

Aged care data strategy  
Consultation information guide





**Department of Health and Aged Care**

**Australian Institute of Health and Welfare**

# Introduction

The *Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety* (the Royal Commission) tabled its final report in March 2021. The Australian Government accepted recommendations 67 and 108, which target improved data governance and a national aged care data asset.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) and the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care (the department) are playing key roles in responding to these recommendations and are partnering to develop an **Aged care data strategy** (data strategy).

## Purpose of this guide

We have developed this information guide for you and other stakeholders. It provides background information and an interview guide covering 2022-23 consultation activity. Another guide will be released as we refine the data strategy before its release in 2024.

We recognise the critical importance stakeholders like you play in developing a better aged care data system. We are consulting widely with:

Consumer groups, including those representing carers

Other relevant federal agencies

State and Territory Health departments

Primary Health Networks

the department’s Council of Elders and the National Aged Care Advisory Council (NACAC)

Peak and advocacy groups, particularly those representing different user groups of aged care data

A range of aged care service providers

Research organisations, including Cooperative Research Centres, applied research institutes and universities

Professional associations representing those working in aged care.

In addition to a brief background of the data strategy, we have included questions we would like to explore with you. These questions are indicative only, and we encourage you to raise other topics or relevant issues with us during interviews.

## Relationship to other strategies

The data strategy will align with other department strategies, including several under development:

* 2022-25 Data strategy
* Aged care digital strategy
* Aged care workforce strategy
* Aged care workforce action plan
* National ageing and aged care research strategy.

It is expected that some of the activities under these related strategies will contribute to the aged care data strategy’s strategic priorities and outcomes. We also recognise that strategies and action plans released by other federal agencies may also contribute to, and intersect with, this data strategy.

## Core elements of the strategy

The data strategy will drive the approach for developing and continually improving a comprehensive national aged care data system. While the data strategy is being developed in consultation with you as stakeholders, the table below provides some indicative content for each core element. Our questions we’d like to explore with you, found on the last page of this guide, reflect these core elements.

Table 1: Core elements of the data strategy, including draft content for discussion.

|  |  |
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| **Core element** | **Draft content** |
| Vision  *Key to understand ‘why’ we are doing this and what the benefits will be.* | An aged care data system that provides robust information to support the better health, ageing and wellbeing of older Australians. |
| Purpose  *A statement of what we are aiming to achieve.* | The data strategy will explain why we are improving the aged care data system, including providing information about aged care that will better support:   * people to make informed choices about aged care * services and providers to improve their provision of safe, high-quality and dignified care * government to design, administer, evaluate and improve the aged care system * secondary users of data (such as peak bodies and academic researchers) to study and provide insights that can improve the aged care system. |
| Guiding principles | The data strategy should be guided by a set of agreed principles, for example:   * Putting older Australians at the centre of aged care * Data that meets the needs of participants and stakeholders including consumers, providers (including aged care workers), governments and researchers * Safeguarding trust, privacy and security * Share data once, and use it often * Data that supports evaluating the performance of the aged care system and supporting future improvements * Leveraging existing data assets and capabilities * Data that continually improves. |
| Scope  *The range of considerations to be included – what is within scope and what is out of scope.* | The scope of the data strategy and that of the data system are interdependent.  The data strategy applies to all aspects of the aged care data system: the comprehensive range of data related to aged care in Australia, and the arrangements that support capture, use and sharing of these data. This includes data governance, information standards and infrastructure arrangements associated with capturing, using and sharing these data.  The data system includes, but is not limited to, data in the planned Aged Care National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) and the planned Aged Care Data Asset.  The data strategy **is not**:   * an information management strategy * an ICT strategy, while recognising that technology is fundamental to maximising the value of data * a people capability or workforce strategy, while recognising that generating value from data involves everyone. |
| Strategic priorities / focus areas  *Key areas requiring action within the data strategy.* | Strategic priorities / focus areas will be identified through consultation and research. They will articulate shared outcomes for stakeholders that complement existing investments and enable innovation and improved delivery of aged care. Strategic priorities will align with the Vision and Purpose and contribute to the Outcomes.  Based on a review of other data strategies, and alignment with the department’s data strategy focus areas, strategic priorities / focus areas could include: Governance; Culture; Capability (Government and Workforce); Discoverable Data; Data Sharing and Release; and Technology and Innovation. |
| Roadmap  *Implementation plan for development of the data system, including data improvements.* | The Roadmap will be informed by government-committed deliverables and responses to the Royal Commission including the Aged Care NMDS, Aged Care Data Asset and stakeholder consultation. |
| Outcomes  *The benefits realised from an improved data system.* | Outcomes will be identified through consultation and aligning with the Aged Care Outcomes Framework (in development). An example of an outcome could be ‘*Users can readily search for, identify and understand our data assets and the information they can provide*.’ |

## Next steps

We are consulting with you and the broader sector over the next 6 months and anticipate this round of consultation to conclude towards the end of 2022. After we finish interviewing stakeholders, we will collate feedback and identify common themes. We will use this and our own work to draft the first blueprint or high-level version of the data strategy by **December 2022**. This draft data strategy will be provided to you early in 2023 for further input and refinement before being publicly released in 2024. We are also available to discuss this work outside of these structured engagements, and welcome discussion on emerging issues and the aged care data system more broadly.

## Interview guide for consultation

These questions are indicative only. They are meant to provide areas that can be explored during interviews. You are encouraged to raise other relevant topics or issues not covered below.

1. **What do you think of the draft** **Vision, Purpose and Guiding principles?**

*Points to consider*

* + Are there any you would like to add to those drafted so far?
  + Are they pitched at the right level?
  + Which Guiding principles do you consider to be of higher priority?

1. **How well do the Vision, Purpose and Guiding principles align with your organisation’s strategies or objectives?**

*Points to consider*

* + Are there any significant inconsistencies?
  + Is there any emerging work we should be aware of?

1. **What do you think of the draft Scope in relation to aged care data?**

*Points to consider*

* + Are there areas in Scope that we can collaborate with you on?
  + Are there specific areas you would like to see in Scope, that aren’t currently specified?

1. **What areas and activities would you like to see prioritised in the Roadmap?**

*Points to consider*

* + We are developing a NMDS and a enduring data asset. What other types of Roadmap activities could intersect or leverage with work that your own organisation is undertaking?

1. **What outcomes do you think are most important to this data strategy?**

*Points to consider*

* + What benefits would you like to be realised under the data strategy?
  + Are there some quick gains that can be made?
  + What sorts of outcomes could contribute to your own organisation’s outcomes?
  + How do you see this work actually delivering real improvements for consumers?

1. **What are the most significant barriers and success factors for the data strategy?**

*Point to consider*

* + Where do you think some of the biggest challenges lie, and what from your perspective will set this work up for success?
  + Are there some quick gains that can be made?

1. The full list of the Royal Commission’s final recommendations is available through <https://agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au>. The Government’s response is available through <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/australian-government-response-to-the-final-report-of-the-royal-commission-into-aged-care-quality-and-safety> and the associated reform activities are outlined in <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/aged-care-reforms/five-pillars-to-support-aged-care-reform>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)