



Learning Health System Strategic Advisory Committee

Chair's report – 15 June 2026

The Learning Health Strategic Advisory Committee (“the committee”) met for their fifth meeting on 15 June 2026.

This meeting provided advice on the development of draft guiding principles that, subject to decisions of government and further consultation, may form the basis of an approach to inclusive and trustworthy governance data arrangements for research and public health. The committee were also provided an update on initiatives announced during the 2026-27 Budget and opportunities available to demonstrate the value of the program.

The committee provided advice on a draft engagement and communication plan, developed to support engagement with interest-holders appropriate to this stage of the program of work. Early and targeted consultation has recently commenced with three Indigenous-led roundtables conducted in June by the Indigenous Data Network. The roundtables were held in Cairns, Brisbane and Alice Springs and provided a range of insights and discussion on how to achieve the best practice of governance of Indigenous data, ongoing First Nations' engagement, and how we consider community needs and priorities in different regions of Australia.

Development of use cases continues with the intent that these will inform how the program will provide access to data that translates into meaningful research and public health use within a learning health system. It is an exciting program of work but cannot be realised until we can better understand the opportunities to inform future planning and create conditions where data can be used to improve safety, quality and efficiencies of care and promote health equity. These opportunities could be realised through targeted consultation with interest holders, alignment with government priorities, and further investigation of use cases already in use in the broader market.

Digital health initiatives

The committee received a presentation from a representative of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing on the digital health initiatives funded through the 2025-26 Federal budget. The presentation included a high-level overview of previous government investment and how the initiatives in this budget are building on these foundations to improve user experience and access. The presentation highlighted the plans for:

- Share by Default to expand to include mandatory uploads of prescribed medicines and chronic condition management plans.
- Investments into Thriving Kids including the creation of a national digital child health record that will track young children's health milestones and
- An investment through the National Health Reform Agreement to support implementation of digital initiatives.

All these initiatives will enrich the future data available in My Health Record and increase the potential value of using the data for research and public health benefit.

Data linkage

The committee also received a presentation from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare on data linkage including legislative and governance arrangements. Discussion highlighted that privacy needs to be protected across the life cycle of the use of that data, not just during its collection and storage.

Guiding principles

In previous meetings, the committee provided advice on a draft *Guide to Learning Health System Data Governance for Research and Public Health* ('the Guide'). The Guide, developed during the 2021-2023 [Proof of Concept](#), is being prepared to support future work, consultation and engagement. The committee's previous advice was that the content of the Guide was not yet in a form suitable to support effective engagement and consultation. It was recommended that some technical and operational detail be removed and, instead, a clearer and more accessible principles-based approach to governance be proposed.

At this meeting, members were positive regarding the efforts made to translate the content of the Guide into a simpler and more accessible format and structure. Recommendations were made regarding necessary contextualisation and further development of the draft principles. The principles themselves were themed and a proposed timetable for future consideration of specific themes at future committee meetings was agreed.

Interest-holder engagement and communication plan

The committee continues to prioritise maintaining public trust and ensuring the work we do now has meaning for the community. Committee advice has previously been sought on the best way to engage interest-holders and to seek input and understanding of the meaningful use of data for research and public health.

At this meeting, the committee provided advice on proposals for early targeted consultation to test and inform program content prior to government decisions on implementation. This early engagement will help solidify the programs foundations and support work to develop a compelling business case for further funding and authority to implement the program. Keeping pace with reasonable expectations of different interest-holders, requires that take a collaborative and sustainable approach to program development and delivery, and deepen understanding of community priorities regarding public benefit.

Looking forward

The committee will thematically consider, and provide advice on, the development of the governance guiding principles, as well as continuing to contribute to the development of use-cases illustrative of a range of potential benefits, and ongoing engagement with interest-holders. The committee will also provide input into the development of a business case over the next six months to support how the potential benefits of data could be translated into improvements in safety, quality, sustainability, and equity within a learning health system.

The committee will next meet on 18 August 2026.