
Role	<i>The role of the Independent Inquiry is to undertake impartial investigations and provide recommendations for improvement about health data integrity, associated processes and systems, drivers of health system demand and any other related matters as set out in its Terms of Reference.</i>
Independent Inquiry	<i>The Minister has appointed the Chair in line with a motion agreed by the ACT Legislative Assembly regarding health system expertise and independence from the ACT's public health system.</i>
Deliverables	<p><i>The core deliverables of the Inquiry are to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Make recommendations for any required improvements to the health data made publicly available, including but not limited to wait times for specialist appointments. This will be supported by:</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ <i>undertaking inter-jurisdictional comparisons of publicly available health data;</i>○ <i>considering centralisation of the publication of health data; and</i>○ <i>considering improvements in the presentation of data to enable longitudinal comparisons and changes and segmentation to better understand determinants.</i>• <i>Determine the extent and impact of any interference – administrative, managerial or political – in clinical care decisions at Canberra Health Services and make recommendations as relevant.</i>• <i>Determine the effectiveness, risks, and any unintended consequences of planned care reforms and the Digital Health Record implementation, including potential improvements in data, updates to privacy legislation and oversight required to facilitate patients' treatment.</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ <i>This will include investigating concerns raised publicly regarding the cardiology and orthopaedic surgery groups in the ACT public health system.</i>• <i>Investigate current and projected resourcing needs (including workforce, theatres, equipment and beds) relative to demand. To support this analysis, the Inquiry will seek to:</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ <i>understand drivers of waiting list growth, including referral pathways and any peri-operative capacity constraints; and</i>○ <i>consider inter-jurisdictional comparisons of drivers of waiting-list growth, including referral pathways and peri-operative capacity constraints.</i>

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- Investigate factors affecting recruitment, retention and morale of medical, nursing and allied health staff.
 - Make evidence-based recommendations to improve governance, resourcing and data required to facilitate patient, policy and clinical outcomes, and staff wellbeing.

In undertaking this work, the Inquiry will have regard to previous inquiries, reviews and recommendations, and to concurrent reviews and strategic planning work, including that being undertaken by:

- the ACT Auditor Office into the implementation of the Digital Health Record and the Reform of Outpatient Service Delivery (see [ACT Audit Office 2025-26 Performance Audit Program](#)); and
- the Health System Sustainability Taskforce comprising senior officials from the Health and Community Services Directorate, Canberra Health Services and ACT Treasury.

Consultation *The Inquiry is required to undertake stakeholder consultations and accept written submissions where relevant. Consultation may be public and/or confidential and the Chair will accept confidential submissions and input on request.*

Following any public hearings or forums, transcripts and/or summaries may be published on the Health and Community Services Directorate website, subject to privacy considerations.

Reporting *The ACT Health System Council will act as the steering committee for the Inquiry. The Inquiry Chair will provide updates on progress at each Council meeting. The Inquiry may also provide papers for out of session consideration.*

The Inquiry Chair will also provide regular reports to the Health System Sustainability Taskforce and attend these meetings at the invitation of its Chair.

The Inquiry will report to the Minister for Health and Mental Health, who will make the final report publicly available, including by tabling it in the ACT Legislative Assembly by 30 June 2026. The Minister will also table a formal response to the final report by the last sitting day of 2026.

Taskforce *A team will be established in the Health and Community Services Directorate to support the independent inquiry, including the provision of Secretariat support.*

Approved *August 2025*
