



UPDATE FROM INDEPENDENT REVIEW LEAD PROFESSOR MARK CORMACK

On behalf of the Scope of Practice Review team, I am pleased to provide you with an update on the progress of the review. We have made good progress and have reached a significant milestone as we enter Phase 3.

Highlights from Phase 2

We completed the second of the review's four phases. Phase 2 was instrumental in highlighting a range of potential reforms that could enable health professionals to work to their full scope of practice, support the multidisciplinary team to provide optimal care and strengthen the system to deliver best practice primary health care.

The release of Issues Paper 1 led to more than 250 responses to our call for submissions. This input built on the more than 700 submissions from Phase 1, reflecting the critical nature of our work and the high level of engagement we have enjoyed – thank you!

Participants met with enthusiasm our national consultation efforts through the National Roadshow in February 2024. This program of forums around Australia drew approximately 500 participants across 21 sessions in every state and territory.

Across targeted discussions, submissions and consultation, stakeholders have consistently indicated support for safe and effective primary care delivered by highly functioning teams comprised of skilled and competent health professionals working to their full scope of practice. The need to place the consumer at the centre of reform discussions, in support of patient-centred care was viewed as paramount.

Moving into Phase 3

Phase 3 of the Review commenced with the release of [Issues Paper 2](#) on 16 April 2024.

Issues Paper 2 proposes eight policy reform options across three themes.

The first theme, *Workforce design, development and planning*, includes three options which combine to support primary care professionals to achieve and maintain the skills and capabilities needed for their role and to meet community needs. The most significant, a National Skills and Capability Framework and Matrix, is a critical foundation for all reform options.

The *Legislation and regulation* theme, proposes three options to make system-wide changes to strengthen the healthcare system by enabling health professionals to use all of their individual and combined skills to meet community need.

The final theme, *Funding and payment policy*, proposes two options to support the primary care team to better serve consumers – flexible blended and bundled payment models that allow the primary care team to work together more effectively, and much-needed improvements to the way health professionals refer patients for specialist consultations.

Issues Paper 2 is now out for public consultation with a [call for submissions](#) open until 26 May 2024. The reform options will also form the basis of a new round of stakeholder consultations planned for June, including virtual and in-person workshops. On [CitizenSpace](#), as in previous phases, key questions frame the invitation for your submissions.

In Phase 3, we will:

- consult widely to test, validate and further develop options for reforms and consider how to implement them
- tailor options for their rural and remote context
- ensure proposed reforms respond to the needs of First Nations communities and workforces
- consider additional policy areas requiring further attention in the final report.

A new round of stakeholder consultations is scheduled for June, including virtual and in-person workshops. These will comprise in-depth discussions on the themes and reform options we have outlined in Issues Paper 2. We will schedule dates and venues shortly. The team will reach out in coming weeks to update you on the consultation program.

Next steps

The commencement of Phase 3 marks a critical juncture in our review. The release of Issues Paper 2 and [call for submissions](#) represent a further opportunity for you to continue to shape our final recommendations.

We remain committed to a transparent and inclusive review process and encourage you to engage actively in the upcoming consultations. Your insights and contributions are invaluable as we progress the review.

If you would like to be added to the review's contact list, please email scopeofpracticereview@health.gov.au.

Thank you for your ongoing support and engagement.

Best regards

Mark Cormack
Independent Review Lead

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