



STATEMENT OF INTENT

Working together to support the Australian Centre for Disease Control

Preamble

In recent years, Australia has experienced various emergencies with an impact on health, from natural disasters to the COVID-19 pandemic. The response to these emergencies has been intense and all governments' capabilities were challenged. Australia's success in protecting the health of our people was due to the strong collaborative and coordinated approach across all systems, including the Commonwealth and state and territory governments. Despite this, there are many lessons to be learned from previous public health emergencies, including the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Australian Centre for Disease Control (CDC) will facilitate, support, and strive to deliver better population health outcomes for all Australians. The Australian CDC will work with state and territory governments to prevent and control communicable and non-communicable diseases and protect Australia against future emergencies that affect human health.

The establishment of the Australian CDC will support and strengthen existing state and territory government capacity and capabilities. The Australian CDC will not override or replace jurisdictional responsibilities - particularly in relation to emergency management. The strengths, capabilities, expertise, and connections to local communities that exist within state and territory governments remain critical to delivering the best public health outcomes for Australians.

The development of the Australian CDC will be framed around the following five objectives, for which reciprocal support, engagement and collaboration between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments will be critical to success:

- increase independence and strengthen evidence-based and transparent decision-making to maintain trust;
- improve national coordination of effort and efficiencies, with stronger partnerships, including across Commonwealth agencies and between jurisdictions;
- support national action through enhanced national capabilities, underpinned by the distinct and complementary roles and responsibilities of jurisdictions and the Commonwealth;
- enhance international connections; and
- increase and productively utilise resources to support preparedness and response across all jurisdictions, including nationally.

This Statement of Intent outlines how the Commonwealth and state and territory governments will work together to meet these objectives to support the establishment and operation of the interim Australian CDC, and a timeline for delivering an agreement to support the fully developed Australian CDC.

The Statement of Intent is not legally binding and includes no expectation of financial contributions towards the operation of the Australian CDC.

Statement of Intent

The Commonwealth and governments of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory, and the Northern Territory share a commitment to

1. Each working in partnership with First Nations people (including key national and state and territory advisory bodies) to ensure the establishment and operation of the Australian CDC is informed by the voices and needs of First Nations people and contributes to better outcomes for First Nations people. This includes the consideration of social determinants of health and in-line with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.
 - a. This includes through the inclusion of an experienced First Nations representative on the Senior Officials Group for the Australian CDC.
2. Working together to support the establishment of the Australian CDC including by:
 - a. Participating in the Senior Officials Group established to lead engagement and identify jurisdictional insights to inform the Australian CDC.
 - b. Working collaboratively to inform the scope and priorities of the Australian CDC.
 - c. Identifying how the Australian CDC can work, collaborate, and provide support across governments and portfolios. This includes to plan for, respond to and recover from emergencies with an impact on health.
 - i. This should occur in alignment with existing management plans and focus on building nation-wide resilience to reduce the impact of arising risks.
 - d. Harnessing the deep expertise provided by state and territory governments to build a truly national Australian CDC, including by creating multi-way knowledge and data exchanges, to establish an enduring national capability that supports all jurisdictions.
 - e. Sharing lessons learnt, including from the COVID-19 pandemic, and other emergencies to inform the establishment of the workplan of the Australian CDC.
 - f. Committing to work together to determine and implement the governance and legislative arrangements to support the establishment of the Australian CDC.
 - g. Supporting the Australian Government to finalise the operational requirements of a networked Australian CDC during 2024.
3. Working together to improve the timely access and sharing of consistent data, information, and advice nationally, which is essential to the work of the Australian CDC, including to enable rapid risk assessment and response and to support informed and public health decision-making. Noting this will require consideration of any relevant legislation.
4. Working together to negotiate and finalise an agreement to support the establishment and operation of the Australian CDC in line with the five objectives outlined above.