

Response ID ANON-Z5CP-MKNH-G

Submitted to National Allied Health Digital Uplift Plan Consultation
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Privacy and Your Personal Information

1 Response Collection Consent

I consent to the Department collecting the information requested in Citizen Space about me, including any sensitive information, for the purposes indicated above.

Respondent Information

2 Are you answering these questions on behalf of an organisation?

Yes, I am answering on behalf of an organisation/institution.

3 If answering for an organisation, please select the category that best describes your organisation:

Peak/professional body – allied health

If the description is not listed above, please provide one below.:

4 If answering as an individual, please select the region that best describes where you live:

Not applicable – I am responding on behalf of an organisation

5 If answering as an individual, please select the category that best describes you:

Not applicable – responding on behalf of an organisation

If the description is not listed above, please provide one below.:

6 If you are a practicing allied health professional, please describe your profession:

NA:

7 If you are a practicing allied health professional, which of the following best describes your main type of employment?

Not a practicing allied health professional

Please describe a description of your main type of employment if no category applies.:

8 If you are a practicing allied health professional, approximately how many employees work in your main workplace?

Not a practicing allied health professional

Action Plan

9 What do you think would make the most impact in increasing digital maturity and capability of AHPs?

Not required:

To encourage AHPs to engage with digital health tools and to increase their digital maturity and capability, the specific value to the AHP needs to be present and seen. Currently, AHPs see little tangible benefit in the use of digital health products such as the My Health Record (MHR), as they do not meet the needs of AHPs to easily contribute information and it is difficult to easily find useable information. Until recently, the allied health sector has been left out of the conversation for the development of the MHR and so there is considerable groundwork to be done for the sector to understand that it is also for them and what the value is to them. While this is shifting and work is being done to actively include allied health, it is far from the standard needed to engage allied health professionals in routinely incorporating digital health tools into their everyday practice. Demonstrating a clear value proposition to AHPs, such as chronic disease management features, will be the driving factor in increasing digital maturity and capability within the allied health sector.

The introduction of mandatory reporting or uploads such as the recently introduced mandatory uploads requirements in the radiology and pathology sector would significantly increase digital maturity and capability of all allied health professionals. Mandatory reporting requirements could be introduced as a requirement for allied health professionals participating in schemes such as the GP Chronic Condition Management Plan (GPCCMP) (formally the Chronic Disease Management Plan). This would result in a significant number of AHPs actively engaging in digital health products such as the MHR and more data being shared between multidisciplinary teams.

Additionally, for digital health literacy to become a key professional capability of all health professionals in Australia, it must be embedded at the

university level and be built into course curriculums. By considering digital health literacy a professional capability and an accreditation standard, it will mean that course curriculums will need to address its importance within the provision of healthcare and ensure practitioners have the capability to use digital health products. This will greatly increase the digital maturity and capability of AHP cohorts graduating from university and entering the workforce.

10 Do you believe that actions and initiatives described in the consultation paper offer real and practical assistance with increasing digital capability?

Yes

Please share any advice or context that explains your answer.:

The actions presented in the draft Action Plan provide a good basis for increasing the digital capability of the allied health sector. However, the action plan could be more ambitious and aim to align the allied health sector at the same pace as the rest of the healthcare sector.

The development and implementation of conformant and interoperable allied health clinical information systems (CIS) needs to be identified as a significant action that will greatly impact the success of building digital capability and other actions.

11 Is the action plan described in the consultation plan clear and concise?

Yes

Please share any advice or context that explains your answer.:

Yes, the proposed outcomes, focus areas and actions are clear and provide sufficient guidance. However, the inclusion of weblinks and/or appendices that provide additional information about the initiatives that are being undertaken would be a useful inclusion.

When the plan speaks of co-design as key to enabling secure, fit-for-purpose and connected digital solutions in which consumers, industry and providers, it is important that co-design includes a diversity of allied health. To date (until very recently) only general practice and public health systems were used and they may not be suitable focus for true co-design.

12 Are there any initiatives or related activities that should be included in the plan? These could be government, industry or sector driven initiatives.

Yes

Please share any advice or context that explains your answer.:

The Action Plan should be aware of any legislative changes that occur in relation to artificial intelligence (AI). For example, the Therapeutic Goods Authority (TGA) has been exploring how AI is used within the healthcare sector and which products will be considered a medical device. These definitions and legislative changes will greatly impact how AHPs use certain digital health products and thus should be considered.

Support and resource needs

13 Do you know where to find existing support and resources to support adoption of digital health tools in the allied health sector?

Not sure

Please share any advice or context that explains your answer. :

The digital health sector and work is often siloed and difficult to navigate to find out about what is happening.

14 What would help you more easily find or access the support and resources you need?

Resource needs:

A central depository of resources and information. This central depository can then link to other resources but a central 'point of truth' and information of what is available and happening in the sector is needed. Without this central depository, it is difficult for AHPs who are unfamiliar with what is going on in the sector to find the appropriate information.

This should also explain how each piece of work or tool interacts with others and what the end result is.

15 What types of support, resources, or infrastructure are most critical to enable successful adoption of digital health tools in the allied health sector?

Critical resourcing:

Having simple and informative educational resources tailored to the allied health sector and providing step-by-step guidance on how practitioners can register for and use digital health tools is essential.

Dedicated support lines should be established to assist practitioners in setting up the necessary digital health infrastructure and to provide ongoing support will be crucial especially in the early implementation stages.

The ease with which AHPs can connect to and interact with digital health tools and products will also significantly impact the uptake and capability of AHPs. Ensuring that there is a range of conformant and interoperable clinical information systems (CIS) available to AHPs that will better facilitate and streamline access will increase the uptake of digital health products.

Additionally, the government should provide financial supports and subsidies to allied health practices to assist in the uptake and transition to conformant CISs. For example, the e-health incentive provided to general practices could be expanded to allied health practices and subsidies could be provided to practices who need to transition to conformant CIS as this can be a costly and time-intensive process. Significant investment has been provided to both the public health system and general practices to encourage the uptake of digital health products and so this investment should be mirrored in the allied health sector.

Value of digital health for allied health professionals

16 How can we ensure the plan clearly demonstrates how digital health tools and services will deliver ongoing value to allied health professionals?

Not required:

Ongoing consultation and co-design with the allied health sector will be essential to understanding if digital health tools and services are providing value to AHPs.

The plan should include set touch points, where the progress of work is assessed and consultation is conducted with the sector to assess if value is present and if the tools and services are fit for purpose.

Allied health must be involved at every step of the process, including peak associations and individual practitioners.

17 What additional information, examples, or framing would help clarify the value of digital health for allied health professionals?

Not required:

Specific information and examples need to demonstrate the tangible everyday benefits and value that the digital health tools and services will provide to individual practitioners.

Examples need to demonstrate to AHPs how the tools and services provided will make their everyday practice easier and how it will benefit their patients and the care they provide to them. For example, they will be able to access and share information more easily and quicker and be able to facilitate better multidisciplinary team care.

Framing should focus on the value to allied health and their patients rather than the previous GP centric nature of examples.

Consent to publish

18 Do you consent to your submission being published?

Yes

19 Would you like your name or your organisation's name to be published alongside your submission on the consultation hub?

Yes

20 Please provide your name or your organisation's name as it will appear alongside your response:

Not required:

Osteopathy Australia