

# Australia's National Digital Health Strategy

**Daniel Kildea**

Strategy, Australian Digital Health Agency

Friday 20 October 2017



Australian Government  

---

Australian Digital Health Agency



# The Australian Digital Health Agency

The Australian Digital Health Agency is funded by all Australian Governments. It designs and operates national digital health services and set data standards that:

- Give **consumers more control of their health and care** when they wish it
- **Connect and empower healthcare professionals**
- Promote **Australia's global leadership in digital health and innovation**

The Agency reports to its Board, appointed by the Minister.

We are the system operator for the My Health Record, and a number of other clinical information systems and standards, and commenced operations on 1 July 2016.



# National Digital Health Strategy 2018-22

**Approved by the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) Health Council on 4 August 2017**

*“This Strategy will build on Australia’s existing leadership in digital health care and support consumers and clinicians to put the consumer at the centre of their health care and provide choice, control and transparency.”* COAG Health Council communique

## **A Strategy with an evidence base of benefits prioritising national-level digital health activity**

- Hospital admissions avoided
- Fewer adverse drug events
- Reduced duplication of tests
- Better coordination of care for people with chronic and complex conditions, and
- Better informed treatment decisions



# Australia produces high quality health outcomes...

## ...better use of digital information can improve it further

- *An average 13% of appointments in general practice need follow up because of missing information and 10% of GPs waste time every day searching for missing clinical information*

*Content shared digitally between clinicians and patients means reduced risk of lost information*

- *223,000 patients are admitted to hospital due to adverse drug events, and over 2000 people die every year due to medication errors*

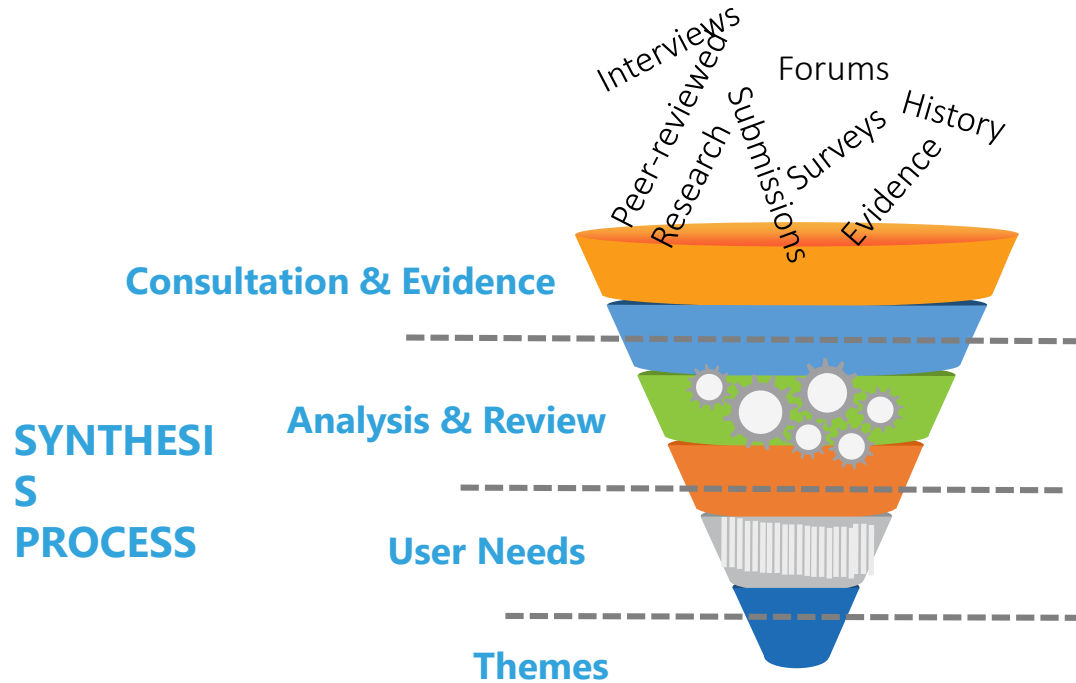
*Medicines information available securely online reduces safety risks*

- *14% of pathology tests are ordered due to lack of access to patient history*

*People and clinicians will be able to see results of previous tests*



# Developing Australia's Digital Health Strategy with the community



## Evidence

We undertook a broad scoping review of the international peer reviewed and grey literature, including publications from key digital health organisations, policy and media, as well as targeted interviews with digital health thought leaders

## Consultation overview

- 3,193 attendees
- 1050 written and survey submission from general public, organisations, technology sector etc.
- 103 forums, meetings and workshops
- Interviewed thought leaders across different sectors
- Deep engagement with jurisdictions to understand their strategies and priorities

## CONSOLIDATED THEMES

1

Support me in making the right healthcare choices, and provide me with options

2

Help all the people who care for me to understand me, and together, provide safe and personalised care

3

Create an environment where my healthcare providers and I can use and benefit from innovative technologies

4

Preserve my trust in the healthcare system and protect my rights

- Vision
- Priority Areas
- Initiatives



# The National Digital Health Strategy: consultation confirms Australians want digital access to health



Australians value our **high quality** healthcare practitioners and workers, and generally experience **affordable** and **accessible** care



Over **65%** of respondents say the Australian healthcare system is difficult to navigate. People want to know the cost, quality, and availability of services



Over **45%** of respondents had difficulty accessing healthcare when they needed it. Top reasons given:

- Cost,
- Location, and
- Couldn't get an appointment



More than **four times** as many people want to access their personal health information on their smart phone than do currently



The **top three** activities people want to be able to do on their mobile device:

1. Manage their medications
2. Track their health
3. Request refill prescriptions



# Key themes from consultation



Support me in making the right healthcare choices, and provide me with options

*"[I want] better culturally diverse resources, health literacy and personalised support"*  
11.7% of people >15 years of age in rural/remote experienced difficulty accessing a doctor



Help all the people who care for me to understand me, and together, provide safe and personalised care

*"It is vital that medical professionals have access to a holistic view of patient data to fully understand the client's needs..."*

- 91% of people living with dementia live in the community rely on an informal carer to support them with 22% relying solely on informal care



Create an environment where my healthcare providers and I can use and benefit from innovative technologies

*"Our smartphones and tablets need to be an extension of access to the healthcare system and customizable to our individual needs."*

- 7% make an appointment online to see a doctor or organise a hospital appointment
- 83% complete doctor or hospital registration details online before visit
- 70% order prescription drug refills using mobile apps on your phone.
- 66% use a device that connects to a smartphone and send information to the doctor.



Preserve my trust in the healthcare system and protect my rights

*"I need to be confident that my information is securely held and that it is not going to be accessed by unknown people."*

- In the UK, based on a cost to the NHS of £45 per GP visit, ensuring everyone had the basic digital skills to access health information online would provide savings of around £120 million a year by 2025



# Strategic priority areas for delivery 2018 - 2022

Health information that is available whenever and wherever it is needed	MY HEALTH RECORD
Health information that can be exchanged securely	SECURE MESSAGING
High-quality data with a commonly understood meaning that can be used with confidence	INTEROPERABILITY AND DATA QUALITY
Better availability and access to prescriptions and medicines information	MEDICATION SAFETY
Digitally-enabled models of care that improve accessibility, quality, safety and efficiency	ENHANCED MODELS OF CARE
A workforce confidently using digital health technologies to deliver health and care	WORKFORCE EDUCATION
A thriving digital health industry delivering world-class innovation	DRIVE INNOVATION



# 1. Health information that is available whenever and wherever it is needed



WHAT  
WILL BE  
DELIVERED  
BY 2022?

- Every Australian will have a My Health Record, unless they choose not to have one, by the end of 2018.
- All healthcare providers will be able to contribute to and use health information in the My Health Record on behalf of their patients, providing potentially lifesaving access to reports on their medications, allergies, laboratory tests and chronic conditions, and supporting significant improvements in the safety, quality and efficiency of healthcare for the benefit of individuals, the healthcare system and the economy.
- All Australians will be able to access their information at any time online and through mobile apps.



# A mobile health record for every Australian by 2018

The Australian Government has invested **\$374.2 million** over two years to ensure every Australian has a My Health Record, unless they prefer not to.

Roll-out of the **opt-out model** to all Australians, and will continue and improve operations of My Health Record, while making it easier for health providers to register for the system.

Will increase the number of **pathology and diagnostic imaging reports**.

Improve the accuracy, timeliness, visibility and accessibility of **medicines information** in the system.

## Implementation

- If a person doesn't already have a My Health Record, a record will be automatically created for them in 2018, unless they chose not to have one.
- The Agency will work with the community early next year to provide further information on the My Health Record.



## 2. Health information that can be exchanged securely



**WHAT  
WILL BE  
DELIVERED  
BY 2022?**

- Every healthcare provider will have the ability to communicate with other professionals and their patients via secure digital channels if they so choose. This will end dependence on paper-based correspondence and the fax machine or post.
- From within their chosen system healthcare providers will be able to search for other healthcare providers in a single directory, and easily and securely share clinical correspondence.
- Patients will be able to communicate with their healthcare providers using these digital channels.
- Patients' health data will be safeguarded and able to be shared securely at their discretion. They will spend less time having to retell their story, and their healthcare providers will be able to work together more effectively to provide coordinated care.



# 3. High-quality data with a commonly understood meaning that can be used with confidence



**WHAT  
WILL BE  
DELIVERED  
BY 2022?**

- A public consultation on draft interoperability standards, leading to an agreed vision and roadmap for implementation of interoperability between all public and private health and care services in Australia will be completed in 2018.
- Base-level requirements for using digital technology when providing care in Australia agreed with governments, peak clinical bodies and other key stakeholders.
- Health services will be able to assess their level of digital maturity (the extent to which they are supported by the effective use of digital technology) and be supported in improving their level of digital maturity.
- Improvements in data quality and interoperability through the adoption of clinical terminologies, unique identifiers and data standards.
- By 2022, the first regions in Australia will showcase comprehensive interoperability across health service provision, community and hospital sectors, public and private.
- The safety and the quality of patient care will be improved by ensuring we have a connected health system that seamlessly shares high-quality data with the right people at the right time.



# 4. Better availability and access to prescriptions and medicines information



**WHAT  
WILL BE  
DELIVERED  
BY 2022?**

- By the end of 2018, all consumers and their healthcare providers will have access to comprehensive views of their prescribed and dispensed medications through the My Health Record system, irrespective of who prescribed and dispensed the medicine.
- By 2022, there will be digitally enabled paper-free options for all medication management in Australia. People will be able to digitally request their medications online, and all prescribers and pharmacists will have access to electronic prescribing and dispensing, increasing convenience for people filling prescriptions and improving overall safety.



# 5. Digitally-enabled models of care that improve accessibility, quality, safety and efficiency



**WHAT  
WILL BE  
DELIVERED  
BY 2022?**

- A number of pioneering initiatives – co-produced between consumers, governments, providers and entrepreneurs – to test evidence-based digital empowerment of key health priorities and then, where appropriate, to promote them nationally.
- Priority health reform areas such as Health Care Homes chronic disease management, telehealth, babies' and children's health, residential aged care, end of life care, and emergency care will be a focus. The test beds will run for two years to inform the national roll-out of innovations across Australia, ensuring that all Australians can benefit.
- By 2022, six test bed projects will have been launched, each of two years' duration. Four of these test bed projects will have been evaluated and the learning from two test bed projects will have been rolled out across Australia.



# 6. A workforce confidently using digital health technologies to deliver health and care



**WHAT  
WILL BE  
DELIVERED  
BY 2022?**

---

- The Agency will collaborate with governments, care providers and partners in workforce education to develop comprehensive proposals so that by 2022, all healthcare professionals will have access to resources that will support them in confident and efficient use of digital services.
- Resources and curricula will be developed to ensure all healthcare practitioners are exposed to and trained in digital technologies and their use during training and upskilling.
- A comprehensive set of clinical resources which clearly outline the evidence for how, when and where digital health should be used in everyday clinical practice.
- Promotion of a network of chief clinical information champions to drive cultural change and awareness of digital health within the health sector.



# 7. A thriving digital health industry delivering world-class innovation



**WHAT  
WILL BE  
DELIVERED  
BY 2022?**

- Australians will have better and more informed access to safe, quality health applications, tools and content, through a digital services endorsement framework that will be co-produced with clinical, design and innovation leaders.
- A new health innovation exchange will be established, where clinicians, researchers and entrepreneurs use data to identify opportunities to work collaboratively on designing digital health solutions.
- The Agency will work with industry to evolve the developer support program to reduce barriers to innovation and enable opportunities for better integration with the My Health Record system and other digital services.
- The Agency will consult with the community on development of a comprehensive approach to digital inclusion, to ensure new innovations do not leave anyone behind.
- Adoption will be accelerated by providing best practice design principles and guidelines to improve usability and user experience.



# Implementing the National Digital Health Strategy

*“The National Digital Health Strategy is, necessarily, a strategy for Australia, not just the Australian Digital Health Agency or the Commonwealth. The Strategy is built on the assumption that every participant in the health sector plays an important role in achieving the vision of digitally enabled healthcare.”*

National Digital Health Strategy, page 15



# Australia's National Digital Health Strategy

[www.digitalhealth.gov.au](http://www.digitalhealth.gov.au)

National Digital Health Strategy:

<https://www.digitalhealth.gov.au/australias-national-digital-health-strategy>





Australian Government  
Australian Digital Health Agency

## Contact us

Help Centre

**1300 901 001**

8am–6pm Monday to Friday AEDT

Email

[help@digitalhealth.gov.au](mailto:help@digitalhealth.gov.au)

Website

[www.digitalhealth.gov.au](http://www.digitalhealth.gov.au)

Twitter

<https://twitter.com/AuDigitalHealth>