



13 September 2024

Strengthening Medicare Implementation Oversight Committee

Meeting 4

Communiqué

The fourth meeting of the Strengthening Medicare Implementation Oversight Committee (the IOC) was held on Friday 13 September 2024 via videoconference.

The IOC was chaired Ms Penny Shakespeare, Deputy Secretary, Health Resourcing Group, from the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care (the department). Organisations represented at the IOC meeting are at Attachment 1.

Progress of Strengthening Medicare Reforms

The department provided members with an update on progress of Strengthening Medicare reforms, with a particular focus on MyMedicare, Medicare Urgent Care Clinics (UCCs), health workforce initiatives relating to general practitioners, nursing, midwifery, and allied health professionals.

Members provided feedback on the MyMedicare UCCs evaluation including the need to consider the impact on the general practice sector and effect on the broader healthcare system.

Members provided feedback on health workforce initiatives, expressing the need for the Commonwealth and jurisdictions to work collaboratively to prioritise primary care placements. Members also raised the need for allied health workforce planning.

Outcomes of Reviews Impacting Primary Care

The department provided members with an update on the reviews impacting primary care including the Review of General Practice Incentives, After-hours Review, Scope of Practice Review and Working Better for Medicare Review. The department advised a consolidated approach will be needed to respond to all reviews.

Members expressed interest in being involved in this work and raised the importance of aligning reviews back to the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce Report recommendations.

Consumer Perspective on Strengthening Medicare Reforms to Date

Dr Elizabeth Deveny provided an overview of consumer feedback discussed at consumer roundtables on MyMedicare, telehealth and after-hours. Key issues facing consumers include affordability, access, and navigation.

Members discussed the importance of building connections with patients and the need for stronger consumer health literacy.

Modernising Primary Care

The department provided an update on the significant progress made to establish the foundations required to accelerate digital health reforms to strengthen Medicare and fast-track modernisation of primary care. Members recognised the significant progress made.

Next meeting

Date of next meeting will be confirmed in due course.



Attachment 1:

Member organisations in attendance

Organisation
Allied Health Professions Australia (AHPA)
Australian College of Midwives (ACM)
Australian College of Nurse Practitioners (ACNP)
Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM)
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) Medical Benefits Review Advisory Committee
Australian Medical Association (AMA)
Australian Multicultural Health Collaborative (Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia)
Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF)
Australian Physiotherapy Association (APA)
Australian Primary Healthcare Nurses Association (APNA)
Brisbane North Primary Health Network (on behalf of Primary Health Networks)
Consumers Health Forum of Australia (CHF)
Department of Health Victoria (on behalf of states and territories)
Healthdirect Australia
Independent Advisors
LGBTIQ+ Health Australia
National Rural Health Commissioner
People with Disability Australia
Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA)
Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP)
Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA)
Western Australia Primary Health Alliance (on behalf of Primary Health Networks)