shannon, Emma Dunning

Fourteen months ago, the dementia care unit at Cashmere Heights opened with a vision to create a vibrant, resident-centred community grounded in Enliven's values—particularly Aroha. Many residents arrived heavily medicated. Drawing on the Eden Alternative and Spark of Life philosophies, we set out to shift from a clinical, task-focused model to a holistic, person-centred approach—replacing sedation with connection, meaning, and joy.

interRAI assessments in action: lessons for data analysis

Presenter: Pauline Norris

Administrative data, produced when healthcare is delivered, or when health status is assessed, is a valuable resource for improving policy and practice. AI is now turbocharging our ability to analyse this data and use it in new ways. Therefore, it is vital that data are as accurate as possible. In 2021–2024 we carried out a study of how administrative data are produced in New Zealand, using two case studies. In this final report from our study, we will present and discuss our findings in the context of other studies of data production in the NZ health system.

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