

The Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA) welcomes the recommendations in the National Health Reform Agreement (NHRA) Mid-term Review Final Report, released following the National Cabinet Meeting held in Canberra on Wednesday.

AHHA also acknowledges governments' early consideration of the recommendations and commitment to healthcare funding and reform announcements, including a continued focus on addressing elective surgery waiting lists, funding to further Strengthening Medicare measures and policy to secure the future of the NDIS.

'Expanding the focus of the National Health Reform Agreement beyond hospital funding to include health care more broadly has long been the missing piece in Australia's health reform agenda,' says Acting AHHA Chief Executive Rebecca Haddock.

'The fact that this has been acknowledged in the Review's Final Report is a step in the right direction towards a more sustainable and holistic healthcare system that can achieve better health outcomes for the Australian people and their communities,' continued Adj AProf Haddock.

'However, realising the Report's recommendations will require both recognising the place-based nature of health and the adoption of joint planning through a whole-of-government approach.'

'Hospitals and health services are inextricably linked to the wellbeing of their communities, and are driven by a workforce that is constantly striving to meet health needs at both the individual and population level.

'References to the health workforce in the current NHRA have largely been limited to isolated capability requirements rather than taking a more strategic approach. We are pleased to now see the importance of the health workforce being recognised in the Review Final Report.

'But real reform success will require health workforce planning that extends beyond the numbers and distribution of professions and starts to consider the skills mix innovation and health funding planning required to accommodate jurisdictional difference and regional needs.

'Greater accountability is needed within the Agreement itself to systematise collaboration and this must be supported by adequate resourcing and collective focus on reducing low value care.'

AHHA also welcomes the recommendation to introduce a nationally consistent governance framework that can underpin and drive integration between LHNs, PHNs, and ACCHOs.

'Recommendation for the National Health Reform Agreement to focus on innovation and reforming at scale would enable grassroots innovation to be structured through a collaborative, data-driven approach.'

'The report also acknowledges there are lessons to be learned from the pandemic about how the system can be more efficient with a greater focus on value and equity.'

The online version of this [media release](#) 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.

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AHHA commends the recommendations to include a focus on digital health, alternative funding models, care pathways that consider the patient journey and Closing the Gap through a dedicated Agreement Schedule.

‘AHHA encourages Health Ministers to strongly consider the recommendations outlined in the National Health Reform Agreement (NHRA) Mid-term Review Final Report, and thank Rosemary Huxtable AO PSM and Mr Michael Walsh PSM for facilitating a meaningful consultation process, through which AHHA is pleased to have had the opportunity to contribute.’

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