



25 June 2021

Media release

Provider Connect Australia - helping healthcare providers stay connected

Healthcare provider organisations around the country will soon be able to update information about their healthcare services and practitioners in just one place using *Provider Connect Australia*, eliminating the need to keep multiple directories up-to-date manually.

Provider Connect Australia is new technology that maintains the accuracy of healthcare service and practitioner contact details and will be rolled out nationally early next year. It is expected to achieve economic benefits of more than \$30 million per year by 2025.

When healthcare provider organisations update their contact details in the *Provider Connect Australia* service, this automatically sends their new details to nominated hospitals, pathology and radiology services, public service directories, secure messaging providers and more.

Australian Digital Health Agency CEO Amanda Cattermole said *Provider Connect Australia* would drive greater interoperability and adoption of secure messaging across the Australian healthcare system and provide benefits to both patients and health professionals.

“By providing this national service, the Agency can improve the quality and reliability of healthcare service details in directories and other services, including Medicare, and significantly reduce the administrative burden on healthcare organisations,” Ms Cattermole said.

Accurate and reliable information about healthcare services is a key foundation to support a digitally connected healthcare system, including secure messaging and interoperability.


“Secure messaging is a key strategic priority under the National Digital Health Strategy and the Agency is delivering this new feature of the national digital health infrastructure to enable healthcare providers to easily find each other to securely share patient information,” Ms Cattermole said.

Healthcare provider organisations have previously been required to complete between 10 and 20 different paper or online forms to notify different parts of the healthcare system whenever their service or practitioner information changes.

This is a substantial red-tape burden that leads to inaccurate and out-of-date information across the sector, impacting efficiency and quality of care.

A trial of the service in Northern NSW in 2020 found 99 per cent of participating practitioner records held in the Local Health District address book were out of date. The *Provider Connect Australia* service meant updates were made quickly and seamlessly, giving healthcare organisations more time with patients and less time on administration.

“The objective is to improve the efficiency of administrative processes for publishers and subscribers managing their data and help provide prompt, safe and seamless patient care across settings and providers,” Ms Cattermole said.



The benefits to patient care will also be significant across a range of healthcare settings. For example, having the most up-to-date details is essential to ensuring hospital discharge summaries, including treatment plans and progress notes, get to the right person as quickly as possible. This helps the patient’s GP to provide the best possible post-hospital care.

Dr Steve Hambleton, a General Practitioner and the Agency’s Chief Clinical Adviser said: “*Provider Connect Australia* will deliver efficiencies for practice support staff who will only have to update any changes in practice information once and will increase confidence at the point of care that all of the incoming information about patients will be there, and that outgoing address books are complete and up-to-date.

“I look forward to using it in my practice.”

Media contact

Mobile: 0428 772 421 Email: media@digitalhealth.gov.au

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.

The Australian Digital Health Agency is a statutory authority in the form of a corporate Commonwealth entity.