**2018 ARATA Abstract (Independent Living Centre WA)**

**TITLE: Innovations in Telepresence Practice and Policy**

**Aim:** To discuss and share experiences surrounding policy development when introducing emerging technology as an access method for consumers.

**Outcomes:** This presentation will discuss the methods used to identify and evaluate telepresence technology, the learned experiences from trials, organizational and client perspectives as well as the evaluation of the product usage and the effect on Telehealth policy.

**Word Count Abstract (249)**

The availability and reliability of technology will play a significant role in closing the services gap experienced by those living in regional areas. It is necessary to be agile in service delivery and ensure that organizational policies and procedures remain up to date with changing technology. The Independent Living Centre WA conducted a review of service delivery methods with the aim of providing alternatives for clients who were physically unable to access our premises, due to geographical location, ability to travel or social support requirements. Currently telehealth services are offered to regional areas to compliment outreaches as part of state wide services. Given the increasing awareness of telehealth technology there has not been a similar increase in client engagement. As such an alternative access method was explored, Telepresence Robotics. Telepresence robots are those which can be controlled by a person in a remote location to move through an environment and interact with those present onsite during a live video stream. Telepresence robots are more common in an office environment. However, they offer an access method for clients in an agile and flexible way. This increased control to move about an environment opens a range of opportunities for the client and also raises policy and privacy considerations which vary from traditional telehealth guidelines. This presentation will discuss the methods used to identify and evaluate telepresence technology, the learned experiences from trials, organizational and client perspectives as well as the evaluation of the product usage and the effect on Telehealth policy.