



Aged care leader senses opportunity.

Modern technology is steadily pervading all areas of life and the aged care sector is no exception.

As one of South Australia's largest providers of quality independent retirement village living and ageing care services, ECH (Enabling Confidence at Home) has embraced modern technology to help it deliver on its primary goal to support people to live independently at home as they age.

The not-for-profit organisation has invested in a revolutionary activity tracking system called 'Billy', which records the movements of older people in their own homes to give their families peace of mind that they are maintaining their daily routines.

ECH Chief Executive Dr David Panter says Billy uses data from motion sensors to recognise, learn and monitor a person's routine patterns of behaviour within their home, which can then be shared with family members and care providers via a smartphone app.

"We're constantly looking at new ways to help people remain in their homes for longer as they age, and Billy is one of those new ways," said Dr Panter.

"Through analysis of data, Billy knows when an occupant has moved throughout their home, opened the fridge or lifted their medication container. Over time, Billy builds up a strong profile of a person's usual routine, and makes it easier to identify changes to this routine for both the family and the care provider.

"Other monitoring technologies can be quite intrusive and invade privacy by requiring the use of cameras and wearable devices – whereas Billy is very discreet and works through information received via motion sensors placed around the home.

"It provides families with visibility, and consequently peace of mind, that daily routines are being undertaken, while care providers like ECH can analyse the data to monitor changes to behaviour that may then require adjustments to the individual's care plan and services."

Dr Panter says the initial feedback from ECH clients to Billy has been overwhelmingly positive.

"Billy is different from other home monitoring systems because it focuses on prevention rather than emergency response. Its use of artificial intelligence allows the identification of changes in behaviour over time and enables deeper conversations to occur between us and the client, or between the client and their family," he said.

Established in 1964, ECH currently employs 750 staff and volunteers – including nurses, home support staff, allied health professionals and administrators – who support the aged care needs of more than 15,000 South Australians.

ECH currently has 1,693 independent living units across 105 retirement villages throughout metropolitan Adelaide, the Adelaide Hills, Victor Harbor and Ardrossan,

as well as four wellness centres, five dementia-friendly day programs and a custom-designed short term care and respite centre.

It is also on the verge of constructing a new \$42.5 million apartment-style retirement village at Modbury, which has been designed to challenge the traditional retirement living model.

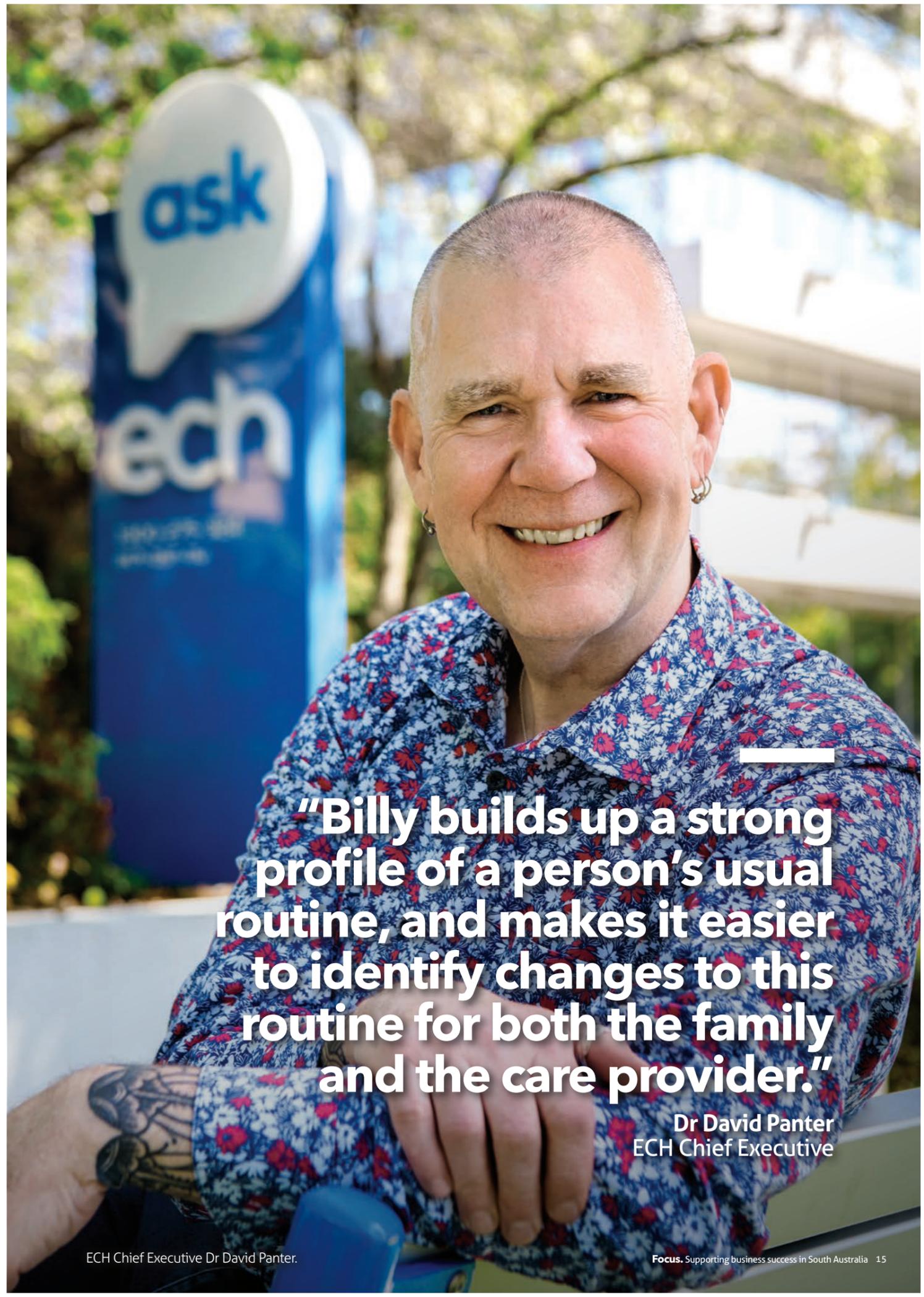
"Our Modbury development will include 77 apartments, a gym, café, allied health services and an early learning centre," said Dr Panter, who praised BankSA for its support of such projects and "incredibly responsive" service.

"More importantly, we have designed the village to encourage a neighbourly atmosphere where residents have a sense of belonging, which is a vital ingredient for anyone wanting to live independently and enjoy life for as long as possible as they get older."

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Helping people age well.

ECH is a registered Australian charity established for the benefit of its clients, with all profits reinvested to increase and improve the services it provides ageing South Australians.



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