



# National Medical Workforce Strategy

A National Medical Workforce Strategy (the Strategy) will guide long-term collaborative medical workforce planning across Australia.

The Strategy will improve access to care by building a medical workforce that is appropriately structured and genuinely supported to meet emerging needs - that is, the right people with the right skills where they are needed the most.

---

The Strategy is being developed to provide a guide for medical workforce planning activities at all levels. It aims to match the supply of GPs, non-GP specialists and consultant physicians to the predicted medical service needs of the community. The Strategy will also identify achievable, practical priority actions to build a sustainable, highly-trained medical workforce.

---

The first phase of the Strategy has developed a Scoping Framework that focuses on identifying and understanding medical workforce issues that will benefit from a national approach to medical workforce planning.

## The Strategy aims to address medical workforce issues of national significance

- **Improve coordination** in medical workforce planning through joint decision-making and a common approach to collecting and sharing data
- **Reduce geographic maldistribution** of medical professionals to improve access to high quality care for all
- Achieving the **right balance** between generalist and subspecialist skills to create a more flexible workforce, capable of delivering a broader scope of practise
- Address the growing over and under **supply of doctors** in some specialties
- **Reduce the reliance on registrars** to deliver healthcare services, which is affecting distribution, work-readiness and well-being
- **Simplify the training pipeline** and remove barriers to make it easier for doctors to navigate their career pathway
- Create a **flexible workforce** which adapts to new technology and supports innovative models of care
- Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors and have a **culturally safe medical workforce**
- Ensure **doctor work-readiness**, giving young doctors a variety of experience.

The Scoping Framework is available on the [Strategy webpage](#).

## Collaboration with stakeholders

The Commonwealth Department of Health is developing the Strategy in collaboration with the Medical Workforce Reform Advisory Committee (MWRAC). MWRAC members include the states and territories, specialist medical colleges, and medical professional associations. MWRAC provides a national perspective to align priorities for supporting medical practitioners and addressing workforce shortages.

The development of the Strategy has support from the Health Services Principal Committee, the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Committee, and the Council of Australian Governments Health Council.

## Consultation

A wide range of stakeholders have been engaged on the Strategy, including on the Scoping Framework in early 2019, to start developing potential solutions in November 2019, and most recently to refine and test the identified solutions in February 2020. Consultations were held with the state and territories and a cross section of medical professional organisations and doctors:

- Medical associations and peak bodies
- Aboriginal Medical Services
- Medical schools
- Public & private hospitals
- Specialist colleges
- Commonwealth, state and territory health departments
- Medical regulators
- Rural, regional and remote clinicians
- Primary Health Networks
- Community and consumer representatives
- Rural Workforce Agencies

## Timeframes

The next phase of the development of the National Medical Workforce Strategy will use stakeholder input to refine and prioritise potential solutions, which will inform the writing of the Strategy.

The Strategy is being progressed as a high priority to ensure the medical workforce is structured to drive long-term improvements to health outcomes.

---

<b>Mid – late 2019</b>	Commence developing the Strategy including wider consultation to identify key strategic actions
<b>Early 2020</b>	Consultation to prioritise strategic actions and commence drafting the Strategy
<b>Mid – late 2020</b>	Finalisation of the Strategy including establishing a 5 year implementation plan

---

More information is available on the [Department's webpage](#) along with updates on the progress of the Strategy.