



Australian Government

Department of Health and Aged Care

Action Plan

for the Digital Health Blueprint 2023–2033



A more personalised and connected health
and wellbeing experience for all Australians

Acknowledgements

The Department of Health and Aged Care gratefully acknowledges the advice, input and support of the many organisations and individuals who contributed to developing this document through user research, engagement and consultation processes.

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Terminology used in this document

In this document, we only use the term 'patient' to refer to a person receiving treatment for a disease or injury. When referring to people in the community involved in services related to health and wellbeing, we may use the term 'consumers', 'people' or 'Australians' as appropriate. These terms should be considered inclusive of non-citizens making use of the health system. The term 'healthcare provider' includes individual health professionals and the organisations for whom they work. 'Healthcare' is used as an adjective (for example, 'healthcare provider'), while 'health care' is used as a noun (for example, 'primary health care').

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A digital blueprint for strengthening our health system

The Digital Health Blueprint 2023–2033 articulates our vision for the role digital health capabilities will continue to play in delivering a more person-centred and sustainable health system by 2033:



Trusted, timely and accessible use of digital and data underpins a personalised and connected health and wellbeing experience for all Australians.

For consumers, healthcare providers, researchers and innovators, the Blueprint reflects our vision for the use of digital health and our role in its use. For example:

- **digitally enabled services are changing how people, clinicians, businesses and governments work together.** A contemporary health service should reflect the digital experiences people expect from other industries
- digital health can play an important part in **better supporting a health workforce** that is under pressure to deliver timely and high-quality care
- there is a need for the adoption of national **digital health capabilities** in areas where we hold responsibility for policy, legislation and funding.

The **Blueprint aims to complement** existing state and territory frameworks and the *National Digital Health Strategy* and align with the Australian Government's broader digital transformation agenda.

It outlines the role digital will play in delivering a health system that:

places the consumer and their carers at the centre of their health and wellbeing

is better at preventing disease and promoting health and wellness

responds to the evolving needs of healthcare providers, researchers and innovators

supports our long-term health reform priorities for a consumer-centric health system informed by data

supports inclusivity, equity and usability by design

A plan for action

The Blueprint is supported by this Action Plan, which guides our efforts in realising our vision.

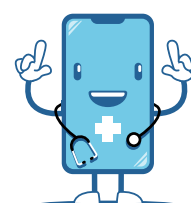
To deliver on our vision, the Blueprint:

- identifies the **outcomes needed** for consumers, healthcare providers, researchers, industry and innovators
- **outlines the priority areas** in which we will invest to achieve the vision
- defines our role in providing a **strong and consistent vision and leadership** in stewarding digital transformation to support long-term health reform priorities.

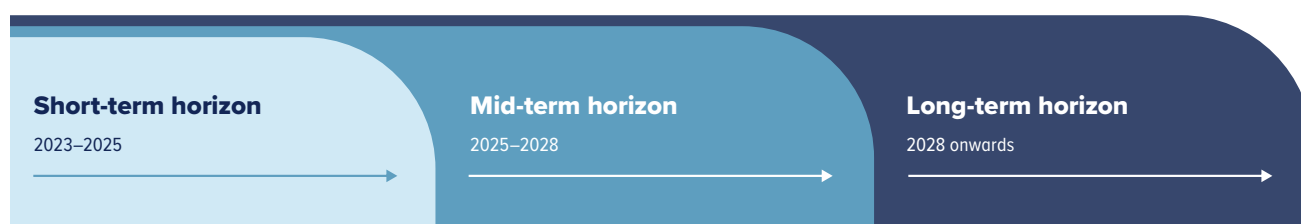
Building on the Blueprint, this Action Plan:

- explains the initiatives we and our partners are investing in to meet our target outcomes
- identifies how these initiatives align to the action areas from the Blueprint
- outlines our key delivery partners and progress.

While the Blueprint outlines 2033 health and wellbeing goals, it also acknowledges the dynamic nature of digital health.



Our initiatives will span three horizons, recognising evolving technology, government funding cycles, and the value of building upon existing foundations for sustainable healthcare connections.



We will refresh this Action Plan as required to reflect the changing digital health landscape and our responses to these changes.

Working with our delivery partners

Australia's health system is a complex mix of organisations and individuals, priorities, responsibilities and capabilities.

Our delivery partners will help us realise our vision through collaboration to develop and implement our digital initiatives.

Delivering on this vision cannot be achieved in isolation. It requires a clear approach and strong partnerships.



We are committed to ensuring there is:

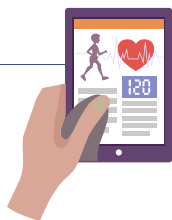
Clarity on our digital priorities

Certainty to those involved in delivering innovation in the health and wellbeing sector

Enhanced sector **collaboration** on national initiatives for more effective, consumer-focused healthcare delivery

A principles-led approach

We are taking a principles-led approach to developing initiatives that support the delivery of our vision.



Person-centred

- data focuses on the person it is about
- systems are designed around the people who use them
- consumers easily access, use and understand information
- healthcare providers access consumer data when and where they need it as a natural part of their clinical workflow.



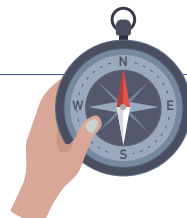
Collaborative

- by acting together, we can achieve more
- collaboration with a diverse stakeholder community enables meaningful implementation and use
- change is managed and outcomes improved through ongoing engagement and discussion
- planned activities consider sector-wide digital maturity levels and necessary uplifts.



Trusted

- consumers and healthcare providers trust the quality, accuracy, security and privacy of health data
- consumers control data consent for health care and research, trusting its appropriate use
- healthcare providers are confident in the tools they use to access and interpret data according to professional guidelines.



Enduring

- contemporary legislation, guidelines, policy, and funding supports bold reform designed for long-term benefits
- good governance ensures staying on course while adapting to digital health changes
- implementations are aligned with the modern health and wellbeing agenda for a sustainable healthcare system.

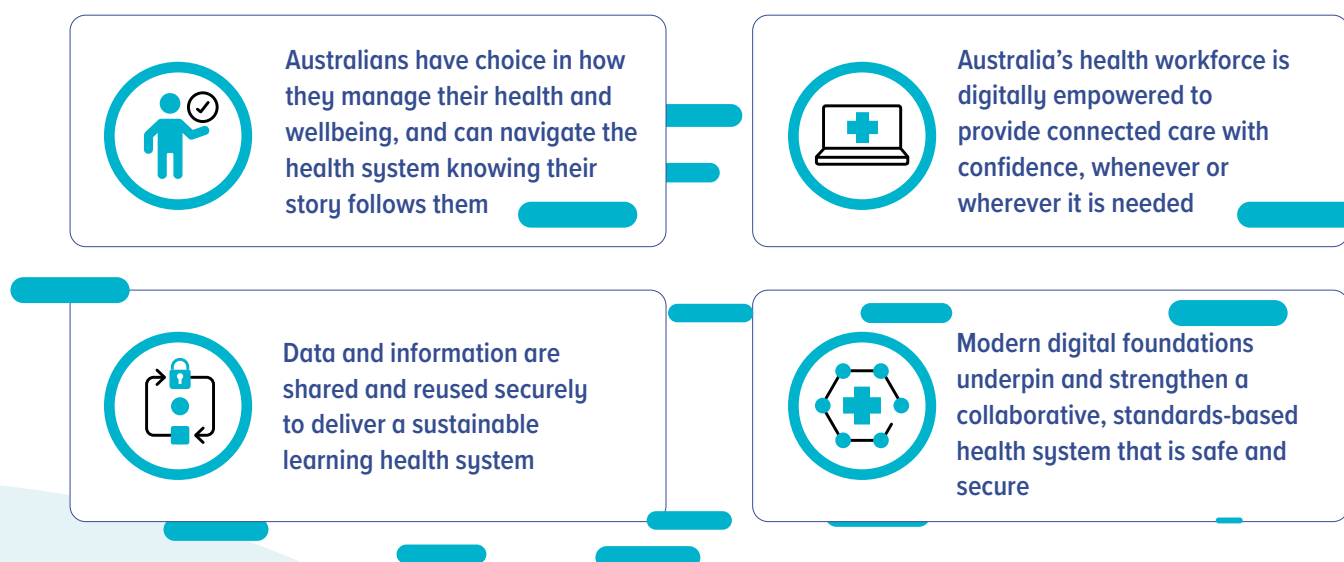
The engine that drives change

This Action Plan recognises that digital health evolves rapidly.

We know that individual organisations and initiatives will not all start from the same level of maturity. Part of our role is to support a growing digital maturity for everybody in Australia's healthcare system.

To achieve our vision for digital health, we have adopted an **outcome-focused approach** guided by our principles, the Blueprint, and Action Plan, emphasising improved health outcomes. This Action Plan focuses on the next 2 years of planning within our three-horizon approach.

Outcomes will depend on shared initiatives across action areas, all contributing to the same vision.

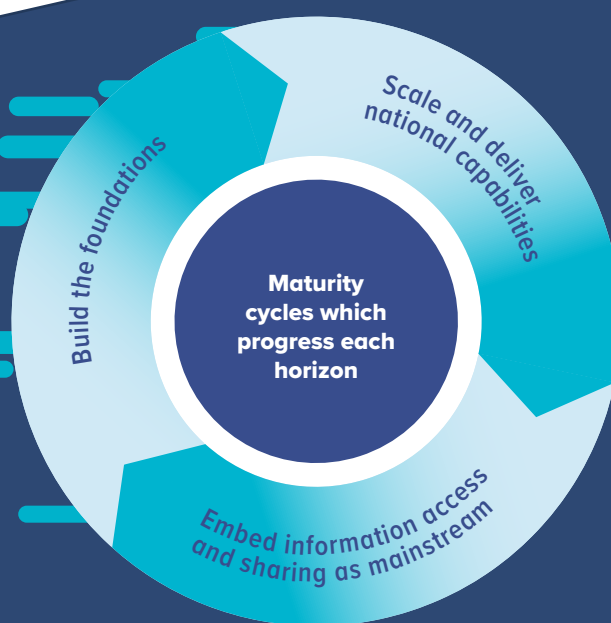


... will be delivered through initiatives

Short-term horizon

2023–2025

As the Blueprint begins to roll out, some initiatives will build on mature areas of digital health, while others will start in areas of lower maturity.



Future horizons will see specific initiatives continue, some end and new ones commence.

A focus on action to deliver outcomes

What we are doing to meet Australia's digital expectations

For each of the four outcomes, we've established action areas to target digital initiatives, promoting a connected, inclusive, and personalised healthcare system. Each initiative in this Action Plan is aligned with these action areas to clarify their purpose and connections.

Australians have choice in how they manage their health and wellbeing, and can navigate the health system knowing their story follows them



Action areas:

- helping Australians make informed choices
- supporting self-care and improved access
- leveraging the insights of consumers
- delivering transparency and strengthening trust
- ensuring an inclusive future
- connecting people's healthcare journey
- providing care where it is needed for all Australians
- encouraging consumer participation in emergency responses.

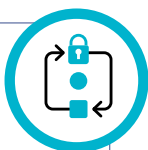
Australia's health workforce is digitally empowered to provide connected care with confidence, whenever or wherever it is needed



Action areas:

- collaborating with representative organisations for broader adoption
- linking skills development and career pathways
- driving towards national consistency in education and training
- promoting the need for digital skills and education in national priority health programs
- creating a trusted view of consumer data
- strengthening continuity of care
- delivering high-quality, trusted health intelligence and decision support.

Data and information are shared and reused securely to deliver a sustainable learning health system



Action areas:

- meeting public expectations for consent and data sharing
- delivering accessible, accurate and usable health data
- ensuring coordinated national investment and co-commissioning
- promoting efficiency and financial sustainability
- supporting precise research and analysis translated into practical care
- bringing innovation into the spotlight.

Modern digital foundations underpin and strengthen a collaborative, standards-based health system that is safe and secure



Action areas:

- ensuring systems are connected, are interoperable and can easily share information
- connecting data to the right person
- building a resilient and secure system
- strengthening foundations for emerging technology and devices
- promoting use and reuse of national infrastructure
- leveraging whole-of-government investments.

Delivering initiatives to meet our outcomes

Our digital investments will build upon existing foundations to achieve our planned 2033 outcomes, incorporating known mid-term initiatives and options.

While each initiative calls upon specific delivery partners, the health software industry should be recognised for its key role in realising many of these. Equally, consumers and consumer advocacy groups play an important role in many initiatives to ensure they meet the needs of those with lived experience.

Progressing national digital health reform with our partners

Securing the Australian Digital Health Agency

Recognising its role as the national coordinating body for the digital enablement of Australia's health system, the Australian Government is investing \$325.7 million over four years from 2023–24, to establish the [Australian Digital Health Agency](#) as an ongoing entity.

Short- to mid-term horizon

Partners

Australian Digital Health Agency



Ongoing

Intergovernmental Agreement on National Digital Health 2023–2027

The Australian Government is investing \$126.8 million over four years from 2023–24 to support the implementation of the [Intergovernmental Agreement on National Digital Health 2023–2027](#) (IGA) in conjunction with state and territory governments.

Implementing the IGA will enhance health system sustainability, efficiency, and patient outcomes while maintaining funding for existing national health infrastructure and services, including the [Healthcare Identifiers Service](#), National Clinical Terminology Service, and [National Authentication Service for Health](#).

The IGA will also implement priority projects of strategic importance. These include:

- the design and development of national health information exchange capabilities to support patients as they transition across care settings and jurisdictional borders
- adoption and use of ePrescribing in public hospitals and health services
- the continued delivery of the Real Time Prescription Monitoring service.

Short- to mid-term horizon

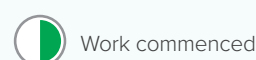
Partners

State and territory governments

Australian Digital Health Agency

Services Australia

Healthdirect Australia



Work commenced

Legend:

Identified



Planning



Work commenced



Implementation



Completed



Ongoing

MyMedicare

MyMedicare is a new voluntary system for patients and healthcare providers to support better care for people who choose to register with their general practice and nominate their usual GP. This information will be viewable in My Health Record so that hospitals and other healthcare providers can more readily communicate with each patient's nominated GP.

MyMedicare responds to the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce recommendation for government to introduce a system of voluntary patient registration for general practice. The Australian Government is investing \$19.7 million over four years from 2023–24 through the Department of Health and Aged Care (the Department) to support the rollout of the MyMedicare system.

Short-term horizon**Partners**

Healthcare providers
and organisations

Australian Digital Health Agency

Services Australia



Work commenced



Modernising healthcare delivery

MyMedicare is a new model of care being implemented by the Australian Government to drive improvements in the continuity of quality primary health care for all Australians. It will deliver new blended funding models for primary care providers targeted at improving patient health outcomes and supporting greater practice viability. Practice and patient registration in the MyMedicare system will be voluntary.

MyMedicare will recognise multidisciplinary team-based care models for registered patients. This will allow new payments that incentivise team arrangements and improve patient outcomes. By making greater use of the available workforce we can reduce patient wait times and address shortages.



Broader types of health organisations (such as Nurse Led Practices) will be recognised as eligible practices under MyMedicare. By recognising them against the primary and community care standards, we can ensure quality service provision for patients.

Ongoing health policy efforts

International partnerships

Continue to work with international partners and key bodies such as the [Global Digital Health Partnership](#), and the [World Health Organization](#), to emphasise the vital role of the health workforce in supporting digitally enabled change and leverage international collaboration, thinking and advancement.

Short- to mid-term horizon

Partners

Global Digital Health Partnership

World Health Organization



Ongoing

Policy levers to support health system interoperability

Identify and support priority areas of health and wellbeing that need policy, legislation and standards for enhanced interoperability, leading to improved consumer outcomes and reduced burden on providers.

Short-term horizon

Partners

State and territory governments

Healthcare providers and organisations

Australian Digital Health Agency

Services Australia



Ongoing



Modernisation of My Health Record

My Health Record data-rich platform

The Australian Government is investing \$38.4 million over two years from 2023–24 to commence the transition of My Health Record from being a clinical document (PDF) system to an atomic data-rich platform. This work involves aligning My Health Record with international health data standards, such as HL7 and FHIR, to enhance interoperability and promote person-centred care for all Australians.

Short-term horizon

Partners

Australian Digital Health Agency



Work commenced

Continued modernisation of My Health Record

My Health Record will play a key supporting role in the establishment of national health information sharing capabilities. Planning for the modernisation of the My Health Record system to meet these sharing requirements for consumers and healthcare providers is underway, with future phases to be considered by government.

Short-term horizon

Partners

Australian Digital Health Agency

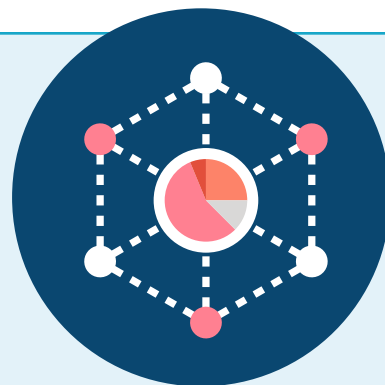


Planning

Australian digital health on FHIR

We are supporting a community-led consortium approach engaging all stakeholders to develop national data models and interactions using the FHIR® standard. This will include an Australian Core FHIR standard and eRequesting FHIR Implementation Guides that specify data models and interactions for managing personal digital health and administrative patient information.

This investment will also trial a FHIR Management process (community process and HL7-AU FHIR Management group) and evaluate the effectiveness of the accelerated standards development approach



and operating model. This work is underpinned by the development of the Australian FHIR Management Framework.





Enhancing My Health Record capabilities

Sharing by default

The Australian Government has allocated \$13.1 million over two years, from 2023–24, to enable default sharing of key health information with My Health Record. This initiative begins with pathology and diagnostic imaging reports within the next two years, enhancing care continuity and preventing redundant diagnostic services. The Australian Digital Health Agency offers technical assistance for healthcare providers to register, connect to, and use the My Health Record system. The Agency also provides education and change adoption support for consumers and healthcare providers. Support will also include education and guidance for consumers and healthcare providers as new features become available.

Planning is underway to extend sharing to My Health Record by default for other key health information to further support continuity of care for all Australians.

Short-term horizon

Partners

Australian Digital Health Agency



Work commenced

Connecting allied health to My Health Record

The Australian Government has invested \$5.8 million over two years starting in 2023–24 to support allied health software vendors in connecting to My Health Record, building on adoption within general practice and medical specialists. This work will support increasing members of a patient's healthcare team with access to their essential health information in My Health Record.

Short-term horizon

Partners

Australian Digital Health Agency

Software industry

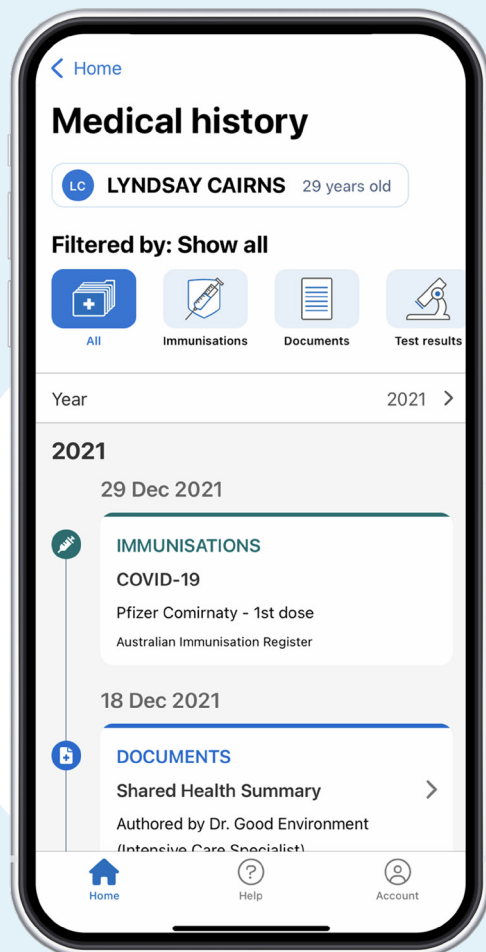


Planning



Putting knowledge into the hands of Australians

My Health Record already contains useful consumer information. As we continue to upload more health data by default, we are working to enhance the presentation of this information for Australians.



The Australian Digital Health Agency has delivered the My Health app, which provides easy access to key health information once it has been uploaded to My Health Record.

The Department encourages the development of more user-friendly health apps providing comprehensive health information. This could include direct sharing of electronic prescriptions with pharmacists from the medication screen and providing clear medication timelines and advice for easier discussions with healthcare providers.

Combined with information from other sources such as the Australian Immunisation Register, consumers will be able to confidently manage their vaccination status through apps on their personal devices.

Connected wearable devices that collect a person's real-time health data will enable Australians to be actively involved in managing their health and wellbeing.

“I have severe psoriasis. To get subsidised ... lots of paperwork needs to be prepared. It would be nicer if I could play a larger part in the process. For example, when my Dermatologist sends the paperwork to Medicare, I'd like to be cc'd.”

EY Sweeney, 'DoHAC Digital Health Blueprint User Research'. Jun. 2021



Enhancing medication management

Strengthening electronic prescribing and targeted digital medicines enhancements

The Australian Government will invest \$111.8 million over four years from 2023–24 to deliver a stable and sustainable prescription delivery service. This will support the continued use of electronic prescribing across the health system.

ePrescribing high-cost and high-risk medications

As part of this initiative, the Australian Government will implement the mandatory use of electronic prescriptions for high-risk and high-cost medicines, which will strengthen their safe provision and use. This change will also address data quality issues that stem from paper-based or poorly structured, non-mandatory processes. The timing for implementation of this initiative will depend on the consultation that will take place to inform the policy and legislative requirements.

Electronic medication charts

Under this initiative, the Australian Government will establish a national framework for electronic medication charts, expanding their use in various settings, such as oncology, hospitals (private and public), residential aged care, and palliative care. This will enhance clinical safety and medication practices, and reduce administrative burdens for prescribers and dispensers.

Long-term horizon

Partners

State and territory governments

Software industry

Australian Digital Health Agency

Department of Veterans' Affairs

Australian Commission on
Safety and Quality in Health
Care

Professional and peak bodies



Ongoing



ePrescribing in public hospitals and health services settings

The Australian Government is supporting the adoption of electronic prescribing to public hospital and healthcare settings, including (but not limited to) in-patient and out-patient hospital care, at-home or outreach services, oncology/chemotherapy or palliative care treatment in hospital and other facilities.

Expanded adoption will ensure consumers have a seamless experience as they transition between clinical settings through the:

- development of a conformance profile for electronic prescribing from electronic medical charts
- integration of electronic prescribing from electronic medical charts with the existing prescription delivery service
- alignment of enabling national and jurisdictional legislation.

Long-term horizon

Partners

Australian Digital Health Agency

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care

Peak bodies

State and territory governments



Ongoing

Real Time Prescription Monitoring

Real Time Prescription Monitoring (RTPM) is designed to monitor the prescribing and dispensing of monitored medicines with the aim of reducing their unsafe use in Australia. RTPM is being implemented Australia wide and the National Data Exchange component of this system has been delivered.

RTPM is intended to support decision-making by providing the capability for prescribers and pharmacists to check a patient's medicine history before writing or dispensing a prescription for a monitored medicine. The system provides an alert to prescribers and dispensers when a patient is receiving multiple supplies of monitored medicines.

Short-term horizon

Partners

Australian Digital Health Agency

State and territory governments

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency



Ongoing

Real Time Prescription Monitoring

RTPM is a nationally implemented system designed to monitor the prescribing and dispensing of controlled medicines with the aim of reducing their misuse in Australia.

The RTPM provides information to doctors (prescribers) and pharmacists (dispensers) about a patient's history and use of controlled medicines when they are considering prescribing or dispensing these medicines. This digital capability can help reduce misuse of medicines listed as controlled substances, while ensuring patients who genuinely need these medicines are able to access them.



We are working together with state and territory agencies to implement the RTPM system. However, each state or territory remains responsible for the management of controlled medicines in its jurisdiction.

ePrescribing

Electronic prescribing allows prescribers and their patients to use an electronic prescription. It forms part of an Australian Government budget measure to make the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) more efficient. Electronic prescriptions are part of the broader digital health and medicines safety framework. They enable the prescribing, dispensing and claiming of medicines, without the need for a paper prescription.

Electronic prescribing does not fundamentally change existing prescribing and dispensing processes. Patients can still choose which pharmacy they attend to fill their prescription. While paper prescriptions remain an option, prescribers and patients can choose electronic prescriptions if they prefer.

Electronic prescribing is important because it:

- provides greater choice for patients
- makes prescribing and dispensing medicines more efficient
- may reduce prescribing and dispensing errors



- supports electronic medication charts in hospitals and residential aged care facilities
- removes the need for handling and storing a physical paper prescription
- supports digital health services such as telehealth services to ensure continuity of patient care
- provides an opportunity to protect community members and healthcare providers from exposure to infectious diseases (for example, COVID-19)
- maintains patient privacy and integrity of personal information.

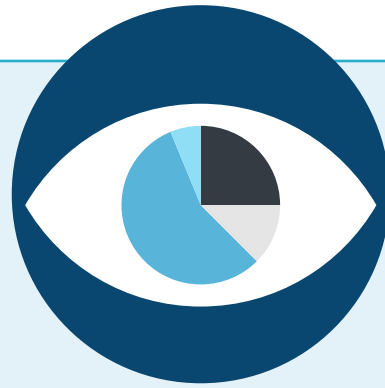


Maximising the value of the Healthcare Identifiers Service

Established in 2010, the Healthcare Identifiers (HI) Service is operated by Services Australia on behalf of the governments of Australia. The value of the HI Service lies in its accuracy when identifying consumers of health care and healthcare providers. Unlike other options, such as Medicare card numbers, the HI Service provides a unique identifier for all individuals and organisations in the health system.

Healthcare Identifiers are essential for My Health Record's functionality, and state and territory health systems incorporate consumer identifiers to ensure accurate data exchange.

We will maximise the value of the HI Service by identifying and promoting the broader adoption of healthcare identifiers within jurisdictions and the



Department, including rationalising directory services and expanding support for healthcare identifiers in other systems.

Through widespread adoption of a single national identifier for individuals and healthcare providers, we can support the increasing need for data linkage across systems to support clinical decision-making and research. This will be critical to support the rapid adoption of digital solutions and data focused on the individual such as genomics and the broader precision health movement.



National standards to support health system interoperability

Healthcare Identifiers Framework Project

As part of the 2022–2023 Budget, the Australian Government agreed to continue the Health Delivery Modernisation (HDM) Program. The HDM Program was initiated to progressively stabilise and modernise the health payment systems and services to underpin the Medicare PBS, and the Australian Immunisation Register, as well as a number of other health-related programs.

As part of the HDM Program, the Department of Health and Aged Care is working to modernise the Healthcare Identifiers legislative framework and HI Service to ensure they support and improve the exchange of health information. The project aims to align the *Healthcare Identifiers Act 2010* with the modern healthcare environment to support current and emerging goals.

Short-term horizon

Partners

Services Australia

Australian Digital Health Agency

State and territory governments

Australian Government Solicitor

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner



Ongoing

Sparked – Core FHIR standards

The Australian Government has invested \$9.3 million over two years from 2023–24 for the CSIRO to work with all Australian governments, the Australian Digital Health Agency and the health technology industry. This collaboration aims to establish a core national standard for consistent patient health interaction information capture through community consensus. This work is vital to achieve consistent, near-real-time health information capture and sharing throughout the healthcare system. CSIRO will develop national core health information sharing standards based on FHIR core standards, guided by community collaboration. Implementation guides will support open national data exchange and sharing capabilities for Australia's health system.

Short-term horizon

Partners

CSIRO

Australian Digital Health Agency

Software industry



Work commenced



eRequesting and electronic Clinical Decision Support

The Australian Government has invested \$5.8 million over two years from 2023-24 for the Department of Health and Aged Care to collaborate with key sector stakeholders to design a national eRequesting capability. This work includes establishing the technical, clinical terminology and exchange standards required to implement a national eRequesting capability for pathology and diagnostic imaging health services, subject to future decisions of government.

This co-design process will establish the ability to implement the first end-to-end digital pathway for patients and their healthcare providers, from an eRequest to diagnostic result that would be shared to My Health Record. This work will establish information and data standards for pathology and diagnostic imaging, enabling electronic Clinical Decision Support (eCDS) tools and systems to support health professionals across their scope of practice.

Short-term horizon

Partners

CSIRO

Australian Digital Health Agency

Software industry

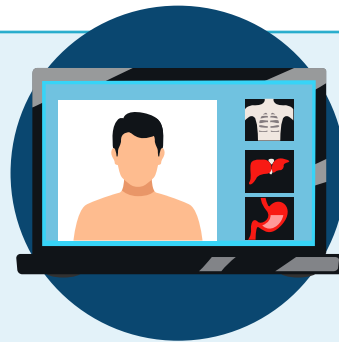


Work commenced

Building the standards for a national eRequesting capability

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This co-design process will establish the ability to implement the first end-to-end digital pathway for patients and their healthcare providers, from an



eRequest to diagnostic result that would be shared to My Health Record. This work establishes information and data standards for pathology and diagnostic imaging sectors, enabling eCDS tools and supporting health professionals in their practice.



National health information exchange capabilities

Short-mid-term horizon

National health information exchange capabilities

Under the IGA, scoping and development of a National Health Information Exchange Architecture and Roadmap will be undertaken to establish the national technical requirements needed to enable consistent, secure, safe and discoverable sharing of health information across care settings and state and territory borders. This work will inform national infrastructure requirements needed to establish national health information exchange capabilities into the future.

Partners

Australian Digital Health Agency

State and territory governments

Software Industry



Work commenced

Discovery for a national health information sharing legislative framework

As part of the 2023–2024 Budget, the Department is investing to support the states and territories to undertake preliminary legislative policy and analysis work to identify options to develop a national legislative framework authorising national health information sharing across care settings and borders.

Short-term horizon

Partners

Australian Digital Health Agency

Services Australia

Office of the Australian
Information Commissioner

State and territory governments



Planning

What is Health information exchange?

Health information exchange (HIE) is the electronic access to and sharing of healthcare information by healthcare providers within a country, region, community or hospital system, depending upon the scope. The idea is to securely and appropriately share and access a patient's vital health information with their healthcare providers, thus enhancing the speed, quality, safety, and cost of care.

Many organisations have implemented individual HIE solutions through development of systems or deployment of commercial solutions. However, Australia currently lacks a national HIE capability for real-time healthcare information exchange between healthcare systems.



HIE capabilities are considered a key part of international and Australian health systems. We aim to work with our delivery partners to eliminate legislative and regulatory obstacles to establishing a national framework for health information exchange in Australia.



Workforce development

Capability Action Plan – framework

Expanding upon the Capability Action Plan ([CAP](#)), we will develop foundational digital health capability statements applicable to the entire healthcare workforce, addressing both standard and unique digital health capability needs of various healthcare professions. The Australian Government co-funds parts of the implementation of this work through the IGA.

Activities will include the promotion and adoption of standardised digital health capabilities, development of a workforce digital health readiness framework and foundational digital health practice guidelines to support healthcare providers.

Short- to mid-term horizon

Partners

Australasian Institute of Digital Health

Australian Digital Health Agency



Implementation

CAP – online hub for digital career pathways

Building on the CAP, an online hub for digital career pathways for clinical and non-clinical professionals will be established. The hub will serve as a central repository for educators, professional bodies, employers, and individuals to access information and resources related to digital health careers, workforce development, career pathways, skills attraction, and future job skill growth.

Work will continue with stakeholders including government jurisdictions, professional groups, and peak bodies to increase the availability of easily accessible training, resources, guidance, and tools on digitally enabled health care for health workers and health service organisations.

Short- to mid-term horizon

Partners

Australasian Institute of Digital Health

Australian Digital Health Agency



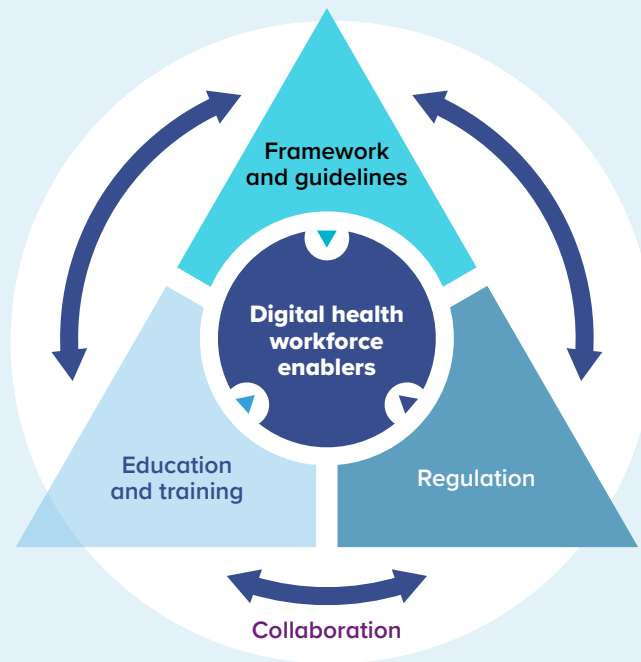
Work commenced



National Digital Health Capability Action Plan (CAP)

The CAP is a two-year program of work that sets out initiatives to equip Australia's health workforce for a digitally enabled future with standard capability frameworks, guidelines, resources, and tools. The Australian Digital Health Agency has published the CAP, which builds on thinking to date, with an emphasis on defining pragmatic actions that are relevant across the sector.

It outlines priority actions for building digital health capability in the health workforce to meet consumer needs now and in the future. The CAP combines three themes, which together influence the upskilling of Australia's health workforce.



Framework and guidelines
to support consistent digital health capabilities and practice nationally

Regulation
to require the inclusion of digital health in regulated health education

Education and training
to enable the health workforce to upskill and adopt digital

Collaboration
to promote a shared digital culture and continuous learning



Mental health

National Initial Assessment and Referral for mental health care

Initially released in 2019, the Initial Assessment and Referral (IAR) Guidance and the IAR-Decision Support tool is designed to provide a consistent approach for clinicians to decide or confirm the level of mental health care a patient will need, across five levels of care in a stepped care model. In its current form, the IAR provides guidance to health professionals on the areas that should be considered when conducting an initial assessment; however, it does not recommend/utilise a specific assessment tool. The IAR was funded in the 2021–22 Budget for four years to expand its use in primary care and community-based mental healthcare settings.

Short-term horizon

Partners

State and territory governments

Primary Health Networks (PHNs)



Work commenced

National Head to Health website

Refreshed in 2023, the [national Head to Health website](#) provides an online pathway for Australians to navigate mental health information, programs and services. The refreshed website includes new features and functionality to make it easier for Australians experiencing mental health challenges (or those caring for them) to find and access services that meet their needs more seamlessly. The website offers healthcare professionals additional resources and an improved service finder to find suitable services for their patients, supporting a blended model of care.

Short-term horizon

Partners

Mental health sector partners



Ongoing

Head to health phone Service

The Head to Health phone service, launched nationally on 1 July 2022, allows anyone in Australia to make a free call to Head to Health on 1800 595 212 (between 8:30am and 5pm weekdays) for information, advice and referral into the most appropriate mental health service that meets their needs. This may involve referral into a Head to Health service, or another free or low-cost mental health service in their local area, depending on what best meets individual circumstances. Services are commissioned by PHNs.

Short- to mid-term horizon

Partners

State and territory governments

PHNs



Ongoing



Head to Health

Head to Health helps all Australians access the mental health and wellbeing services that are right for them. It makes it easier to navigate and choose the most suitable care options, whether that's face-to-face, via phone, or online. Head to Health makes timely mental health advice, assessment, and treatment more accessible for all Australians. In

HEAD TO HEALTH

In addition to the website, there is a national Head to Health phone service, Head to Health centres and pop up clinics, and Head to Health Kids Hubs.



Digital initiatives supporting population health

Cardiovascular Disease Risk Guideline and calculator

The Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) Risk Guideline provides clinicians with the most up-to-date evidence on the early detection, assessment, and management of CVD risk. The Australian Government contracted the National Heart Foundation of Australia in 2019 (until 30 June 2023) to update the guideline and develop an online risk calculator for use by health professionals. In the 2023–2024 Budget, the Australian Government committed \$1 million to commence implementation of the new guideline and embedding of the calculator into GP software.

Short-term horizon

Partners

National Heart Foundation



Ongoing

Grow and Go Toolbox

The [Grow and Go Toolbox](#) provides a repository of evidence-based Australian resources for parents, health professionals and early childhood educators that support healthy food habits in the first 5 years of life.

Key features include:

- comprehensive digital library and intuitive search engine with over 1,700 resources and tools
- ‘Find a Health Professional’ tool
- ‘Build a Resource Suite’ (coming soon)
- free nutrition education modules for the Early Childhood Education and Care Sector (coming soon).

Short-term horizon

Partners

University of Queensland



Ongoing

Daybreak app

[Hello Sunday Morning’s](#) Daybreak program is a treatment and early intervention mobile app designed to provide around-the-clock support to individuals who are seeking support for their at-risk drinking and to reduce their harmful alcohol consumption.

Short-term horizon

Partners

Hello Sunday Morning



Ongoing

Path2Help

[Path2Help](#) is an information and support pathways directory that contains more than 11,000 services nationwide for Australians who may need information for themselves or their loved ones about alcohol and other drug use. The directory provides evidence-based information and is searchable by location, need, specific drug and type of service. Path2Help is Australia’s first online tool to recommend support services and information based on individual needs and circumstances.

Short-term horizon

Partners

Alcohol and Drug Foundation



Ongoing

Legend:

Identified



Planning



Work commenced



Implementation



Completed



Ongoing

Positive Choices

Positive Choices is an online portal targeting teachers, principals, school counsellors, First Nations education officers, youth workers, parents, and young people. Positive Choices aims to raise awareness about the harms associated with alcohol and other drug use by providing tools and school-based programs on alcohol, tobacco, illicit drugs, and related harms.

Short- to mid-term horizon**Partners**

University of Sydney



Ongoing

Cracks in the Ice

Cracks in the Ice is an initiative aiming to develop and disseminate evidence-based resources about crystal methamphetamine to improve knowledge, reduce stigma and increase access to care for people who use crystal methamphetamine as well as their families, health workers and communities.

Short- to mid-term horizon**Partners**

University of Adelaide



Ongoing

ASSIST-BI tool

The Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST) and linked Brief Intervention tool provides early and targeted brief intervention for substance use and reduces the short- and long-term risks for individuals, families, and communities.

Short- to mid-term horizon**Partners**

University of Adelaide



Ongoing

Counselling Online

Counselling Online provides free 24/7 access to specialised drug and alcohol counselling and support by a qualified counsellor, in a confidential environment. The Counselling Online service offers support in the form of self-assessment tools, an online support community, self-help, information articles, chat-based counselling, questions by email, and telephone support.

Short- to mid-term horizon**Partners**

Turning Point



Ongoing

SMART Recovery

SMART Recovery's goal is to support all Australians in managing addictive behaviours, anxiety and other mental health issues. It aims to reduce the impact of drugs and alcohol across the country by providing evidence-based peer support services online, especially for those without access to in-person services. SMART Recovery also addresses the effects of anxiety, depression, anger, and disconnection.

Short-term horizon**Partners**

SMART Recovery



Ongoing

**Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet**

Edith Cowan University manages the Alcohol and other Drugs Knowledge Centre [HealthInfoNet](#). This is a national web resource that provides relevant and culturally appropriate content and a resource for health practitioners and community members working to reduce harm from alcohol and other drug use among First Nations people.

Short- to mid-term horizon**Partners**

Edith Cowan University



Ongoing

Healthy Habits

The [Healthy Habits program](#) was established to develop digital education and training material for GPs to support Australians to achieve a healthy lifestyle through increased physical activity and better nutrition and sleep. The program also delivers digital educational resources for patients about preventive activities and lifestyle risk factors. There is also the Health Habits patient app, which tracks behaviour and can be linked to a patient's general practice, allowing users to set and view goals together with their GP and/or practice team.

Short-term horizon**Partners**

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners



Work commenced

After-hours reform for Healthdirect Australia

The Australian Government is investing \$143.9 million over two years from 2023–24 as part of Strengthening Medicare to improve access to after-hours primary care. This involves a \$7 million investment over two years from 2023–24 to enhance Healthdirect Australia's after-hours care pathways, including improving the After Hours GP Helpline with ePrescribing and routine reconnection to usual care arrangements. It also covers the integration of urgent care provider information into the National Health Services Directory, cyber security enhancements for data protection, and improved access to real-time appointment availability with support for seamless bookings.

Short-term horizon**Partners**

Healthdirect Australia

State and territory governments



Work commenced



Genomics

Short-term horizon

Establishment of Genomics Australia

The Australian Government is currently consulting with states and territories, through the Health Technology and Genomics Collaboration, on the establishment, design, and remit of a new national genomics body. The consultation process is expected to be completed by the end of 2023 and will be informed by the advice of the recently formed Expert Advisory Group, as well as the existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group on Health Genomics. Potential future roles and responsibilities for Genomics Australia may include guidance on responsible collection, storage, use and management of genomic data.

Partners

State and territory governments



Planning

A blueprint for genomics data in Australia

Genomic health technologies have the potential to reshape clinical practice and change the way we prevent, diagnose, treat and monitor illness throughout each person's life. We continue to provide substantial funding for genomics research through the Genomics Health Futures Mission of the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF).

Guided by the *National Health Genomics Policy Framework*, we and our partners have delivered the *National Approach to Genomic Information Management* (NAGIM) Blueprint, which supports the management of genomic information and the safe adoption of medical genomics. This addresses the challenge of handling data resulting from genomics research and clinical applications. Informed by Australian Genomics' data pilot program and a national and international capability report, we have



supported development of an implementation strategy for the recommendations from the NAGIM Blueprint.

We are working with consumers, health professionals, researchers, and industry to determine the next steps in this plan to develop the world's leading genomic medicine sector here in Australia, to create both life-saving health outcomes and a high-tech industry of the future.



Aged care

Support at Home Assistive Technology and ICT enablement

Support at Home offers a simplified, more accessible pathway that expedites access to Home Care Packages and a wider array of Assistive Technology. Our goal is to help older Australians remain comfortably at home for longer. Support at Home Assistive Technology aims to broaden the range of available assistive technologies for seniors living independently. While the current list features 18 digitally enabled options, final approval is pending.

The Department is launching a new Support at Home program, which aims to:

- provide consumers with a unified system matching their assessed needs
- focus on care management for those requiring it and offer consumers the choice of multiple service providers
- ensure early access to goods, equipment, and Assistive Technology.

Short-term horizon

Partners

Aged care sector

Software vendors



Work commenced

24/7 registered nurses coverage

Since 1 July 2023, at least one registered nurse (RN) has been required to be on-site and on duty at all times at each Residential Aged Care Facility. The Department will publish 24/7 data and information along with Star Ratings on the My Aged Care 'Find a Provider' staffing pages.

Future work to further develop and refine the 24/7 RN responsibility includes:

- modelling aged care RN workforce shortages by region
- developing clinically appropriate alternative models of care, through the University of Wollongong, to ensure safe and quality care is delivered when an RN is not available due to workforce shortages.

Short-term horizon

Partners

Aged Care sector



Work commenced



Dollars Going to Care

Dollars Going to Care will publish financial data items of residential aged care providers on My Aged Care alongside Care Minutes and Star Ratings. The standardised and benchmarked financial information on residential aged care services on My Aged Care will include information on profits/losses, care, nursing, food, maintenance, cleaning and administration costs.

This information will empower consumers with enhanced transparency, helping them select a provider that best suits their needs. Publicly available financial information will increase provider accountability and enable them to compare their financial data with similar providers.

Short-term horizon

Partners

Aged care sector



Planning

Care Minutes

The government implemented Care Minutes targets for all government-funded residential aged care services on October 1, 2022. Care Minutes represent the time that older Australians who are living in these facilities receive from healthcare professionals, including RNs, enrolled nurses (ENs), personal care workers (PCWs), and nursing assistants (AINs).

In the future, the Department will publish Care Minutes on the My Aged Care website for consumers. Care Minutes are currently available for providers via the Provider Portal, which includes the following:

- total Care Minutes
- average nursing Care Minutes
- total nursing Care Minutes
- calculation date
- responsibility period start date
- responsibility period end date
- calculation period start date
- calculation period end date.

Short-term horizon

Partners

Aged care sector



Work commenced



Government Provider Management System

The Department will establish the Government Provider Management System (GPMS) to provide access to timely and up-to-date information. The GPMS will:

- allow aged care providers to self-manage, view and maintain their records with the government and support their reporting requirements
- improve information sharing between the aged care and healthcare systems to deliver the right care the first time and reduce duplication and manual reporting processes
- provide a better view of care requirements for each resident to improve quality of care
- provide a master source of aged care provider information for collection and sharing with relevant stakeholders
- allow for future development of a whole-of-government provider management system
- replace legacy ICT infrastructure with a contemporary and extensible platform to support future aged care system requirements.

Short-term horizon

Partners

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission



Planning



Health and artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) technologies can boost Australia's competitiveness, drive industry transformation, and create local jobs and economic growth. This is especially true in the health sector. AI covers a range of technologies that process data using specialised algorithms to derive information from large quantities of raw data faster than can be done manually. For example:

- Natural Language Processing can convert free text in medical records and other documents into structured and coded information
- Machine Learning can use large sets of training data to identify attributes in new data, such as detecting diseases in medical images, when trained on radiologies-diagnosed images.

National investments already support several aspects of aspects of AI. For example:

- The [National Artificial Intelligence Centre](#) will help drive adoption and use of transformative AI technologies. Established within CSIRO's Data61, the centre manages Australia's AI expertise and addresses barriers for small and medium-sized enterprises in adopting and developing AI and emerging technology
- The [Therapeutic Goods Administration](#) is working with other major regulatory agencies in the International Medical Device Regulators Forum to establish an optimal regulatory approach for AI-enabled medical devices. This approach balances safety, effectiveness, and timely market access



- [CSIRO's bioinformatics group](#) used its own AI-based platform to analyse one trillion genomic data points in the cloud to help locate parts of the human genome that cause disease
- CSIRO's Data61 has developed [Artificial Intelligence: Australia's Ethics Framework \(A Discussion Paper\)](#) to provide principles and guidance regarding implementing AI technologies.

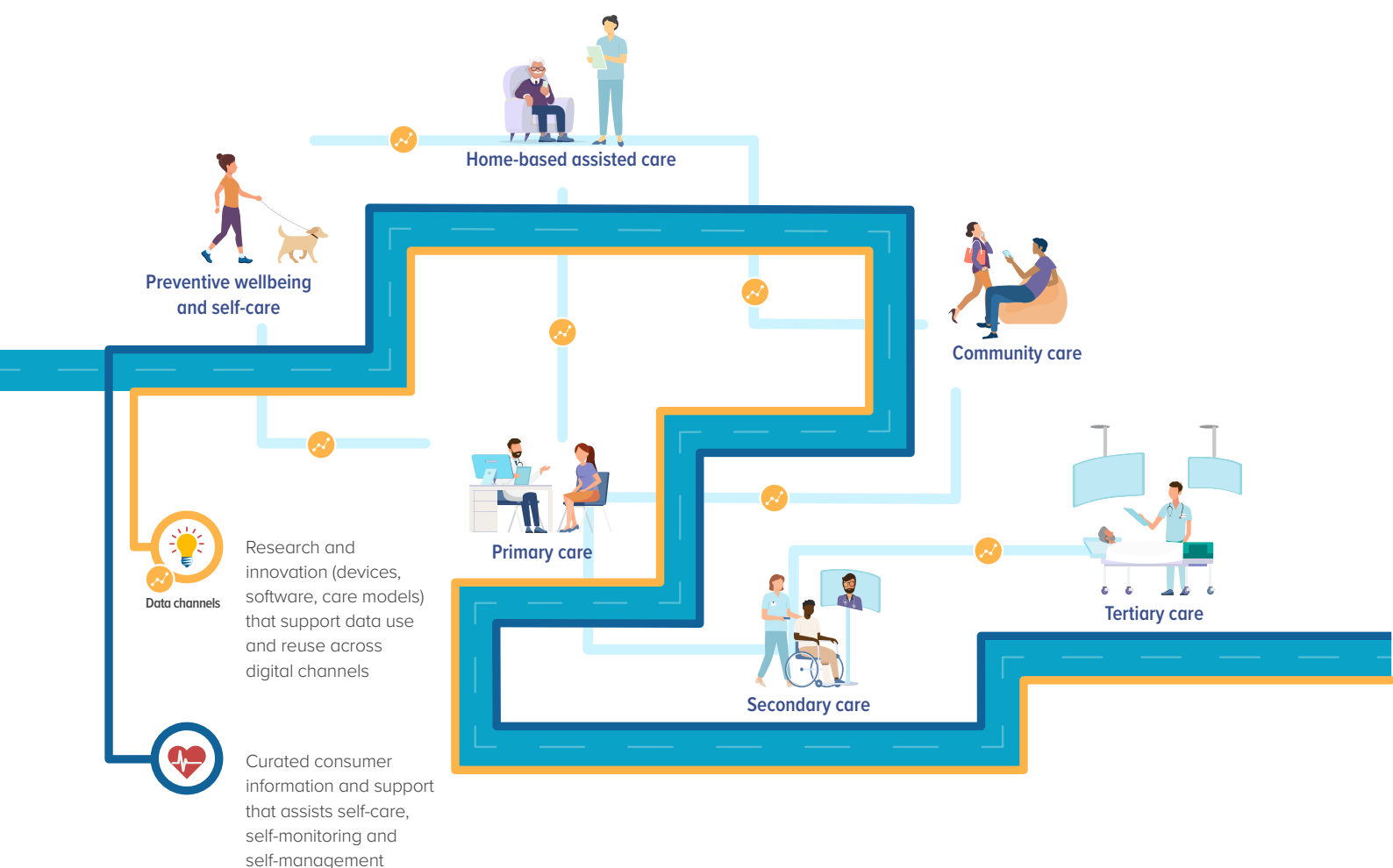
The recent rise of generative AI, which generates new content from learning/training data, will provide new challenges for health care in Australia. Public access to new consumer grade tools may encourage some clinicians to self-develop algorithms and code with no review or guidelines and with unknown quality, accuracy or understanding of risk. The role clinical governance plays in the use of generative AI will be the topic of much discussion.

Even better health care by 2033

This Action Plan will support a more connected experience throughout a person's interactions with the health system. These interactions will be supported by relevant data and the appropriate digital technologies.

Our vision for 2033 is:

Trusted, timely and accessible use of digital and data underpins a personalised and connected health and wellbeing experience for all Australians



Terms and abbreviations

Term/abbreviation	Description
HL7	Health Level Seven, an international standards development organisation
FHIR®	Fast Health Interoperability Resources
Consumer	Any person who uses health or wellbeing services, or supports somebody who does
Healthcare provider	Any professional providing health or wellbeing services
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
SNOMED CT-AU	Clinical terminology used for health care
NHSD	National Health Services Directory
NDHS	National Digital Health Strategy
PHNs	Primary Health Networks