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Australia takes step towards using smartwatches in chronic disease prevention

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The roadmap focuses on three themes to address the challenges



University of Queensland (UQ) researchers have developed a roadmap for the integration of smartwatches into Australian health care but acknowledge there are several challenges to overcome.

The roadmap focuses on three themes to address the challenges - building digital health prevention foundations, transforming preventive care using data and analytics, and harnessing learning systems to enable precise disease prevention.

Dr Graeme Mattison from UQ's Faculty of Medicine said using smartwatches for a comprehensive analysis of a patient's health could enable personalised care for those diagnosed with diseases including obesity, diabetes and arthritis.

"One in three Australians own a smartwatch and they have become a popular accessory to monitor health and wellbeing. However, there are challenges preventing the health sector from using smartwatches in clinical decision-making, including data accuracy and interoperability", Dr Mattison said.

Dr Mattison also said that if smartwatches were to be integrated into clinical decision-making, regulations would be needed regarding how the devices display digital health information. "With greater regulation and data research, healthcare professionals can further their understanding of smartwatch use in chronic disease with the ultimate goal of improving health outcomes for consumers", he added.