



Council for Connected Care

A better-connected healthcare system for all Australians

Communiqué – 10 August 2023

The second meeting of the Council for Connected Care (Council) took place virtually on 10 August 2023.

Rob Heferen, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and Chair of the Council, acknowledged a major milestone had been achieved with the publication on 11 July 2023 of Australia's first national plan to deliver a connected health system – *Connecting Australian Healthcare – National Healthcare Interoperability Plan 2023-2028* ([Interoperability Plan](#)).

Members discussed proposed communication and engagement activities relating to the Interoperability Plan. It was recognised that everyone can benefit from a connected healthcare system and everyone has a role to play from consumers to healthcare providers, government, technology sector and researchers. Members discussed the process and content for planned quarterly progress reports against the 44 actions in the Interoperability Plan. Regular publication of the quarterly progress report will commence in October 2023.

The topic for the second Council meeting was identity – the first of five key priority areas in the Interoperability Plan. Members considered how individuals, providers and organisations can be better identified to enable information sharing between care settings and heard from the Department of Finance, the Department of Health and Aged Care and Services Australia on government initiatives to strengthen digital identity and healthcare identifiers.

There was a strong commitment to using national healthcare identifiers to facilitate improved health outcomes. Members stressed the importance of working together to address the privacy, security and consent issues that are critical to sharing information. Members identified the need for healthcare identifiers to be ubiquitous across all healthcare consumers (not just Australian citizens or Permanent Residents), across both clinicians and administrative staff in healthcare providers and extending into the disability and aged care sectors as required. Members considered that the inclusion of healthcare identifiers for both healthcare organisations and individual healthcare providers in the National Health Services Directory was key to enabling the provision of connected care. Members also agreed that ensuring national healthcare identifiers are globally unique and able to be recognised both in Australia and internationally was a priority.



Australian Government

Australian Digital Health Agency

Draft terms of reference for an Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group were considered by the Council. The Advisory Group will facilitate collaboration on standards, identification of priorities and agreement on shared goals for a National Standards Development Roadmap. Once established in September 2023, the Advisory Group will meet at least quarterly and reports on the outcomes of its deliberations will be published regularly on the Australian Digital Health Agency's website.

The Council will next meet face-to-face in Melbourne on 11 October 2023. The primary focus of discussion for the next meeting will be standards.