



Australian Government

Australian Digital Health Agency

**Media release**

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## **Embedding digital health education into degrees across Australia to deliver greater capability**

A national approach to embed digital health education into university degrees is part of a groundbreaking project to deliver greater capability to Australia's healthcare workforce.

As part of the National Digital Health Capability Action Plan (CAP), the Australian Digital Health Agency (the Agency) will collaborate with the Australian Council of Senior Academic Leaders in Digital Health (the Council) to support digital health capability for new and existing health workers.

Agency CEO Amanda Cattermole PSM said the Agency recognises how important it is to build the digital health capability of the health workforce.

"Working in partnership with the Council, this project will support a consistent approach to digital health education at a national level, better preparing the health workforce to respond to the needs of Australians in more settings, both now and in the future," Ms Cattermole said.

"The Agency's vision is that university graduates enter the workforce with an understanding of digital health systems and how they can be used to support clinical decisions and provide better care. In an increasing digital world, a workforce with strong digital health capability ultimately benefits the patient by driving safer, higher quality care where consumers are empowered."

An initiative of the Digital Health Cooperative Research Centre (DHCRC), the Council was launched last year with 37 founding member universities to promote the use of digital technology, informatics and data science to health in Australia.

Inaugural Council Chair and Director of the Queensland Digital Health Centre at the University of Queensland, Professor Clair Sullivan, said "the Council has been established to promote, foster and support academic collaborations that help address Australia's key challenges and contribute to national and global health and economic prosperity.

"Our workforce needs to be supported to adapt to and embrace the future of healthcare. Embedding digital education into university degrees will positively impact Australia's healthcare system."

DHCRC Director of Education and Workforce Dr Melanie Haines said this collaboration with the Agency will help address the knowledge and skills gap in digital health education in Australia.

"Digital health technologies are key to transforming healthcare outcomes, so our future workforce needs to be capable of using them. To keep pace with dynamic change in the health system we need an evolving curriculum to ensure health professionals can deliver optimal care.

"The Council is uniquely placed to deliver on this project given it has a national footprint and its foundation of transdisciplinary expertise and collaboration," Dr Haines said.

Under the new initiative, the Council will:

- establish a cross sector, education and health industry working group and review current national digital health education competency frameworks and education course content;
- develop standardised core topics to be embedded in undergraduate health degrees and position these within existing curriculum; and
- develop and pilot a “train the trainer” kit for educators currently teaching digital health in Australian universities.

A final report will include recommendations for the development of future resources or course content and an implementation plan to promote embedding digital health into university degrees.

The [CAP](#) is a program of work that sets out initiatives to equip Australia’s health workforce for a connected, digitally enabled future.

**-ENDS-**

**For more information on this project, contact:**

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### **About the Australian Digital Health Agency**

When it comes to improving the health of all Australians, the role of digital innovation and connection is a vital part of a modern, accessible healthcare system. Against the backdrop of COVID-19, digital health has seen exponential growth in relevance and importance, making it more pertinent than ever for all Australians and healthcare providers.

Better patient healthcare and health outcomes are possible when you have a health infrastructure that can be safely accessed, easily used and responsibly shared.

To achieve this, the [National Digital Health Strategy](#) is establishing the foundations for a sustainable health system that constantly improves. It underpins and coordinates work that is already happening between governments, healthcare providers, consumers, innovators and the technology industry.

For further information: [www.digitalhealth.gov.au](http://www.digitalhealth.gov.au).

*The Australian Digital Health Agency is jointly funded by the Australian Government and all state and territory governments.*

### **About Digital Health CRC**

Digital Health CRC Limited connects government, academia and industry to accelerate the implementation and translation of evidence-based digital health technologies that solve the most pressing healthcare challenges. We are co-funded through the Commonwealth Government’s Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Program, and by our Participant organisations.

<https://digitalhealthcrc.com/>