



Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group Terms of Reference

Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group v1.0
Approved for external use
OFFICIAL

1 Background

A connected healthcare system is a cornerstone of the National Digital Health Strategy, the Australian Government Digital Health Blueprint and of state and territory digital health strategies. At a national level the Australian Digital Health Agency (the Agency) is charged with implementing the *Connecting Australian Health Care – National Healthcare Interoperability Plan 2023-2028 (Interoperability Plan)* accepted by the Health Chief Executives Forum in March 2023. The Interoperability Plan focuses on five priority areas across 44 actions to support safe, secure, efficient, quality care through a connected healthcare system that conveniently and seamlessly shares high-quality data with the right people at the right time. Building on a series of successes the nationally agreed Interoperability Plan is a reference for all participants in Australian digital health.

The Agency has established the Council for Connected Care (the Council) to provide strategic advice on matters related to interoperability and support national implementation of the Interoperability Plan. The Agency will stand up small, time limited working groups that focus on emerging problems or areas requiring focused effort as identified by the Council.

Standards are identified as a key priority area of the Interoperability Plan. The Agency established the Digital Health Standards program in November 2021 to coordinate a nationally consistent approach to the use, development and implementation of standards for digital health in Australia. Information sharing that improves clinical outcomes and empowers people to make informed, collaborative healthcare decisions is dependent on the consistent adoption of agreed Standards and specifications. As digital transformation accelerates to improve outcomes across healthcare, the coordinated use of Standards provides the foundations for secure, seamless, timely and meaningful exchange of information necessary for a connected healthcare system that maintains the trust and support of consumers and clinicians.

2 Purpose

The Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group will play a critical role in achieving the consistent use of standards for digital health across Australia. Group members will provide strategic advice to the Council and Agency on prioritisation of effort in relation to standards to inform development of a standards roadmap. Members will also advise the Agency on curation of use-cases and publication of content in the National Digital Health Standards Catalogue.

Members will consider Council for Connected Care advice on barriers to health information sharing and identify where standards use, implementation and development can support connected care priorities. The

Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group augments sector consultation and does not replace existing consultative mechanisms between the Agency and its stakeholders.

3 Objectives

The Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group objectives are to:

- Provide advice on prioritisation of effort in relation to standards.
- Facilitate and support implementation of the Interoperability Plan by providing specific advice on Standards and specifications relevant to connected care.
- Identify barriers to standards use and implementation in Australia.
- Identify priority areas for future standards use, implementation and development to support digital health in Australia.
- Provide advice to the National Digital Health Standards Catalogue including Standards use-case development.
- Provide interim governance to the Sparked Programme products including the National Data Model for Interoperability.
- Advance the use, implementation and development of Australian and international standards used in the design, development, and procurement of digital health solutions in Australia.

4 Responsibilities

The Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group is responsible for:

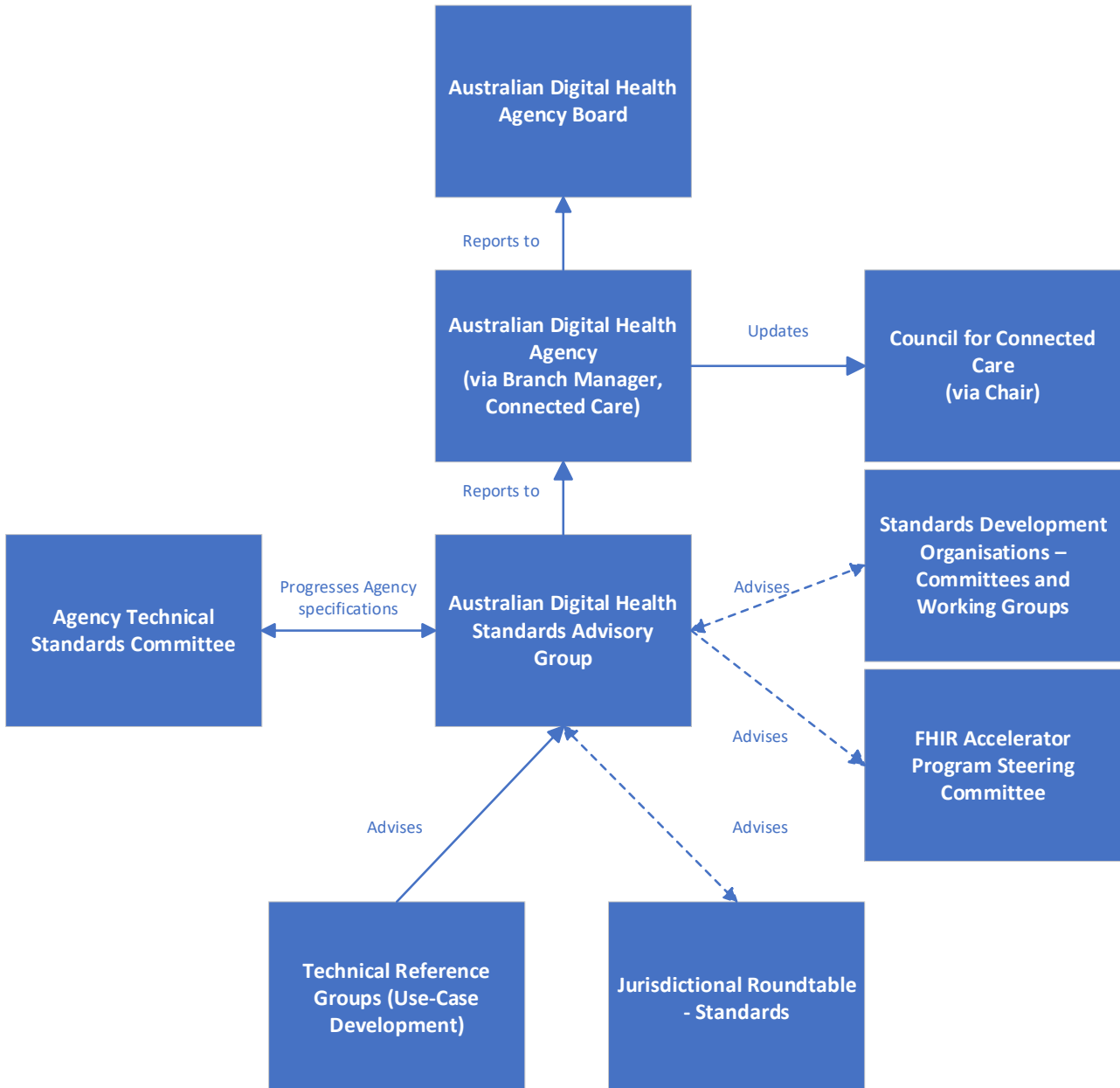
- Providing guidance to the Agency on the priority of effort in relation to standards.
- Providing expert technical advice and domain knowledge on digital health standards.
- Providing strategic, technical and operational advice on publication of content in the National Catalogue of Digital Health Standards including policies, processes and content governance.
- Providing advice on standards use-case prioritisation developed for publication in the National Digital Health Standards Catalogue.
- Identifying and prioritising key standards use, implementation and development activities for inclusion in the National Standards Roadmap.
- Providing advice on standards-related information in key reports produced during the implementation of the Interoperability Plan.
- Reviewing and promoting interoperability standards detailed in the procurement guidelines.
- Providing advice to the Agency and the Department to the Sparked Programme product National Data Model for Interoperability, as to its ongoing and enduring governance arrangements.
- Providing strategic advice to the Agency to inform Standards Development Organisation activities in support of the National Standards Roadmap.

The Agency will support the Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group by facilitating broader consultation to focus on issues requiring broader community engagement and expertise. The broader consultation sessions will provide advice to the Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group on a range of digital health standards priorities and national initiatives. These groups will be convened as required by the Agency. The Australian Digital health Standards Advisory Group will be tasked with

providing, via consensus, advice to the Council for Connected Care and Agency on broader consultation engagements.

5 Governance pathways, reporting and escalation

The Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group reports to the Council for Connected Care through the Chair and Branch Manager at quarterly meetings.



6 Standing membership

The standing membership for the Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group is drawn from a broad range of digital health stakeholders and standards development organisations. Membership will be for a full three-year term and includes the following members:

- Chair – Professor Wendy Chapman, University of Melbourne
- Aged Care Industry Information Technology Council
- Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care
- Australian Industry Information Association
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Clinical representative nominated by the Council for Connected Care
- Consumers Health Forum of Australia
- CSIRO
- Department of Health and Aged Care
- GS1 Australia
- HL7 Australia
- Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise
- Jurisdictions
- Medical Software Industry Association
- Medical Technology Association of Australia
- Services Australia
- Standards Australia

ex officio

- Chief Digital Officer (Deputy Chair)
- Chief Technology Officer
- Branch Manager, Connected Care
- Director, Standards
- Assistant Director, Standards Uplift and Governance
- Assistant Director, Technical Standards
- Standards Stakeholder Engagement Advisor

6.1 Non-member attendees

The Chairperson or Agency may, from time to time, invite other individuals or groups to attend meetings as expert advisers or observers. The invitation may extend to attend a portion or the whole meeting.

Members may only invite an observer or support person (to assist with a presentation for example) with the express approval of the Agency via the Secretariat.

7 Member responsibilities

7.1 Chairperson

The Agency nominates the Chairperson. The Chief Digital Officer, Australian Digital Health Agency as the Deputy Chair is the alternative Chairperson if unable to attend a scheduled meeting. The Chairperson is responsible for:

- Approving the agenda and agenda items.
- Overseeing the orderly performance of business based on the agenda.
- Leading discussion during Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group meetings and providing advice on the key topics.
- Determining when a risk or issue should be escalated to the Agency when it can't be resolved otherwise.

The Chairperson may appoint a proxy to chair all or part of a meeting at their discretion.

7.2 Secretariat

The Agency will provide Secretariat support through staff members in the Connected Care Branch. The Secretariat is responsible for:

- Booking each meeting, based on advice from the Chairperson.
- Preparing and distributing the meeting agenda and meeting pack.
- Recording the meeting minutes, decisions and action items and distributing communiques.

7.3 Members

Members provide input to support the effective operation of the Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group. Members agree to provide specialist advice on areas within their expertise and meet due dates for input. This advice could be in the form of a presentation, addressing the key standards-related topics and recommendations.

A member who is unable to attend a meeting may nominate a proxy to represent them. Members are to notify the Secretariat if they wish to nominate a proxy to attend on their behalf for a particular meeting. Proxies will be accepted at the discretion of the Chairperson or the Secretariat.

8 Quorum

A quorum includes the Chairperson and at least eight of the standing members.

9 Meetings

9.1 Frequency and location

The Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group will meet at least four times a year virtually. At each meeting members will consider critical aspects of standards use, development and implementation. The agenda will support these deliberations with regular business reported by exception.

Additional meetings can be called at the discretion of the Chairperson or Secretariat when required to deliberate on key deliverables or documents. During the initial two years of the Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group it is likely to meet more frequently than the minimum four times a year.

9.2 Meeting pack

The Secretariat will provide the meeting pack to members at least five working days before each meeting.

The meeting pack includes:

- The meeting agenda.
- Previous meeting minutes and actions.
- Supporting information, as necessary for agenda items.

9.3 Minutes and Actions

The Secretariat will record all minutes and actions. An update on progress will be provided to the Council for Connected Care at quarterly meetings.

9.4 Out-of-session papers

Urgent matters that cannot be deferred until the next meeting can be managed as an out of session paper. The out of session paper and cover sheet will be sent to members via email with a requested response date.

10 Confidentiality

The Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group may consider and discuss material that is of a sensitive or commercial nature. Members and attendees acknowledge their responsibility to maintain confidentiality of all information that is not in the public domain and will assume all documents prepared by or presented to the Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group to be confidential unless identified otherwise by the Chairperson. Members agree not to report or attribute comments of individuals nor their affiliations outside of Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group meetings.

11 Conflicts of interest

If a member has a real, apparent, or potential conflict of interest relating to a matter before the Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group, that member is required to inform the Chairperson. In the case of the Chairperson, he or she will inform the Agency prior to consideration of the matter by the Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group. If the Chairperson, or the Agency (as the case may be) concurs that a real, apparent, or potential conflict of interest exists, the member faced with such conflict will not participate in the consideration of the matter. Details of interests declared, and actions taken, will be recorded in the minutes.

12 Intellectual Property

The Agency will own all intellectual property rights in material created for the Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group and will make any such material available to other members for their use under broad licensing arrangements.

13 Performance and review

The performance of the Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group will be measured at least annually. It will conduct a self-assessment of its performance and opportunities for improvement.

Performance measures will include:

- Timely delivery of meeting packs supporting effective operations.
- Attendance by standing members.
- Effectiveness of meetings.
- Effectiveness of members in completing assigned tasks.

Version history

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1.0	14 December 2023	Endorsed by Australian Digital Health Standards Advisory Group

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Acknowledgements

Council of Australian Governments

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