



Strengthening Medicare Taskforce

Communiqué

All Australians deserve equitable access to affordable quality primary care.

Today, the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce held its inaugural meeting on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation.

The Strengthening Medicare Taskforce members are health leaders, representing a cross section of perspectives on the primary care system.

At today's meeting, all members undertook to work together in the best interests of the health of Australians and the Australian health system. I was delighted with the spirit of partnership and collaboration.

The Australian Government established this Taskforce to identify the highest priority reforms in primary care.

There is no doubt primary care around the country is in a parlous state.

The Government is committed to ensuring Australians get the care they need, when they need it and without worrying about the cost.

The Taskforce will develop recommendations to achieve this through five focus areas to achieve concrete results for patients:

- a reliable training and development pipeline, to build a strong and vibrant primary health care workforce
- increased access to multidisciplinary care, harnessing the full skills of nurses, pharmacists and allied health professionals
- new models of care and stronger relationships between patients and practices, to better respond to today's health needs, including older Australians and those with complex and chronic conditions
- ensuring access to care is modern, patient-centred and easy, harnessing the power of technology, and
- providing universal health care and access for all through health care that is inclusive and reduces disadvantage.

Taskforce members had the opportunity to discuss the reform journey to date from the co-chairs of the former Primary Health Care Reform Steering Group, who guided the development of the *Primary Health Care 10 Year Plan 2022-2032*.

Members also had the opportunity to share their priorities for reform.

The Government has committed \$750 million in the Strengthening Medicare Fund to turn proposals into concrete actions for a person-centred primary health care system.

The Taskforce agreed to develop a forward work program, focusing on immediate priorities to deliver better health care for all Australians. The Taskforce will report to Government at the end of 2022 and will meet again in August.

Chair

The Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon Mark Butler MP

29 July 2022

Sydney

The Strengthening Medicare Taskforce is chaired by the Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon Mark Butler MP. The Membership is set out below.

Member	Organisation
Dr Omar Khorshid	President, Australian Medical Association
Adjunct Professor Karen Price	President, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
Dr Sarah Chalmers	President, Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine
Ms Leanne Wells	Chief Executive Officer, Consumer Health Forum of Australia
Dr Dawn Casey PSM	Deputy Chief Executive Officer, National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
Mr Anthony Nicholas	Board Chair, Allied Health Professionals Australia
Ms Karen Booth	President, Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association
Ms Annie Butler	Federal Secretary, Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation
Dr Ruth Stewart	National Rural Health Commissioner
Ms Amanda Cattermole PSM	Chief Executive Officer, Australian Digital Health Agency
Associate Professor Learne Durrington	Chief Executive Officer, WA Primary Health Alliance
Dr Nigel Lyons	Deputy Secretary, NSW Health (state and territory representative)
Professor Adam Elshaug	Director, Centre for Health Policy, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, The University of Melbourne
Professor Stephen Duckett	Honorary Enterprise Professor, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, The University of Melbourne

Dr Steve Hambleton AM	General Practitioner
Dr Walid Jammal	General Practitioner