

The final issue of the [Australian Health Review](#) for 2024 explores key issues shaping the future of Australia's healthcare system, including the integration of innovative care models, the role of digital technologies, and strategies for workforce sustainability.

'As the healthcare system faces evolving challenges, adapting new models of care and supporting integrated, interdisciplinary teams will be important for improving patient outcomes,' says Dr Sonj Hall, Editor-in-Chief of Australian Health Review.

One article examines successful transdisciplinary healthcare organisations in the USA, where such models have not yet been widely studied at the large organisation and system level. The research suggests that a clearly defined mission and integrative practices are crucial for fostering effective team-based approaches in large healthcare systems.

Another article featuring Sydney Local Health District's 'Living Well, Living Longer' program highlights efforts to improve the physical health of individuals with severe mental illness through enhanced collaboration with general practitioners and multidisciplinary teams. While initial results have been promising, challenges remain—particularly around communication and access to primary healthcare. This reinforces the need for ongoing evaluation to ensure the program delivers lasting improvements for this vulnerable population.

Workforce sustainability also takes centre stage in this issue, with discussions on improving healthcare workforce distribution and addressing ongoing shortages. An article highlights how better collaboration between siloed areas of the system could reduce duplication, enhance communication, and improve the overall care experience for patients.

It explores the role of accreditation bodies in fostering these collaborative links, emphasising the need for education providers, health services, and consumers to work together more effectively.

'This is particularly timely given the recent Working Better for Medicare review, which examined the effectiveness of current health workforce distribution strategies, especially in rural and regional areas,' says Dr Hall.

The role of digital technology in relieving workforce pressures and improving healthcare delivery is also featured in this issue. A study on a co-designed digital app used during transitions of care reveals how it empowered patients to engage more actively in their healthcare by improving communication with nurses. This highlights the potential of digital tools to enhance patient-centred care while easing strain on the workforce.

The issue also stresses the need for a digitally proficient healthcare workforce. Key recommendations include upskilling senior leaders, creating agile training opportunities, and fostering change champions to help the sector adapt to the demands of modern healthcare.

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.**

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Australian Health Review: Innovative care models and workforce solutions

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‘As 2024 draws to a close, this issue provides valuable reflections on the progress made within the healthcare sector and offers actionable insights to guide future improvements,’ Dr Hall concludes.

Australian Health Review is the peer-reviewed journal of the Australian Healthcare and Hospital Association, publishing research on major health policy and management issues, healthcare delivery systems, clinical programs, and other topics of interest to healthcare professionals across Australia.

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