



Private Health Chief Executive Officer Forum

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Private Health Chief Executive Officer Forum (CEO Forum) is a time-limited departmental non-statutory committee, scheduled to conclude in June 2026, that brings together leaders across the private hospital sector for the purpose of:

- sharing information and providing insights on the sector’s current operating environment including:
 - models of care, patient outcomes and experiences
 - the demand for services and the cost of service delivery
 - interactions with funders, suppliers, workforce, regulators and the public hospital system
- identifying and considering proposals that may contribute to improving the sector’s sustainability to deliver efficient, high quality contemporary acute care, including identification of:
 - both short and medium-long term proposals
 - potential benefits, costs and implementation issues and timeframes associated with each proposal and
 - the extent to which self-regulatory, contractual or existing regulatory processes can be utilised
- facilitating consultation and communications with private hospital sector stakeholders.

Members of the CEO Forum will act in a collegiate and collaborative manner when discussing and providing guidance and comment to the department. The CEO Forum, with the agreement of the Chair, may identify specific issues for the department to prepare detailed advice on.

Members will be required to respect the confidentiality of CEO Forum deliberations and procedures, unless otherwise specified, and maintain this confidentiality even after their membership of the CEO Forum has expired.

The CEO Forum will be managed according to the department’s External Committee Framework.

Context

The private hospital sector is an important part of the Australian health system, delivering both a significant volume and wide range of services, offering patient’s choice and providing the public hospital sector additional capacity and a complementary workforce.

The Private Hospital Sector Financial Health Check (October 2024) found that the private hospital sector has, and is expected to continue to face, a number of temporary and systemic challenges to its sustainability and capacity to contribute to the Australian health system.

For the sector to continue to make a valuable contribution to the health system, all market participants - particularly hospital operators, private health insurers and health professionals - must work together to ensure the sector’s financial viability in the short term and that it adapts and innovates to deliver efficient and contemporary acute care into the future.

Membership and Meetings

The CEO Forum is chaired by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Aged Care. Membership brings together leaders from across the private hospital sector with the relevant knowledge, expertise and experience to provide detailed information, insights and guidance to the department. The membership will provide a diversity of perspectives to reflect the variety in the size, type and location of stakeholders.

The membership of the CEO Forum will be comprised of:

- representatives from private hospitals
- representatives from private health insurers
- representatives from health professional bodies
- a representative of consumers of health care
- a representative of state and territory health departments
- independent experts.

Additional participants may be invited to contribute to CEO Forum discussions as required. The CEO Forum will meet quarterly virtually and in person. The CEO Forum may meet more or less frequently as required at the discretion of the Chair. The CEO Forum may also consider issues and provide comment of matters out-of-session.

Conflict of Interest and confidentiality

All CEO Forum members and participants are required to sign confidentiality agreements with the department and to declare any real or apparent conflict of interest at the commencement of each meeting. CEO Forum members are expected to declare any conflicts of interest, where they arise, and if deemed appropriate, the person(s) may be excused from the discussion.

All documents prepared by or presented to the CEO Forum are assumed to be confidential unless identified otherwise by the department. Confidential material provided to the CEO Forum members may not be disclosed to anyone outside the CEO Forum.

Members of the CEO Forum have authority to share the non-confidential substance of discussions and papers, but shall not report or attribute the comments of individuals nor their affiliations outside of meetings, whether conducted virtually or in person.

Secretariat and support

The Private Hospitals Branch, Department of Health and Aged Care will provide secretariat support for the CEO Forum. The Secretariat can be contacted via email at private.hospitals@health.gov.au

The agenda and related papers will be distributed to members prior to a scheduled CEO Forum meeting. The department will set the meeting agenda with input from the membership.

The minutes of the meeting will be prepared by the Secretariat. They will provide a concise and focused report of decisions and actions taken. Minutes will be made available after they have been cleared by the department.