



Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (Australia and New Zealand) – survey response submission to the Draft National Health and Medical Research Strategy consultation

1. Vision

Does the proposed Vision establish the right aspirations for the future of health and medical research in Australia?

- If not, what would you suggest instead?

The vision could benefit from explicitly stating the ambition for Australia to be a world leader *in translating research into tangible health outcomes* and improving health equity, not just in research output.

2. Values

Do you agree with the proposed Values?

- If not, what would you suggest instead?

The proposed values are appropriate but could be further enhanced by including *translation and impact*.

3. Goals

Do you agree with the proposed Goals?

- If not, what would you suggest instead?
- **The goals should clearly address *prevention* and *primary care* to emphasise the importance of these areas.**
- **An additional goal covering this topic could be: Prioritise research that promotes prevention, early intervention, and strengthens primary care services**

4. Focus Areas

Do you agree with the proposed Focus Areas?

Overall, the proposed focus areas appear comprehensive and the actions within each focus area are generally well-defined.

- If not, what would you suggest instead?

A suggestion for improvement is for “Focus area 1, Build a vibrant research system that delivers for the nation”. This focus area could be improved by including

reference to the future research workforce, especially early and mid-career researchers.

Do you agree with the proposed Actions associated with each of the Focus Areas?

- If not:
 - what would you suggest instead?
 - what areas of improvement would you identify?

Overall:

- **Ensure that research workforce challenges are addressed across all areas.**
- **Integrate *health equity* as a cross-cutting theme across all focus areas**

Focus area 1: The link to *practical application* could be strengthened. The action should explicitly mention using horizon scanning to inform *service delivery* models, especially for priority populations.

Focus area 2: Emphasise *co-design* in all research stages.

Focus area 3: Ensure that funding guidelines acknowledge the time and resources required to build relationships and mobilise research in community settings.

Focus area 4: Change “Continue to Support” to “Prioritise the expansion of randomised controlled trials (RTCs) to focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, regional, rural and remote and underserved populations.”

Focus area 5: We endorse the “deliver equity – no one left behind” approach and suggest that this is further underlined, particularly for vulnerable groups

5. Enablers

Do you agree with the proposed Enablers?

- If not, what would you suggest instead?

Do you agree with the proposed Enabling Initiative associated with each of the Enablers?

- If not:
 - what would you suggest instead?
 - what areas for improvement would you identify?

Workforce

The Australian Health and Medical Research Workforce Plan should include strategies that support *community-based researchers* with non-traditional pathways into research, often with precarious employment conditions. We

recognise and support the strategy's proposals around EMCRs, fostering science literacy in schools and additional approaches to sustain researchers and the research pipeline. However, it would be helpful if further emphasis was placed not only on strategies to attract new researchers but also on how they can be supported to have sustainable research careers.

Funding

Basic science research receives significant funding, whereas knowledge translation initiatives receive minimal support. Addressing this disparity requires the development of innovative funding models that enable integrated transdisciplinary research programs. To rebalance the system, there should also be greater prioritisation given to primary care and small health service research programs and recognition of the strategic opportunities they present.

6. Priority-ranking of Actions and Enabling Initiatives

Please review the Actions (page 15) and Enabling Initiatives (pages 39, 41, 43, 45) proposed in the draft National Strategy. Identify your top 3, in order of importance for you or the organisation you represent.

Please provide a brief explanation of why the selected Actions/Enabling Initiatives are priorities for you/your organisation, and the impact successful implementation could generate.

- National priority setting and evaluation
- Horizon scanning
- Collaborative platforms and networks
- Commonwealth research funding
- Clinical trials
- Consumer and community involvement
- Regional, rural and remote health and medical research
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' ways of knowing, being and doing
- Translation and implementation of outcomes that address the National Agreement on Closing the Gap
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and workforce capacity and capability building
- Research translation
- Industry integration and risk sharing
- Manufacturing and marketing
- Emerging Technology
- Environmental sustainability

- Global partnerships
 - An Australian Health and Medical Research Workforce Plan
 - Design innovative funding models
 - Access to data, digital assets and advanced technology
 - An Australian Health and Medical Research Infrastructure Roadmap
1. **Collaborative Platforms and Networks: Essential for leveraging resources and expertise across sectors.**
 2. **Design Innovative Funding Models: Strategic funding allocation throughout the research pipeline, accessible to all disciplines.**
 3. **Consumer and Community Involvement: Meaningful engagement of community and consumers across all stages of health and medical research, from priority setting to translation – as far as possible.**

Explanation: These priorities align with the Council’s emphasis on collaboration, equitable funding, and addressing health inequities. Successful implementation would foster innovation, ensure research translates effectively into practice, and improve accessibility and quality of care for all Australians.

7. Governance

Do you agree with the proposed National Strategy Advisory Council?

Yes, as long as the council includes higher education representation and diverse representation from relevant underrepresented professions, communities, primary care, and public health.

- If not, what would you suggest instead?

8. Metrics

What key indicators do you consider should be used to measure the success and impact of the National Strategy?

- **Improved, measurable health outcomes**
- ***Impact on Prevention:* Monitor the impact of research on reducing the incidence of preventable diseases.**
- ***Translation Rate:* Measure the time it takes for research findings to be translated into policy and practice.**
- ***Health Equity:* Track disparities in health outcomes across different population groups (e.g., socioeconomic status, geographic location, Indigenous status, age).**
- ***Community Engagement:* Track the level and quality of community involvement in research projects.**

- **Workforce Diversity:** Monitor the representation of diverse groups (e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers, community-based researchers) in the health and medical research workforce.

Over what time periods should these be measured?

These metrics should be measured annually to allow for continuous monitoring and adjustments to the strategy.

9. Other considerations

Are there other challenges, opportunities or trends that the National Strategy should address?

Workforce Stability: Promote measures that strengthen employment security for health and medical researchers.

10. Strategy impact

How might the National Strategy influence the activities and decision-making at your organisation or in your community?

What would be required for it to have a positive impact?

11. Example projects

Do you have suggestions for projects that highlight best practice in the areas highlighted in the Values, Goals, Focus Areas and Enablers in the National Strategy?

Please provide links to published information or contact details where available.