Australian Government

Australian Digital Health Agency

Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group

Communiqué

The second meeting of the Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group took place on

14th December 2023.

The Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group was established in September 2023 to provide advice to the Australian Digital Health Agency and Council for Connected Care on implementation of the Connecting Australian Healthcare – *National Healthcare Interoperability Plan* 2023-2028 (Interoperability Plan).

The group brings together a diverse range of experts across Australian governments and standards development organisations. Formation of the group is a significant milestone for digital health, demonstrating national commitment to collaboration and consensus on the use of Standards to improve healthcare outcomes and connection of health and care services for the benefit of all Australians.

The December 2023 meeting focused on three key standards uplift projects underway by the Australian Digital Health Agency.

1. **National Digital Health Standards Catalogue**

   A key action of the Interoperability Plan is the publication of a National Digital Health Standards Catalogue (Standards Catalogue). This online resource is currently under development by the Agency to provide a central hub to anyone seeking access to the digital health standards, specifications and supporting resources that underpin Australian healthcare. This publication will support multiple stakeholder groups including (but not limited to) those forming or managing health technology projects, developing technology solutions and procuring new technology capability.

   Members participated in a workshop to advise on key decisions related to inclusion criteria, structure, curation, and initial priorities for the Standards Catalogue. The members reconfirmed the requirements for scalability and intuitive design to ensure an enhanced user experience. The necessity for modelling a maintenance process and a community management approach was also confirmed.

2. **Aged Care Clinical Information System (CIS) Standard**

   Members provided feedback on a mature draft of the Aged Care Clinical Information System (CIS) Standard Gap Analysis developed through extensive stakeholder consultation in 2023. The gap analysis provides an environmental scan of existing and emerging technical standards, specifications and frameworks relevant to Residential Aged Care Facilities in Australia. This

important piece of work will inform the basis of the next phase of the project focused on seeking sector agreement on preferred technical standards and a roadmap to identify where further standards development work may be required to support the Aged Care sector.

3. **National Clinical Terminology Service**

    Members noted the Australian Digital Health Agency's product strategy for the National Clinical Terminology Service (NCTS) and the importance of driving national product adoption and implementation. Members provided advice on the sector appetite to develop a National Library for Translation Mapping which would create a reference collection of existing maps in use. Members noted several existing maps and methodologies are already in use by jurisdictions, universities, and software developers and offered to provide contact and map details for follow-up. Work to identify all current mapping resources was considered to offer important national benefit.

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December 2023 meeting of the Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group addressed the following actions:

- Action 2.1 – **Terminology in digital health systems.** Engage with the health technology sector and health departments to enhance digital health systems to integrate national terminologies and classifications natively.

- Action 2.2 – **Develop specifications and standards**. Engage with the health sector on the development, selection, use and maintenance of specifications and standards that support the Agency's approved priorities. When required, Agency-developed specifications will be progressed to become standards through the appropriate standards development organisation and their balloting/development process.

- Action 2.5 – **Standards Catalogue**. Develop and implement national digital health standards catalogue as a user-friendly access point for digital health standards.

- Action 2.8 – **Standards gap analysis**. Complete a gap analysis to prioritse the digital health standards that are required most urgently to accelerate the interoperability agenda.

- Action 2.10 – **Including terminology in datasets**. Coordinate discussions on expanding minimum datasets to incorporate the use of SNOMED CT-AU, AMT and LOINC for data not currently collected in areas such as medications, adverse reactions, pathology and radiology.

- Action 2.11 – **National library of terminology mapping.** Develop a national library of resources that provide translation mapping from national terminologies to other popular terminologies.