

Allied Health Industry Reference Group

Meeting 2: 1 June 2022 – Summary of outcomes

The Allied Health Industry Reference Group (AHIRG) held its second meeting on 1 June 2022. The group's Terms of Reference were endorsed.

The topics covered in the meeting included:

- A presentation from Allied Health Professions Australia, on behalf of the Australian Allied Health Leadership Alliance, about the need for a national allied health workforce strategy. The AHIRG agreed that any future allied health workforce strategy should:
 - encompass all levels of government and use existing governance mechanisms, where possible.
 - be led by the Health portfolio, but extend beyond the health sector and beyond services funded by governments, to consider allied health practitioners in education, social services, private providers, etc.
 - include allied health assistants;
 - consider the skills, competencies and models of care that encompass allied health, rather than focusing on each individual profession; and
 - be underpinned by a scoping framework to better understand the full range of the allied health sector. An audit of existing strategies could support this.
- Health Policy Analysis (HPA) presented a summary of the work they had undertaken as part of the Department of Health's Allied Health Data Gap Analysis project. They highlighted the weaknesses of currently available allied health workforce data and recommended ways to improve the acquisition of, and access to, such data. Members discussed the need for improved data to inform future policy design and decisions.
- The next AHIRG meeting will be held in September 2022, with the invitation to attend to be extended to the wider allied health sector. The meeting will present and discuss topics from the first and second AHIRG meetings: research opportunities and workforce planning.

Next Steps:

1. The Department of Health will send copies of presentations to members.
2. The Department of Health will develop a paper that reflects AHIRG's views to inform future discussions on allied health workforce planning.
3. All members will identify and report back on existing research networks that could help bring together allied health researchers from across the country. The Department of Health will consolidate information provided by AHIRG members.