

The A-PRECISE Project

Challenges and opportunities for effective infection prevention and control in Residential Aged Care Homes

Philip Russo

Director Nursing Research, Cabrini Health
Nursing and Midwifery, Monash University

**National Centre
for Healthy Ageing**



Acknowledgements



Project team

Prof Helen Rawson (Co-lead)

Prof Philip Russo (Co-lead)

Prof Brett Mitchell

Chris Lynch

Dr Victoria Team

Prof Gabrielle Brand

Dr Kaori Shimoinaba

Dr Katrina Long

Prof Debra Griffiths

Prof Julia Morphet

Samantha Dix

A/Prof Samantha Sevenhuysen

Prof Andrew Stewardson

Prof Grant Russell

Partners

Residents, family members and staff at our partner organisations



Bridget Robinson
Cathrynne Emanuel



Julie Preston

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**Peninsula
Health**



COVID 19 in Residential Aged Care

Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety (2018-2021)

Inadequate IPC Practices

Significant shortcomings in IPC measures, deficiencies contributed to the rapid spread of infections, including COVID-19, among residents and staff.

Insufficient Staff Training

A notable gap in comprehensive IPC training for aged care staff was observed. The lack of proper education and resources hindered the effective implementation of infection control protocols.

Overuse of Antimicrobials

The report raised concerns about the high levels of inappropriate antimicrobial use in residential aged care services, which can lead to antimicrobial resistance.

Regulatory Oversight

Emphasised the need for stronger regulatory mechanisms to ensure compliance with IPC standards, advocating for more rigorous monitoring



Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety (2018-2021)

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Mandatory Infection Prevention and Control Leads**

Every residential aged care service must appoint a dedicated Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Lead. The IPC Lead must be trained in IPC principles and play a key role in educating staff, monitoring infection risks, and ensuring adherence to protocols.

2. **Improved IPC Training for Aged Care Staff**

All aged care workers should receive mandatory, ongoing training in IPC measures, tailored to their specific roles. Training should cover hand hygiene, PPE use, outbreak management, and antimicrobial stewardship.

3. **Strengthening Regulatory Oversight and Compliance**

4. **Enhanced Outbreak Preparedness and Response**

5. **Antimicrobial Stewardship Programs**

6. **Increased Government Support and Funding**

7. **Integration with Broader Healthcare System**



Meanwhile, COVID-19...



Pandemic response: development and delivery of IPC training

Training roll-out: largest state funded program to date

- >4200 participants
- >275 organisations
- face to face education
- train the trainer
- virtual reality simulation

The gap: need for tailored IPC strategies in residential aged care



Frontiers in Public Health



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EDITED BY
Madhan Balasubramanian,
Flinders University, Australia

REVIEWED BY
Ying-Chun Li,
National Sun Yat-sen University, Taiwan
Zhichao Hao,
Southwest University, China

*CORRESPONDENCE
Samantha Dix
✉ samantha.dix@monash.edu

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Practical infection control training for Victoria's aged care workforce at the time of COVID-19 pandemic: a community case study

Samantha Dix*, Helen Rawson, Philip Russo, Victoria Team, Debra Griffiths and Julia Morphet
School of Nursing and Midwifery, Monash University, Clayton, VIC, Australia

The A-PRECISE Project



Australia – PReventing infECtions In reSidential agEd care

The goal: co-design an IPC strategy for the residential aged care environment with residents, families and staff



Codesign

Codesign research also known as co-creation or participatory design,

emphasises collaboration between researchers and stakeholders

(e.g., patients, clinicians, community members, or policymakers)

throughout the research process

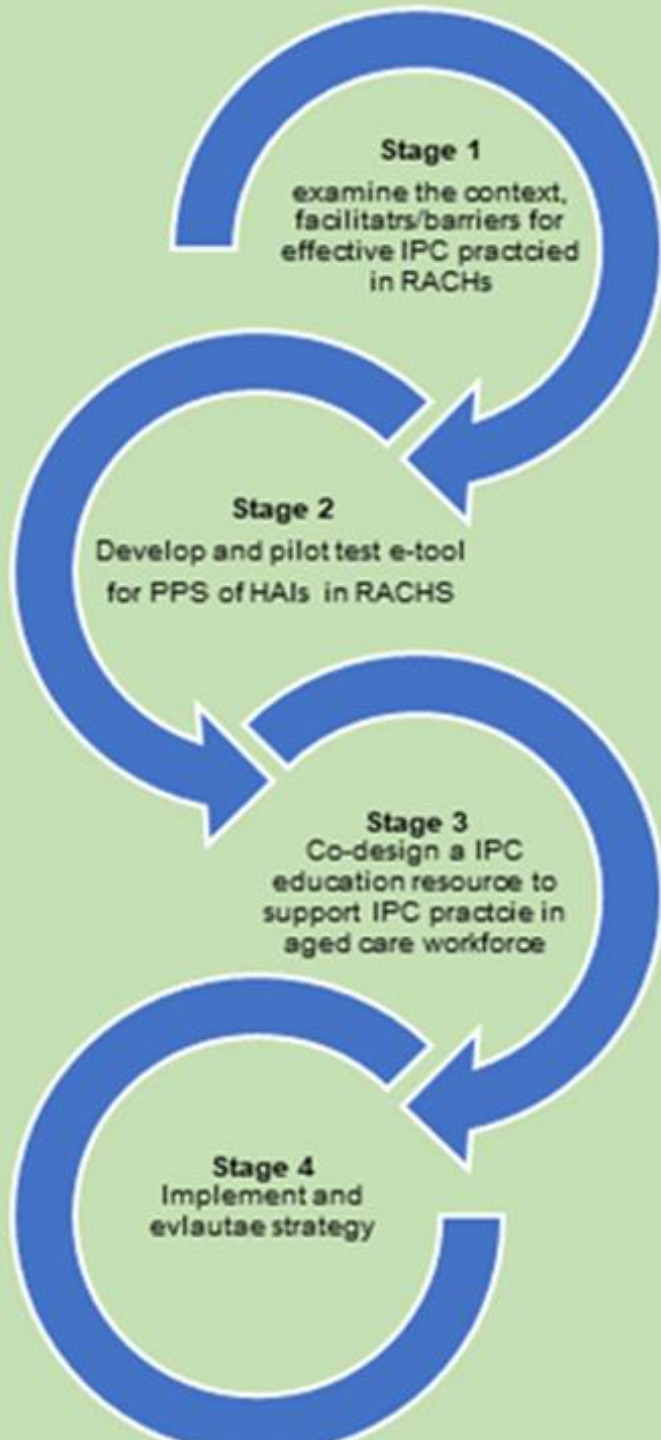
Dimension	Codesign Research	Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
Purpose	Co-create solutions with stakeholders	Test hypotheses, measure variables	Understand experience, meanings, perspectives
Participant Role	Co-researchers, contributors	Subjects/respondents	Informants, meaning-makers
Power Dynamics	Shared decision-making	Researcher-led	Researcher-led but empathetic and open
Data Type	Mixed	Numeric, structured	Textual, unstructured
Methods	Workshops, storyboarding, feedback loops	Surveys, experiments, structured observations	Interviews, focus groups, ethnography
Outputs	Interventions, tools, services, frameworks	Statistical models, generalizable findings	Thematic, narratives, theory generation
Context Sensitivity	Highly contextual, tailored to local needs	Less sensitive to context (generalisable)	Strong contextual focus
Strengths	Relevance, inclusion, buy-in, innovation	Rigor, scalability, precision	Depth, meaning, complexity
Limitations	Time-consuming, hard to generalize	May miss context and complexity	Less generalizable, can be subjective
Typical Use Cases	Designing interventions, services, health programs	Clinical trials, surveys, population studies	Exploring patient experiences, behaviour, culture

A-PRECISE Stages

- **Stage 1.** Examination of the context, facilitators and barriers for effective infection prevention and control (IPC) practices.

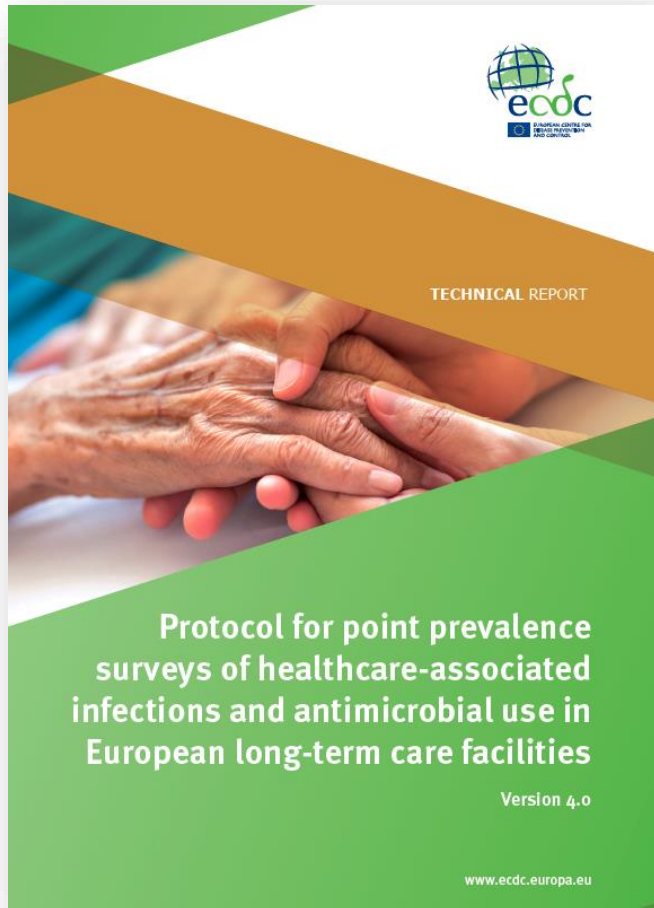
Interviews/Focus Groups with consumers (residents and family) and staff. Context of RACH IPC practices

- **Stage 2.** Develop and pilot test an electronic tool for point-prevalence surveillance (PPS) of healthcare-associated infections in RACHs.



Point prevalence surveillance of infections

“How many residents have an infection today, and what type of infection?”



 REDCap®



Urinary tract infection

COVID-19

Respiratory tract infections

- Common cold syndromes/pharyngitis
- Influenza-like illness ('Flu')
- Pneumonia
- Other lower RTIs

Skin infections

- Cellulitis/soft tissue/wound infection
- Scabies
- Herpes simplex or zoster infection
- Fungal infections

Gastrointestinal tract infections

- Gastroenteritis
- *Clostridioides (Clostridium) difficile* infection

Eye, ear, nose and mouth infections

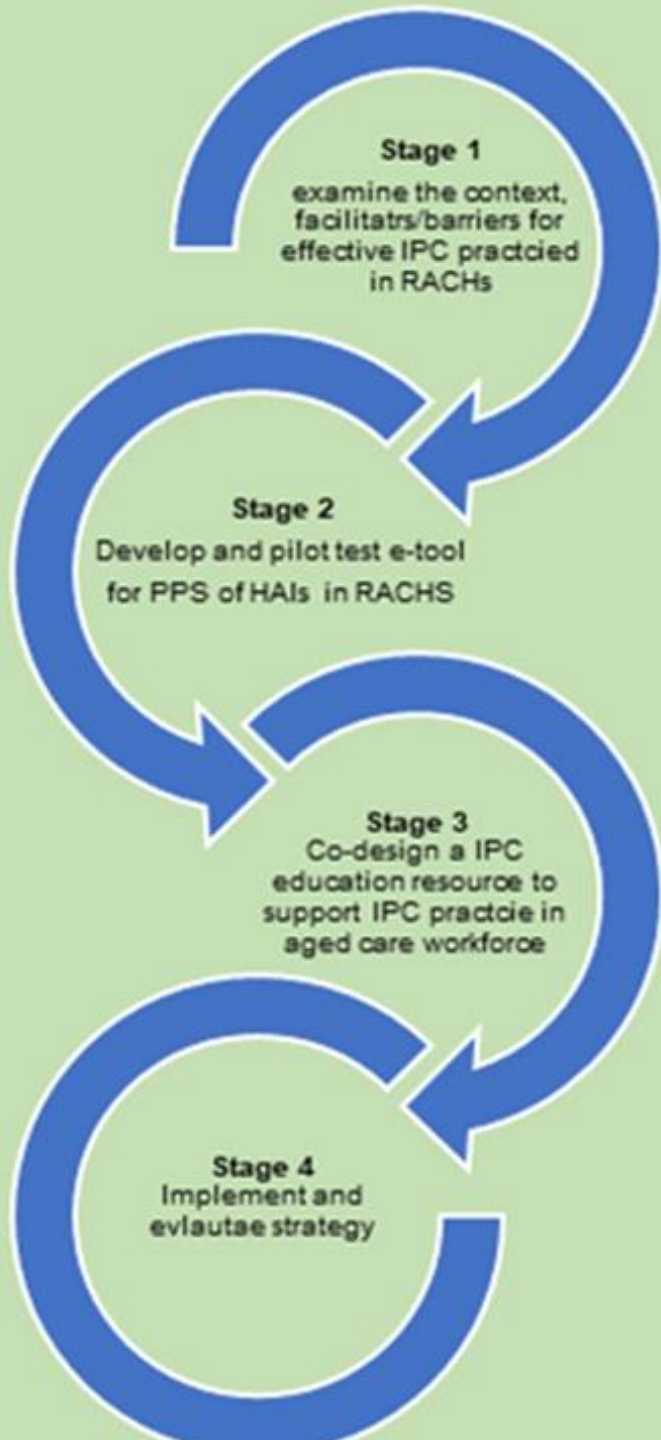
- Conjunctivitis
- Ear infections
- Sinusitis
- Mouth infection or oral candidiasis

Bloodstream infections

Unexplained febrile episode

Other infection(s)

A-PRECISE Stages



- **Stage 1.** Examination of the context, facilitators and barriers for effective infection prevention and control (IPC) practices.

Interviews/Focus Groups with consumers (residents and family) and staff. Context of RACH IPC practices

- **Stage 2.** Develop and pilot test an electronic tool for point-prevalence surveillance (PPS) of healthcare-associated infections in RACHs.
- **Stage 3.** Co-Design of the strategy to be implemented e.g. education, multimedia and other resources

Three co-design workshops:

- 1) Exploration & Discovery
- 2) Drafting
- 3) Review, Refine & Plan
- 4) Findings from Stages 1 & 2 will inform the co-design of the strategy to be implemented in Stage 4.

- **Stage 4.** Implementation of the developed strategy and the PPS tool and evaluation of the effectiveness .

Understanding the context



Interviews and focus groups: 22 people (residents, families and staff)







What did people tell us?

Challenges: variability in IPC knowledge, cultural practices, organisational culture, engagement in education



Themes

- Communication
- Culture
- Education

Opportunities: multi-layered approaches, interactive learning, knowledge building, proactive communication, positive organisational culture

Communication

Diverse, simple, proactive

“It is very difficult when, you know, maybe things are being done but maybe they’re not, but you just don’t get that communication.”

- Family member

“We’ve got to be vocal.”

- Resident

“The more you write the less they read.”

- Staff member



Culture



Resident-centred, open and transparent, everybody's business



"I think they do things very well here and keep us all safe."
- Resident

"If there's an issue, I would mention it to the immediate carer... I find all the staff very approachable."
- Family member

"Every person that works within residential aged care has got a responsibility with infection prevention and control."
- Staff member



Education



Engaging, in person, complementary

“I think it really just comes down to the staff being educated.”

- **Family member**

“Nothing like being at the coal face for these things.”

- **Resident**

“We’re more proactive... and less reactive now [post-pandemic].”

- **Staff member**



Developing the strategy



Video

Resources created



- **Posters (editable, various messages)**
- **Videos (residents, visitors, staff)**
- Audio messages (mealtimes, hold message)
- Escape room educational materials (UTI, skin/wound, gastro, respiratory)
- Written material templates/examples
- Overarching guidelines
- E-tool for infection monitoring



IT'S OK TO REMIND US

It's okay to remind
each other about
hand hygiene.
It helps keep us all
safe.

*This is
our home.*



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DON'T VISIT WHEN UNWELL

Feeling unwell?
Please don't visit.
It helps keep us all safe.

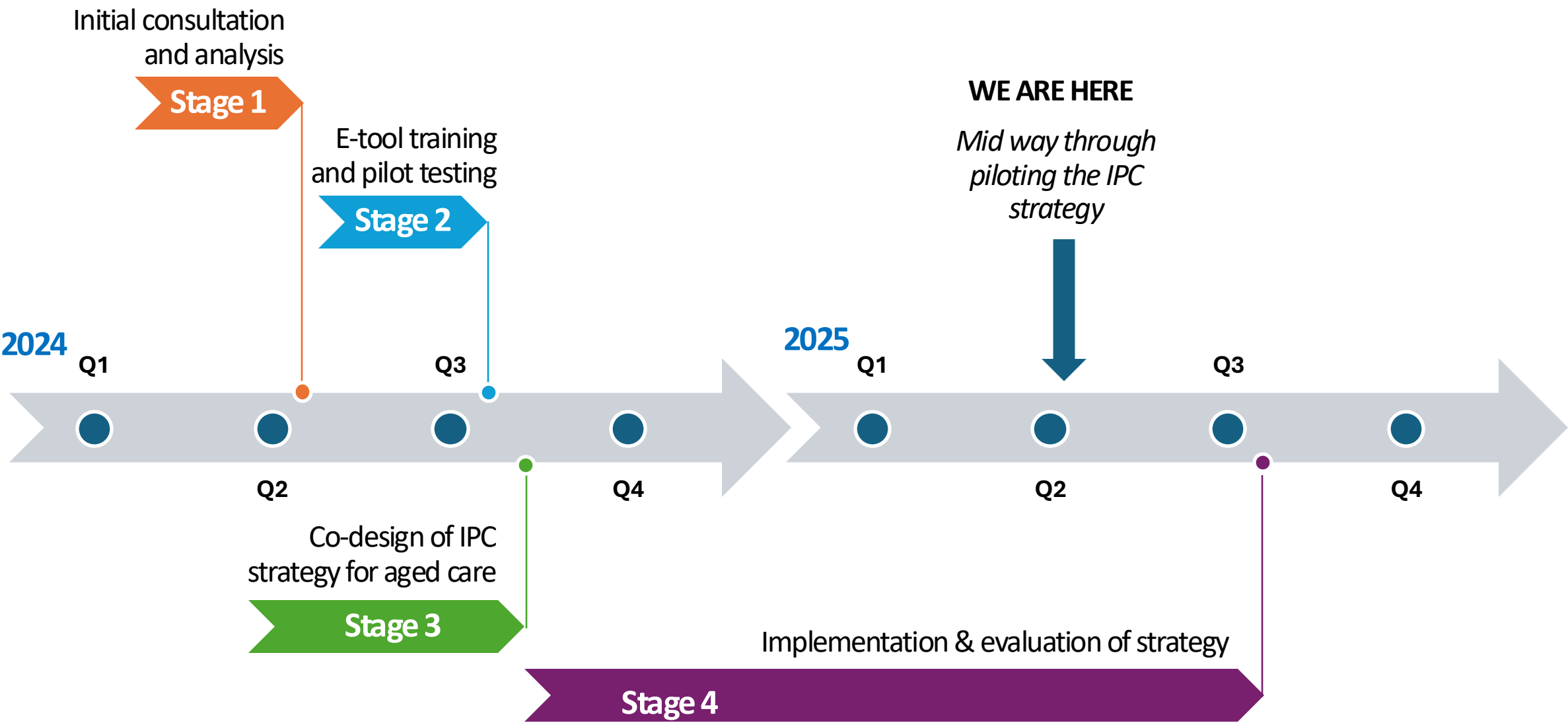
*This is
our home.*



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Current status



Visitor video



Video

Thank you



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 **MONASH**
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 **The
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Preventing Infections.
Together