



Australian Government

Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

# National Medical Workforce Strategy

2021–2031



Investing in our medical workforce to meet Australia's health needs.

## Medical Workforce Advisory Collaboration Communique – 13 March 2026

The Medical Workforce Advisory Collaboration (MWAC) met on 13 March 2026 in Melbourne.

Ms Penny Shakespeare and interim independent Co-Chair Professor, Ruth Kearon co-chaired the meeting.

The Health Workforce Taskforce updated members on current priorities to strengthen national health workforce coordination, including strategic workforce planning, accreditation reform, regulatory harmonisation and digital initiatives to support training and workforce sustainability.

Members discussed national surgical workforce challenges, informed by updated supply and demand modelling from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and perspectives from the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons. Pressures and barriers across the surgical training pipeline highlighted issues with workforce distribution, entry to surgical training, training capacity and long-term sustainability. Members agreed on the need for coordinated national approaches involving governments, specialist medical colleges, universities and the private sector to strengthen training pathways, particularly in regional and rural settings.

The Australian Private Hospitals Association highlighted the role of the private hospital sector in supporting health service delivery, medical training and research and opportunities to better integrate private sector capacity into national workforce training and planning, including through public-private partnerships.

ACT Health presented its structured approach to supporting hospital registrars, career medical officers and International Medical Graduates, outlining initiatives to improve workforce support, learning and supervision arrangements, wellbeing, professional development and to strengthen workforce sustainability across hospital and community settings.

The Australian Medical Council updated members on the Review of Standards for Assessment and Accreditation of Specialist Medical Programs, with a focus on aligning training and graduate outcomes with workforce and community needs, strengthening rural training, cultural safety and wellbeing and supporting flexible, outcomes-focused approaches to accreditation.



