National **Health and Medical Research**Strategy – Webinar 2

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Chair, National Health and Medical Research Strategy

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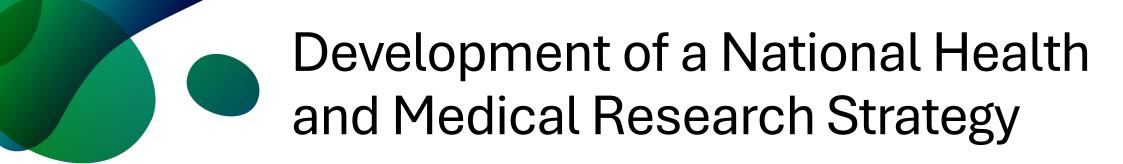
CEO, Health and Medical Research Office

Prof Steve Wesselingh

CEO, National Health and Medical Research Council







- Development of a National Health and Medical Research Strategy Chair (National Strategy) announced May 2024
- Consistent calls from the health and medical research sector for a strategy of this kind
- Intent of the National Strategy:
 - Cover the entire sector and include all levels of government, industry, philanthropy, academia and consumers.
 - Strengthen Australia's world-leading health and medical research capability.
 - Foster a strong research workforce.
 - Create an attractive investment environment from discovery and innovation to translation and commercialisation, improving the health of Australians.



Role of the National Strategy Chair

- Work with the Department of Health and Aged Care (department) and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) to lead the development of the National Strategy for the Minister for Health and Aged Care.
- Provide objective and relevant advice to the department in the National Strategy development process.
- Lead the consultation process with the health and medical research sector.

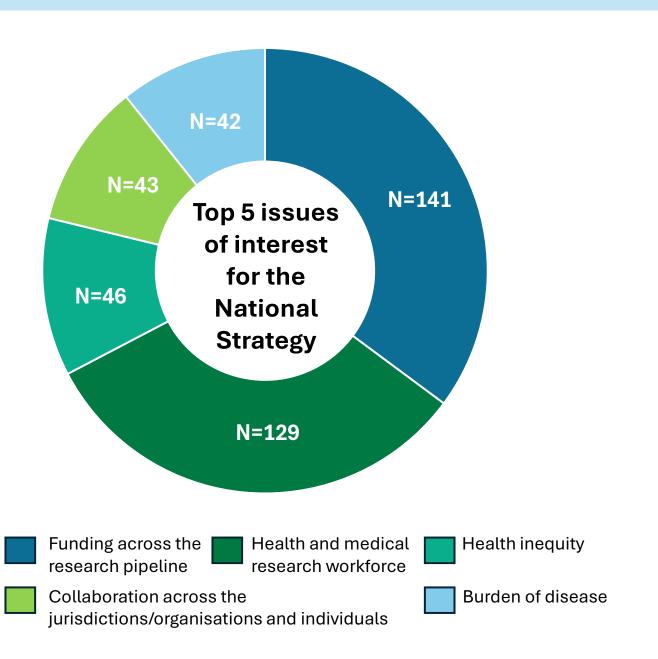
Webinar 1 - Recap

- The first webinar, held by the Chair on 5 December
 2024, provided an overview of:
 - The approach for development of the National Strategy.
 - The Australian Health and Medical Research
 Workforce Audit (commissioned report).
 - Next steps.
 - Ways in which you can get involved.
- Post-webinar survey.

Webinar 1 recording



Webinar 1 - Survey Outcomes



Frequency of National Strategy review

- 5 years
- 3 years
- **Other**



Preferred consultation method

- Webinar
- Written submission
- Survey
- Roundtable



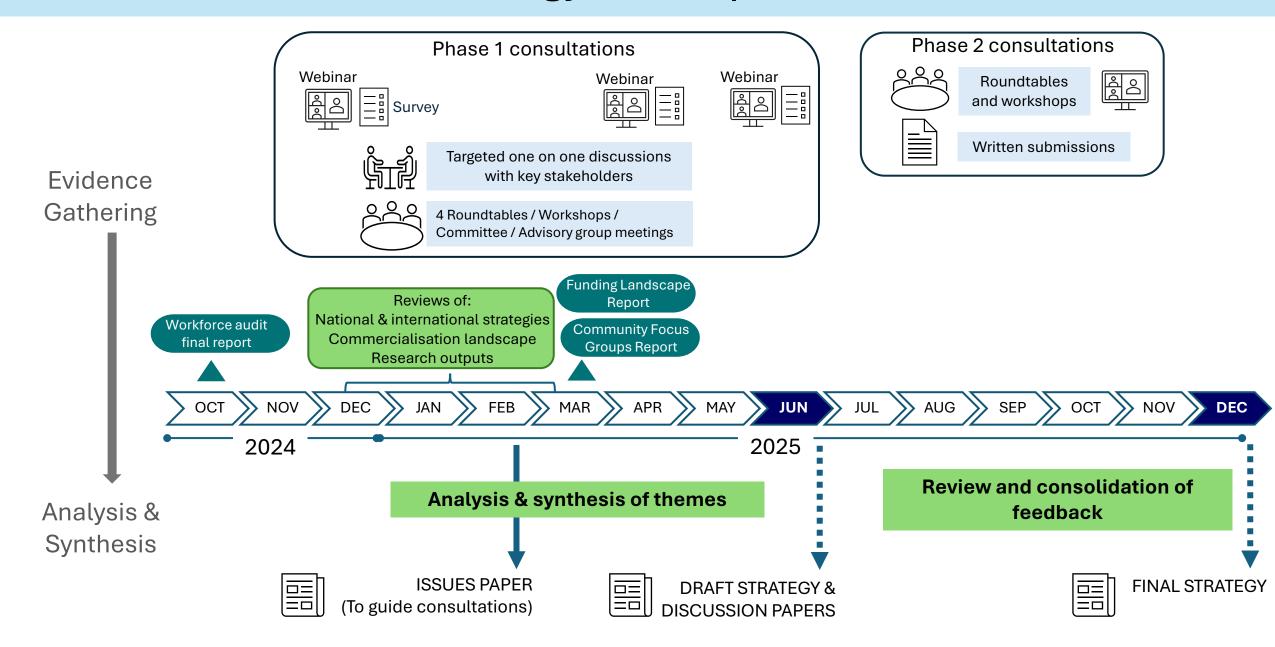




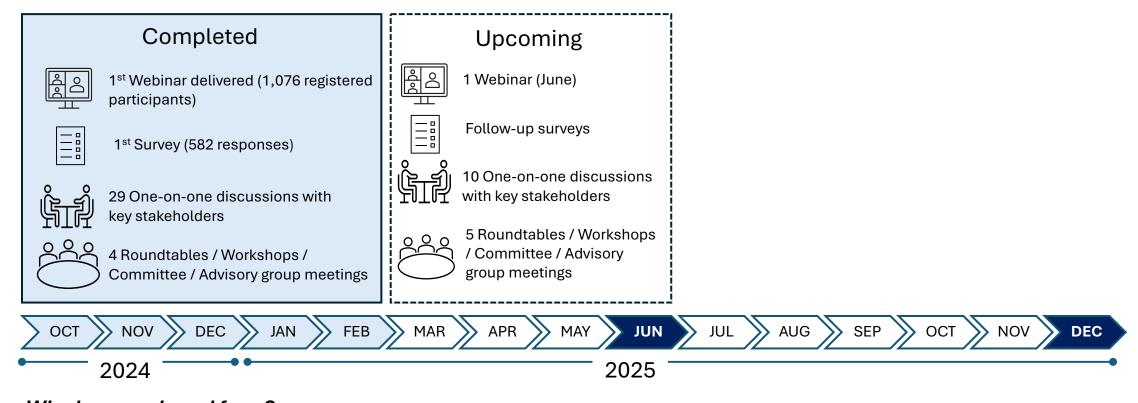
Webinar 2 - Overview

- Recap from Webinar One, including:
 - Health and Medical Research Workforce Audit
- Progress since (December 2024 to March 2025):
 - Themes emerging from early consultations
 - Update on commissioned report:
 - Health and Medical Research Community Focus Groups
 - Internal development work (research impacts, commercialisation, international strategies)
- Next steps
- Q&As

National Strategy Development Process



Consultations – Completed and Upcoming



Who have we heard from?

- Whole of sector through webinars and surveys
- Thought leaders from the health and medical research sector across the research ecosystem
- Commonwealth representatives and advisory groups
- State and territory advisory groups (HCEF)
- Peak bodies and advocacy groups (ASMR, AAMRI, AAHMS, Universities Australia, Research Australia, AusBioTech)
- Biotech and industry representatives
- Community and consumer representatives

What are the current challenges?

Lack of strategic coordination among funders

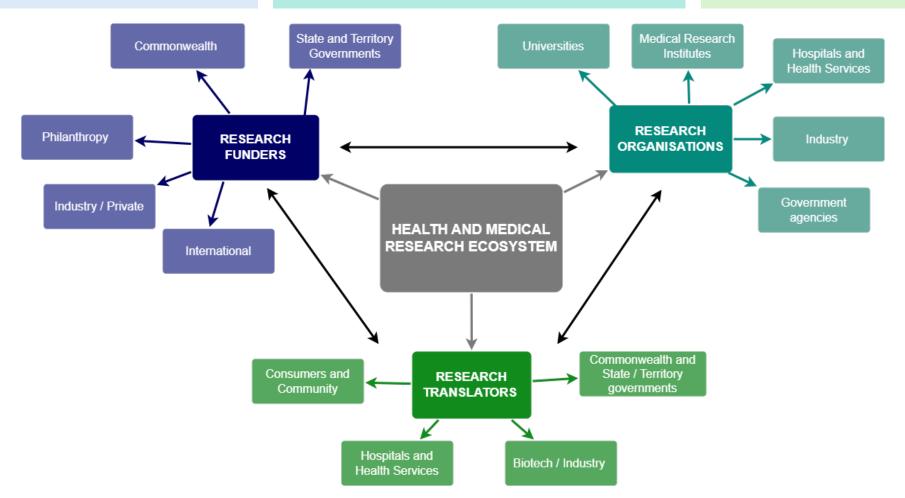
- · Uncoordinated priority setting
- Duplication of schemes
- Areas of unmet need
- Low success rates
- Unplanned workforce

Lack of consistent funding

- Insufficient funds for the full costs of research
- Funding for small shorter projects rather than programs of work

Inadequate levels of research translation and insufficient measures of research impact

- Lack of investment and skills gap in taking research outcomes to scale
- Lack of accountability for research outcomes



What we are hearing a Strategy should aspire to

- Regular assessment of research impact
- Greater accountability for research outcomes at project and aggregate levels
- Understand costs and opportunities of emerging technologies
- Considerations for equity of access and translation
- Al and potential for improved data sharing and access
- Improve job security to retain EMCRs
- Consider career pathways and future sector needs in workforce planning
- Greater diversity across the research workforce particularly at senior levels
- Research processes that drive strategic outcomes
- Community & consumer involvement a systematic feature of research
- Embed research culture in healthcare organisations
- Streamline ethics, governance, data sharing and regulatory approval processes

Research Priority setting

Emerging Technology

Research

Processes

Workforce

An impactful, sustainable and strategically aligned health and medical research sector

Direct & Indirect Costs

Aboriginal

& Torres Strait

Islander health

Funding

Translation &

Commercialisation

- Systematic, explicit and joined up priority setting that is evidence based and monitored
- Greater geographic and sector balance in priority setting (areas and pipeline)
 - Continued focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and research workforce
 - Priorities determined by and research conducted with the community
 - Better strategic coordination and transparency between funders
 - Duplication of funding reduced and areas of unmet need addressed
 - Reduce burden on researchers through streamlined processes
- Sustainability of research organisations improved through better research processes and addressing indirect costs

- A focus on translation from the start of a research project
- Time and opportunity to enhance researcher skills in translation and commercialisation

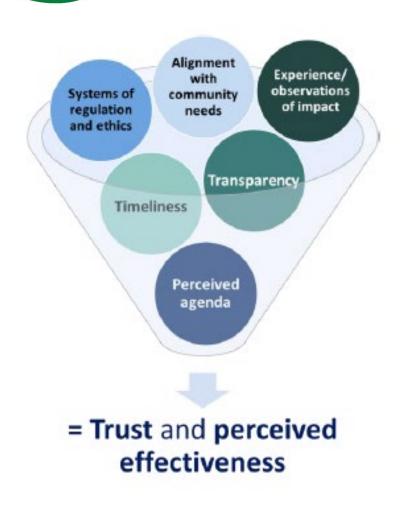
Potential aims of a National Strategy

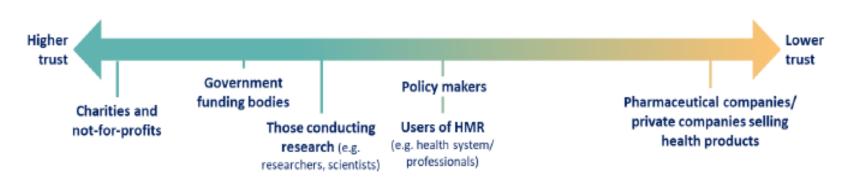




Community Focus Groups

Perceptions of health and medical research



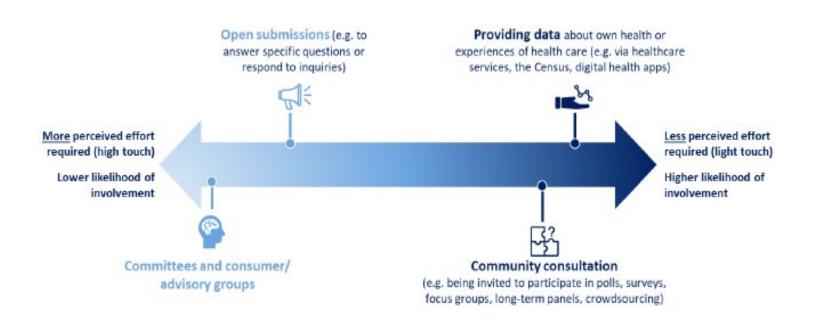




Community Focus Groups

Involvement in health and medical research

Types of community involvement



Barriers to participating in research activities

- Not being aware of opportunities
- Time constraints and/or competing priorities
- Overly complex information or involvement options
- Limited confidence
- Negative past experiences
- · Limited physical access
- Being uncomfortable discussing their personal health conditions
- Feeling that contributions would not be valued or listened to



Community Focus Groups

Priority Setting

Severity of outcome or impact on quality of life



Prevalence of health condition or issue



Considerations for research priorities



Health promotion and prevention

Enabling responsiveness

to emerging health

threats





Cost to the health system to treat or manage



Support for holistic health and wellbeing

Research Commercialisation Landscape

ISSUE	CHALLENGE	OPPORTUNITY		
1. Fragmentation and lack of coordination of commercialisation programs and support	High level of fragmentation and a lack of coordination leading to little connection between initiatives	Develop a route map through programs and services, to assist with improving fragmentation and coordination		
2. Changing landscape of commercialisation programs and support	Confusing or poorly communicated changes post-launch of large-scale programs and strategic plans	Consistent, clear and accurate communication and promotion of programs that are current or upcoming		
3. Researcher capacity and capabilities gaps	Difficult for time-poor researchers to commit the resources needed for commercialisation	Addressing the gap in commercialisation skills capability and capacity		
4. Complex regulatory processes to support commercialisation	Securing approval and listings for reimbursements can be considered too slow and too high-risk for a relatively small domestic market	Evaluation of how Health Technology Assessment (HTA) reforms currently underway impact the system and products considered		

What are the current challenges in measuring Research Impact?



- Approximately 17 years is required to translate research outcomes at a clinical and community level¹
- In our current system, it is difficult to identify which projects are succeeding and which ones are not
- There is a view that incentives are skewed to publications, bibliometric impact factors and further grant success, rather than research translation and the generation of wider 'impact'



What key indicators should be used to measure the success and impact of health and medical research in Australia and what tools are available to do this efficiently and effectively?



International Health and Medical Research Strategies

Canada, United Kingdom, New Zealand and Japan









- UK Research and Innovation
- Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED)
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Prioritising national need

 New Zealand: Research prioritisation done through a lens of 'Why NZ?'



Embedding clear benchmarks, mechanisms and responsibilities for prioritisation, delivery and measurement of impact

- Canada: The Plan is supported by a performance measurement framework and annual monitoring and reporting mechanism
- The specificity of priorities is important (impact can only be measured with clear objectives)



Alignment with other Strategic Initiatives

	Priority Setting	Funding	Translation & Commercialisation	Research processes	Emerging technology	Workforce	Measuring Impact
National Science and Research Priorities			✓	~		~	
Strategic Examination of Research and Development	~	~	✓		~	~	
Australian Digital Health Strategy					~	~	~
Health Technology Assessment Review			✓		~	~	
National Health Reform Agreement Negotiations	~		✓				
Clinical Trials One Stop Shop			✓	✓	~	~	
MRFF / MREA Alignment		~		~			
State and Territory Strategies	~	~	✓	~		~	~



Next Steps

Evidence Gathering

- Reviews reports
- Targeted consultations
- Roundtables, workshops and committee meetings
- Survey responses

Analysis & Interpretation

- Thematic analysis
- Identify gaps for further reviews (if required)



Articulate Strategy Vision, Pillars, Objectives



Draft Strategy & Discussion paper

Wide sector consultation process across Commonwealth and States & Territories

Common questions submitted so far

- Scope/priority setting
- Involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities
- Grant application and assessment processes
- Linkages with other key strategic pieces of work concurrently underway
- Workforce
- Consumer and community involvement



National Strategy – stay connected and involved







Give us your feedback through the National Strategy sector survey.

Opens 7 April 2025 Closes 12 May 2025



Check out the National Health and Medical Research
Strategy Website

www.health.gov.au/ourwork/national-health-andmedical-research-strategy Send any questions on the National Health and Medical Research Strategy to

HMRStrategy@health.gov.au

Questions and discussion