

Outcome 10

Health System Capacity and Quality

The capacity and quality of the health care system meets the needs of Australians

OUTCOME SUMMARY

Outcome 10 is focused on improving the capacity, coordination and quality of the Australian health system. The Australian Government aims to achieve this through programs that address chronic disease management and palliative care issues; and by supporting safety and quality improvement across the health system. The Government leads a national approach to more effective electronic management of key health information (e-Health). It also contributes to the strategic development of health and ageing policies by engaging with the community and international organisations.

Outcome 10 is the responsibility of the Population Health Division, the Portfolio Strategies Division, the Primary and Ambulatory Care Division and the Regulatory Policy and Governance Division.

The Year Ahead

In 2007-08, the Australian Government, in collaboration with the states and territories, will continue to work towards a more seamless, integrated approach to disease management. A priority will be to help people actively self-manage their chronic disease.

The Government will focus on providing patients and health professionals with information and support. It will also aim to improve information systems, and provide an appropriate framework for safety and quality assurance in health care.

Key Strategic Directions for 2007-08

During 2007-08, the Australian Government will:

- continue to improve access to, and the quality of, palliative care for people with a terminal illness;
- improve the management of chronic disease, including self-management;
- work to reduce the burden of cancer and improve support for Australians living with cancer;
- promote improved patient safety; and
- support improvements in clinical practice and decision-making through e-Health.

Major Activities

Improving Palliative Care in the Community

In 2007-08, the Australian Government will continue to improve access to quality palliative care for patients, their families and carers through the National Palliative Care Program. The Government will fund local communities, through the Local Palliative Care Grants Program, which offers competitive grants for equipment and the fitting-out of premises. The program also assists people to make the transition from hospital to home.

The Government will continue to provide funding to the Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach for training and information dissemination, to ensure the provision of high quality palliative care. This training will be provided to health care professionals including nurses, allied health workers, Aboriginal health workers, general practitioners and other medical practitioners. The Government will also support the Respecting Patient Choices model of advance care planning in the community which enables people to record their end of life wishes and to know that these wishes will be considered by their families, carers and health advisers.

Furthermore, the Australian Government will continue to provide funding in 2007-08 to the Palliative Care Knowledge Network to develop a multi-layered website with the capacity to support on-line clinical communities of practice. The website will meet the information and resources needs of groups such as palliative care specialists, researchers, educators and general health professionals. Nurses, allied health professionals, volunteers, patients, families and carers will also benefit from the website.

Improved Management of Chronic Disease

In 2007-08, the Australian Government will continue to focus on improving the management of chronic disease. The Government's approach to chronic disease is guided by the National Chronic Disease Strategy, which addresses prevention and early detection of disease, and reduction of risk factors for disease. The strategy also focuses on greater self-management and the coordination of those diagnosed with chronic disease.

As part of the Australian Better Health Initiative, the Australian Government will develop a targeted training program for health care professionals to assist people with chronic diseases to actively self-manage their health. The Government will also audit and invest in curricula resources in medical, nursing and health science schools and the vocational education and training sector.

In 2007-08, the Government will continue to implement the Asthma Management Program 2005-06 to 2008-09, which includes a national awareness campaign and supports consumer self-management through the Asthma Foundations of Australia. Asthma education for health professionals will be provided through programs delivered by the National Asthma Council Australia with Government funding.

The Government will continue to fund research and development to improve the prevention and treatment of diabetes. The research will focus on the Islet cell transplantation initiative to enable effective treatment of type 1 diabetes. The National Diabetes Strategy will also be updated to align it with the National Chronic Disease Strategy and the National Service Improvement Framework for diabetes, which provide a better framework for addressing the diabetes continuum of care in the context of broader chronic disease management.

The Government will also continue to fund a range of prevention and management activities to improve the early detection, early intervention, clinical management and self-management of arthritis and osteoporosis. These include awareness and consumer self-management activities, the development of national primary care guidelines for arthritis and osteoporosis, and health professional education activities.

Cancer Care and National Leadership in Cancer Control

In 2007-08, the Australian Government will continue to work to reduce the burden of cancer and improve support for Australians living with cancer through the Strengthening Cancer Care Initiative. Programs under this initiative will provide further support for those affected by cancer, with a focus on prevention, treatment, research and support for cancer patients and their families. The Government will also deliver a new strategy aimed at reducing Australia's high rates of skin cancer.

The Department will continue to collaborate with Cancer Australia which provides national leadership in cancer control. The Department will work with Cancer Australia to establish a new Centre for Gynaecological Cancers, which will undertake an early assessment of existing gynaecological cancer services and provide a national focus on gynaecological cancer issues. The Department will also take a leadership role in policy development, utilising the expanding knowledge of Cancer Australia.

Safety and Quality in Health Care

The safety and quality of the Australian health care system is a priority for the Australian Government. In 2007-08, the Government, along with the states and territories, will continue to fund the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care to identify issues, recommend policy directions and provide strategic advice to Health Ministers. The Commission is also responsible for promoting safety and quality, and recommending nationally agreed standards for safety and quality improvement. In 2007-08, the Department will work with the Commission, jurisdictions within the portfolio and cross-portfolio agencies to promote improved patient safety.

Progressing the e-Health Agenda

In 2007-08, the Government, through the Department, will continue to work with all states and territories, health professional groups and consumers, to address those aspects of e-Health which require national leadership and coordination. The Government will continue to invest in key elements of e-Health infrastructure where a common, national approach is required. The Department will specifically oversee the development of national standards to ensure compatibility of e-Health systems across the health network.

Outcome 10 Resourcing

Table 3.1.10 shows how the 2007-08 Budget appropriations translate to total resourcing for outcome 10, including administered expenses, revenue from government (appropriation), revenue from other sources, and the total price of outputs.

Table 3.1.10: Total Resources for Outcome 10

	Estimated actual 2006-07 \$'000	Budget estimate 2007-08 \$'000
Administered appropriations		
Program 10.1: Chronic Disease - Treatment		
Appropriation Bill 1	16,891	15,812
	16,891	15,812
Program 10.2: e-Health Implementation		
Appropriation Bill 1	78,972	40,041
	78,972	40,041
Program 10.3: Health Information		
Appropriation Bill 1	7,300	7,544
	7,300	7,544
Program 10.4: International Policy Engagement		
Appropriation Bill 1	11,575	11,575
	11,575	11,575
Program 10.5: Palliative Care and Community Assistance		
Appropriation Bill 1	19,260	25,610
<i>Health Care (Appropriation) Act 1998 - Australian Health Care Agreements - Provision of Designated Health Services (p)</i>	3,014	2,861
Total Special Appropriations	3,014	2,861
	22,274	28,471
Program 10.6: Research Capacity		
to Department of Health and Ageing	465,589	32,123
to National Institute of Clinical Studies	1,850	-
Appropriation Bill 1	467,439	32,123
	467,439	32,123
Total Administered Appropriations	604,451	135,566

Table 3.1.10: Total Resources for Outcome 10 (cont)

	Estimated actual 2006-07 \$'000	Budget estimate 2007-08 \$'000
Departmental appropriations		
Health and Ageing		
Output Group 1 - Policy Advice	4,918	4,924
Output Group 2 - Program Management	13,206	13,223
Total price from departmental outputs <i>(Total revenue from government and from other sources)</i>	18,124	18,147
Total revenue from government (appropriations) contributing to price of departmental outputs	17,618	17,661
Total revenue from other sources	506	486
Total price from departmental outputs <i>(Total revenue from government and from other sources)</i>	18,124	18,147
Total Price of Outputs for Outcome 10 <i>(Total Revenue from Government and from other sources)</i>	18,124	18,147
Total estimated resourcing for Outcome 10 <i>(Total price of outputs and administered appropriations)</i>	622,575	153,713
	2006-07	2007-08
Average Staffing Level (number)		
Department	134	131

¹ Flows into Special Accounts are also shown in the receipts column of the Special Accounts table in Table 2.6.

² Where names of Acts have been abbreviated, the full name of the Act can be found in the Acts Glossary at the end of Table 2.6.

Measures Affecting Outcome 10

A summary of measures affecting this outcome is provided at Table 2.2, Section 2. Measure descriptions are published in full in *Budget Paper No. 2, Budget Measures 2007-08*, available on the Australian Government website at: <www.budget.gov.au>.

Contribution of Administered Programs to Outcome 10

Program 10.1: Chronic Diseases – Treatment

The Chronic Diseases – Treatment program provides funding to improve the prevention, early detection and management of diabetes; and the treatment and support for people with cancer, their families and the community. It funds programs to reduce the social and economic impacts of asthma in Australia; and to improve the quality of life for people with arthritis and osteoporosis, and their carers. Furthermore, the program provides funding for the clinical trial of Islet cell transplantation, and evidence-based strength training to improve the management of type 2 diabetes.

Program 10.2: e-Health Implementation

The e-Health Implementation program funds a range of activities aimed at delivering e-Health infrastructure where a common, national approach is required. This is achieved through encouraging the development of national standards to ensure compatibility of

e-Health systems across the health sector. The contribution to this outcome is measured by the uptake of e-Health initiatives.

Program 10.3: Health Information

The Health Information program funds a range of activities aimed at developing and/or gathering information that contributes to the strategic development of health and ageing policies and programs. A particular focus is on supporting community engagement and input to the decision-making process. The contribution to this outcome is measured and achieved through national surveys and support of peak community organisations and forums for planning, information sharing and innovation.

Program 10.4: International Policy Engagement

This International Policy Engagement program funds contributions to an existing range of international treaties, commitments and Memoranda of Understanding (for example, with the World Health Organization). The contribution to this outcome is measured by the timeliness and quality of the contributions under these commitments; and improvements to the quality and capacity of the Australian health system through engagement with other countries and international organisations on issues of mutual interest (for example, communicable diseases).

Program 10.5: Palliative Care and Community Assistance

This Palliative Care and Community Assistance program provides funding, through the Australian Health Care Agreements, to improve the provision of palliative care services. The program also funds initiatives to help terminally ill people access the best care and support available; and competitive grants to local organisations to provide better support to people requiring palliative care and their families in their communities. The contribution to this outcome is measured by the extent to which initiatives improve access to, and the quality of, services for people requiring palliative care, their families and carers. The outcome is also measured by the timeliness of quality advice on access to care.

Program 10.6: Research Capacity

The Research Capacity program provides funding to the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care to help improve safety and quality across the health care system. It also supports Australia's medical research to ensure that Australia's research institutions maintain their competitive edge by building capacity for priority research.

Contribution of Departmental Outputs to Outcome 10

The Department describes its core activities in terms of two output groups: policy advice and program management. Outcome 10 reports on both output groups. Refer to Section 3.1 for more information on output groups.

Performance Information for Outcome 10

Performance information for administered programs, individual outputs and output groups relating to Outcome 10 are summarised in Table 3.2.10.

Table 3.2.10: Key Performance Information for Outcome 10

Performance Information for Administered Programs

Indicator	Measured by	Reference Point or Target
Administered Funding – Health System Capacity and Quality Programs		
Initiatives that prevent type 2 diabetes, modify the prevalence of type 2 diabetes risk factors, and improve management of diabetes.	Initiatives will be assessed against the Health Priority Areas – National Diabetes Indicators.	Continued programs and initiatives to prevent type 2 diabetes, modify the prevalence of type 2 diabetes risk factors or improve management of diabetes.
Diagnosis, treatment and support of people with cancer and their families.	Programs and initiatives for improved diagnosis, treatment and support of cancer patients and their families.	Lessened impact of cancer for Australians through programs and initiatives.
Key stakeholders use electronic clinical communications to improve quality and safety in health care.	Use of electronic clinical communications by key stakeholders.	Increased use of electronic communications by key stakeholders in the health sector for electronic prescribing.
Improved quality of, and access to, online health information and Australian Government health policy by medical professionals and the Australian public.	Quality online health information is made available through the Health <i>Insite</i> program.	Improved access and quality information.
Establishment of managed health networks with the capacity to support secure electronic messaging and shared health records.	Level of access to improved connectivity, shared information and digital applications.	Managed health networks developed to support health care providers.
Australian Government investment in the National E-Health Transition Authority (NEHTA) contributes to the development of nationally consistent e-Health standards and basic infrastructure.	Timely and quality contributions to NEHTA during the development of priority e-Health initiatives.	Timely input to NEHTA programs and ensure NEHTA work is delivered within agreed timeframes.

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Budget Statements – Department of Health and Ageing

Indicator	Measured by	Reference Point or Target
Administered Funding – Health System Capacity and Quality Programs		
Effective international health policy engagement.	Feedback from international organisations.	Domestic health policy informed by international experience. Australian contribution to health policy and programs in our region acknowledged.
Effective management of Memorandum of Understanding arrangements with the World Health Organization.	Timeliness of contributions.	Contributions made as per arranged agreements.
Support for Australia's health and medical research.	Implemented funding initiatives that enhance health and medical research capacity.	Contributions made as per arranged agreements.
Cost: \$135.566m		

Performance Information for Departmental Outputs

Indicator	Measured by	Reference Point or Target
Output Group 1 – Policy Advice		
Quality, relevant and timely advice for Australian Government decision-making.	Ministerial satisfaction.	Maintain or increase from previous year.
Relevant and timely evidence-based policy research.	Production of relevant and timely evidence-based policy research.	Relevant evidence-based policy research produced in a timely manner.
Price: \$4.924m		

Indicator	Measured by	Reference Point or Target
Output Group 2 – Program Management		
Administered budget predictions are met and actual expenses vary less than 0.5% from budgeted expenses.	Percentage that actual expenses vary from budgeted expenses.	0.5% variance from budgeted expenses.

Section 3 – Department Outcomes – 10 Health System Capacity and Quality

Indicator	Measured by	Reference Point or Target
Output Group 2 – Program Management		
Stakeholders to participate in program development.	Opportunities for stakeholder participation through a range of avenues, such as surveys, conferences and meetings.	Stakeholders participate in program development through consultation mechanisms, and submissions on Departmental discussion papers.
Price: \$13.223m		

Evaluations

Strengthening Cancer Care Initiative

The Department will manage a two year evaluation of the Strengthening Cancer Care Initiative from 2007-08. The evaluation will examine the programs within the initiative that support people living with cancer, cancer health professionals, and coordination and research categories. The evaluation will also review and assess the overall effectiveness of the Strengthening Cancer Care package.

Better Arthritis and Osteoporosis Care Initiative

The Department will manage an umbrella evaluation of the Better Arthritis and Osteoporosis Care Initiative from May 2007. There will also be an ongoing evaluation of each program element and of the program overall, within a quality improvement framework, finishing at the end of the initiative in May 2010.

Major Reviews

The Department does not plan to undertake any major reviews under Outcome 10 in 2007-08.