

The December issue of the [Australian Health Review](#) (AHR), pivots to focus on the future of the Australian health system. We explore existing measures and the yet-to-be-taken strides aimed at enhancing health outcomes across our communities, whilst nurturing and supporting our strained workforce.

‘Adopting a comprehensive evidence and value-based approach to reform that encompasses all aspects of the health system is critical to the future health and well-being of Australians,’ says Australian Health Review Editor in Chief Dr Sonj Hall.

‘This is reflected in this issue’s research exploring the legal and ethical considerations surrounding end-of-life decision-making, advancing healthcare through embracing genomics and digital health platforms, driving quality and safety improvements, and an enhanced focus on environmental responsibility for healthcare providers.’

A Perspective piece from NSW Health considers the state's goal of incorporating genomics into mainstream clinical care supported by the infrastructure, data governance and management, workforce, education, service planning and delivery necessary to deliver the best health outcomes.

‘Realising the full potential of genomics in healthcare requires strong foundations, real-world application, accessibility and a focus on using person-centred information in clinical care,’ says Dr Hall.

Other featured research explores the carbon footprint of an Australian healthcare and aged care provider. Authors from Mercy Health and Arup Australia identified significant variations in carbon emissions across different operational departments, indicating the necessity for tailored measures to meet carbon reduction targets.

Dr Hall emphasised that ‘These findings underscore the importance of conducting carbon footprint assessments within individual organisations and the significance of conducting research within the Australian context.’

The health system must address the future health and wellbeing of our healthcare workforce. ‘While there are unpredictable factors and external forces that continue to place pressure on Australia’s healthcare workforce, such as COVID-19 and climate change, there are also systemic issues that we can proactively work towards addressing, including workforce culture.’

Other workforce research further addressed workforce issues. ‘A systematic audit carried out by researchers from the Northern Territory and Tasmania into Australian specialty colleges policies on bullying, discrimination and harassment, found that while most colleges have a formal policy surrounding these issues in place, there was wide variation between them and a lack of focus on suitable investigative standards.’

The online version of this [media release](#) and links to the [Australian Health Review](#) can be found on the AHHA website. **The Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA) is the independent peak membership body and advocate for the Australian healthcare system and a national voice for universally accessible, high-quality healthcare in Australia.** Media enquiries: Dr Sonj Hall, Editor in Chief, Australian Health Review
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‘Several recommendations are provided, including the need for colleges to improve collaboration with healthcare regulators to develop and endorse standard policies and to bring policies in line with new Australian work health and safety legislation that better protect our healthcare workers’ psychological safety.’

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