



Council for Connected Care

A better-connected healthcare system for all Australians

Communiqué

The twelfth meeting of the Council for Connected Care brought members together virtually to explore how digital health data, person-centred design and governance are shaping Australia's connected care system. The meeting opened with an Acknowledgement of Country and the Chair welcoming incoming members: Elizabeth Whitelock from the Australian Information Industry Association; and Gillian Giles from the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. The Chair also acknowledged the contribution of outgoing members: Adjunct Associate Professor Stephen Morris, Dr Toby Hodgson and Christopher Leahy.

Council members were briefed on key initiatives underway across the Australian Digital Health Agency and the broader health sector, with discussion focused on interoperability, clinical governance and the growing role of digital health data in supporting safer, more connected care.

The Council received an update on the Agency's product and experience design initiatives, noting the foundational work underway to support a future product vision aligned with transformation priorities and the needs of Australian healthcare consumers. Members examined human-centred design frameworks alongside insights from research and discovery activities and viewed concept designs showing how customer needs are guiding the development of future My Health Record channels and other national digital health capabilities. The Council saw video footage of Dharug Place, the Agency's Experience Centre, which provides a collaborative environment to develop, test and evaluate projects through participatory design practices.

Members also discussed preparatory work to transition My Health Record to FHIR-based services as a key enabler of future system evolution, contributing informed feedback throughout the session.

Following this, a panel discussion exploring how digital health data is enabling more connected, informed and person-centred care was conducted, with panel members Michelle Nelson, Dr Peter Del Fante, Dr Paul Cooper and Angela Ryan providing consumer, clinical and informatics perspectives on opportunities and barriers across the system.

The discussion highlighted the growing influence of artificial intelligence on the way health information is accessed and used, noting both its potential to surface key information and improve usability and its reliance on complete, high-quality data and transparent, reliable systems. The panel considered the capability required across the health and care workforce, including diverse data needs, the value of capability frameworks and early education in data governance and critical thinking as foundations for improving data quality and system



outcomes. Members discussed the implications of these themes for national policy, governance and priority work to strengthen connected care.

The Council received an update on the establishment of the National Clinical Governance Committee for Digital Health (NCGC-DH) and its 3 Expert Advisory Groups (EAGs), recognising the Committee's role in providing national clinical governance oversight for digital health, system safety and quality, building on the work of the former Clinical Reference Group.

Members considered themes from the inaugural NCGC-DH meeting, including the removal of consumer viewing delays for diagnostic imaging reports, opportunities to strengthen safety and quality through national terminologies, and the importance of conformance, legislation and standards in advancing the Share by Default agenda. The Council also reviewed progress from the inaugural meetings of the Better and Faster Access EAG and the Virtual Care and Telehealth EAG, planning for the commencement of the AI Enabled Care EAG in April 2026. The commitment that has been made by the committees to transparent reporting, including quarterly updates to the Council, was noted, with recognition that transparency is an important cornerstone of governance and leadership in delivering on the outcomes of a more connected health and care system.

Members shared updates on digital health initiatives across their organisations, with a focus on interoperability and the role of data and design in improving care delivery.

Members also received an update from 8 NSW Primary Health Networks on integrating the Medicare Mental Health Phone Service with the NSW Single Front Door. This approach centralises intake, assessment and referral to reduce retelling and better match help seekers to services, with NSW currently having the highest use rate nationally. The Council further discussed the planned transition of telehealth triage functions to Healthdirect in 2027. Alignment will be with national recommendations, and opportunities for more streamlined pathways, improved visibility across services and stronger integration between virtual, primary and acute mental health care. Challenges considered included policy alignment, capability uplift for interoperability and differing funding structures and organisational processes.

The next meeting of the Council will be the Annual Review, to be held virtually on 23 July 2026.