Australian Government
Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

Learning Health System Strategic Advisory Committee

Chair’s Report – 10 March 2026

The Learning Health Strategic Advisory Committee (“the committee”) met virtually for their third meeting on 10 March 2026.

In the first two meetings, the committee identified a strong desire to build public trust and professional confidence in its recommendations on the use of My Health Record data for research and public health purposes. Much of the early work focused on communication, engagement and planning. It is through comprehensive engagement and effective communication that inclusive governance principles and program requirements are to be developed in partnership with community, professionals, and the broadest range of interested groups and individuals.

Building on this foundation, the focus for the third meeting was consumer choice and control and how the committee will work towards this priority.

Consumer choice and control

As previously noted, communication and engagement were key foci for meeting #2. Through these discussions, the focus on consumer choice and control was formed for this meeting. Use of the term ‘consumer’ was questioned, with alternatives including ‘patient and carer’, ‘healthcare recipient’, and ‘individual’ suggested. No alternative term received universal support, and we will continue to seek views on the most appropriate and accessible language.

A presentation was provided by the department’s Digital Health Legislation and Policy team, outlining *the use of Health Data for Research and Public Health: Legislation and Policy update*. Members were updated on the connections between the legislative work currently underway for the My Health Record system, with its already strong consumer controls and how this work could be extended for research and public health purposes. Importantly, it was noted that the My Health Record system is a product of its time, with barriers to use including the PDF document format and difficulty accessing the system during short appointment windows. These challenges are being addressed with national data and connectivity standards through the Sparked initiative into the future. Members also noted the importance of digital equity in accessing My Health Record, and ensuring communication about this work is as widely accessible as possible.

Members discussed principles that might guide an approach to developing and applying consumer control in relation to use of My Health Record data for research and public health. There was general consensus that two general principles – first, that health data should be used to improve care, health and wellbeing for all, and second, that individuals control whether their health data is used for research and public health – might usefully form the basis of further work.

Roadmap and Guide

As a recurring discussion and agenda item, members are invited to advise on key themes relating to development of draft policy guidance and a draft roadmap for implementation, ahead of public consultation.

Members noted the value of taking a principles-based approach to development of policy and implementation plans. As discussion on principles evolves, this will need to be integrated into development of the draft policy guide and implementation roadmap.

Following the second committee meetings, several members have contributed their valuable expertise to establish subgroups focussing specifically on developing potential research and public health use cases as well as mapping My Health Record data against existing data sets. These activities will be critical to communicating the value of My Health Record data.

Looking forward

The digital health landscape is advancing rapidly. It will be key for the committee to understand how its wok relates to other initiatives, particularly the department's work with FHIR. Future meetings will consider the connections while continuing to provide recommendations that will help prepare for future consultation and engagement.

The committee will meet again virtually on 13 April 2026, with the next meeting scheduled for 15 June 2026.

Attendees

Attendees	
Prof Mark Taylor, University of Melbourne	Chair
Dr Adrian Burton, Australian Research Data Commons	Member
Ainslie Cahill, Consumer Representative	Member
Prof Dougie Boyle, University of Melbourne	Member
Gaby Carney, University of Technology Sydney	Member
Emeritus Prof Gillian Triggs, University of Melbourne and UNHCR	Member
Jacob Madden, Australian Centre for Disease Control	Member
Mike Lau, Australian Digital Health Agency	Member
Prof Emily Banks, Australian National University	Member
Prof Marcia Langton, University of Melbourne and Indigenous Data Network	Member
Associate Prof Kristen Smith, University of Melbourne and Indigenous Data Network	Member

Attendees	
Dr Aidan Tan, Sydney Children’s Hospital	Member
Donna Goodman, Department of Health Disability and Ageing	Proxy
George Bodilsen, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	Proxy
Apologies	
Michael Frost, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	Member
Kayla Jordan, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing	Member
Guests	
Kate Deree, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing	Guest
Bethan Lewis, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing	Guest
Secretariat	
Department of Health, Disability and Ageing	