



ACT
Government
Health

ACT Health Workforce Strategy 2023-2032

Action Plan 1: 2025–2026





Acknowledgment of Country

ACT Health Directorate acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Ngunnawal people. The Directorate respects their continuing culture and connections to the land and the unique contributions they make to the life of this area. It also acknowledges and welcomes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are part of the community we serve.

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Introduction

ACT HEALTH WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2023-2032

The [ACT Health Workforce Strategy 2023-2032](#) (the Strategy) provides a territory wide approach to building a sustainable health workforce for the ACT. It focuses on inclusiveness, a culture of learning and development, leadership and innovation and will support the territory and surrounding regions to predict and respond to workforce challenges.

The Strategy identifies eight strategic priority areas to target specific workforce needs and includes 23 early actions for implementation.

Vision

A highly skilled and valued health workforce supported by a learning health system delivering quality health outcomes for the community.

Principles



A valued workforce

A highly skilled and supported health workforce enables safe, high-quality person-centered care.



Respectful, diverse and inclusive

Diverse, equitable and inclusive workplaces promote excellence and accessibility. Culturally responsive and safe for diverse staff and consumers



Evidence informed and planned

High quality data, evidence and consultation drives optimal service and workforce planning.



Collaborative

One health system built on expertise, working together to deliver best practice care.



Learning

Continuous improvement through learning drives better care and opportunities to support exciting careers.



Sustainable

Supporting sustainable healthcare delivery, prevention and early intervention models to improve people's health and respond to system pressures.



Safe and secure

Supporting physical, psychological and cultural safety in our workforce with opportunities for secure employment.



Future focused

Embracing innovation, effective models of care and technology empowers our workforce and anticipates the future needs of our community.





ACT Health Workforce Strategy and Action Plans

To implement the Strategy over 10 years, action plans will be developed for three time periods – 2025-2026, 2027-2029 and 2030-2032.

The action plans will be developed in collaboration with stakeholders, including public and private health organisations, education providers and non-government organisations, and will detail the actions to be undertaken to meet the priorities of the Strategy.

Implementation of the actions will be led by the ACT Government and its partners across the health system in the ACT. A review and evaluation of the action plan will be completed in its final year of implementation with any findings implemented in the subsequent action plan.

Action Plan 1

Action Plan 1: 2025-26 is the first of the series of action plans. It sets out the actions to be delivered during 2025-2026.

The development of Action Plan 1: 2025-26 commenced at a stakeholder workshop on 25 July 2023. The draft action plan underwent targeted stakeholder consultation in March 2024.

The actions have been guided by the Territory-wide Health Workforce Planning Group, along with action owners and feedback from stakeholders.

Some actions and activities within the action plan are dependent on future funding considerations. The ACT Government will pursue and explore options to fund these actions during the life of Action Plan 1: 2025-26.

Forum statistics:

78 delegates attended from 36 organisations.

For each of the 8 strategic priorities, delegates considered “What would success look like?” and “What other actions are needed?”

Delegates participated in 15 polls, which captured 753 unique contributions.

Strategic priorities:



1. A focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and a culturally safe environment
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2. Investing in workforce planning and intelligence
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3. Promoting a collaborative health system
-



4. Embracing diversity and a culture of respect to deliver a safe and welcoming workplace
-



5. Delivering excellence



6. Rewarding careers



7. Stepping into the future



8. Advocating for reform

SHADING DENOTES EARLY ACTIONS
PUBLISHED IN THE ACT HEALTH
WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2023-2032

Priority



1. A focus on Aboriginal and
and Torres Strait Islander
workforce and a
culturally safe
environment

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2. Investing in workforce
planning and
intelligence

INTENT	A commitment to working in partnership to develop long-term, sustainable actions based on trust, awareness and an understanding of experiences of ACT and region Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families and communities.	Knowing our workforce: supply, demand and improved forecasting.
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ACTIONS	<p>1.1 Establish an employment program with mentoring and support to successfully develop a network across Health with the creation of at least five identified positions across the ACTHD.</p> <p>1.2 Meet with key community and service provider representatives to identify specific priority actions that will be implemented under the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2023-2031.</p> <p>1.3 Co-design an ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Action Plan, including the use of appropriately collated data to create pathways to increase the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing workforce in the ACT. This plan will be iterated to ensure alignment with local responses to national implementation plans when they become available. This includes the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021-2031 and the Health Sector Strengthening Plan.</p> <p>1.4 Collaborate with the First Nations health workforce to identify and explore the introduction of initiatives to strengthen cultural safety within the health system in the ACT.</p> <p>1.5 Establish a First Nations health worker collaborative to support cross-sectoral and whole-of-jurisdiction connection and to develop a self-determined mentoring program that is targeted to the First Nations health workforce.</p> <p>1.6 Support the implementation of the Indigenous Allied Health Australia Health Academy model in the ACT.</p>	<p>2.1 Partner with Australian National University College of Health and Medicine's, National Centre for Workforce Studies, and the Capital Health Network to improve the understanding of and modelling of the health workforce across the Territory.</p> <p>2.2 Identify, collect, and analyse reliable, recent and applicable baseline workforce planning data.</p> <p>2.3 Explore ways to better understand the workforce of self-regulated and unregulated health professions across different sectors and contexts in the ACT.</p> <p>2.4 Commit to improving publicly available health workforce data.</p> <p>2.5 Establish a health workforce data analytics capability within the ACT Health Directorate and develop a meaningful health workforce profile dataset for the ACT.</p> <p>2.6 Perform a gap and needs analysis for health workforce data for the health system in the ACT.</p> <p>2.7 Ensure health workforce data is discoverable and accessible to health services for health workforce planning within the ACT.</p> <p>2.8 Develop an ACT public sector nursing workforce plan.</p> <p>2.9 Develop an ACT public sector midwifery workforce plan.</p>
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3. Promoting a collaborative Health System



4. Embracing diversity and a culture of respect to deliver a safe and welcoming workplace

INTENT	<p>Strengthening formal and informal collaboration arrangements across the Territory and its surrounds.</p>	<p>Our systems and processes must drive and create workplace environments where all staff are highly valued and supported to deliver compassionate, person-centred care to our diverse community.</p>
ACTIONS	<p>3.1 Identify barriers and opportunities to improve partnerships across Canberra and the surrounds through the leaders of health systems across the ACT and surrounding regions.</p> <p>3.2 Provide opportunities to improve cross-system communication, such as the ACT Health Forum, and achieve attendance from a broad range of stakeholders across the health system in the ACT and surrounding region, including emerging leaders and the junior health workforce.</p> <p>3.3 Consider expanding access to ACT Government health workforce training to the private and non-government sectors, and action opportunities to provide standard training opportunities for staff and students across health system.</p>	<p>4.1 Continue to implement the Health Workforce Wellbeing and Recovery Fund.</p> <p>4.2 Embed a positive workplace culture as business as usual.</p> <p>4.3 Work with education and training partners to embed a trauma-informed, domestic, family and sexual violence informed, and disability confident approach into education and training pathways.</p> <p>4.4 Support the ACT Disability Strategy to improve career pathways in health for people with disability.</p> <p>4.5 Implement Phase Two of Mandated Minimum Nurse/Midwife-to-Patient Ratios within Canberra Health Services.</p> <p>4.6 Introduce a program to support new graduate health professionals transition to professional practice in the ACT.</p> <p>4.7 Continue to deliver the Nurses and Midwives: Toward a Safer Culture Project, including the Safewards program, across all public mental health services.</p> <p>4.8 Work to legislate Positive Practice Environment Standards for public service nurses and midwives in the ACT.</p>



5. Delivering excellence



6. Rewarding careers

INTENT	A learning health system is one committed to continuous learning, innovation and quality improvement to refine and deliver best practice. This approach encourages a health workforce to work at the top of their scope, supported by education, training and research.	Supporting education, training and career pathways will attract a high-quality and motivated workforce to train, study and work in the ACT.
ACTIONS	<p>5.1 Explore models and partnerships to grow and sustain a learning health system within the ACT.</p> <p>5.2 Work with health practitioners to identify barriers to professions working to their top of scope, prioritising key areas of service demand and reform as identified by the ACT Health Services Plan.</p> <p>5.3 Work in partnership with the Better together: A strategic plan for research in the ACT health system 2022–2030 implementation teams.</p> <p>5.4 Promote the benefits of workplace mobility and flexibility for the health workforce and health system in the ACT.</p> <p>5.5 Promote career opportunities within the health system in the ACT in conjunction with ACT and regional education providers through stories of team members experiences of studying and working in the ACT.</p> <p>5.6 Provide local General Practitioners with access to a professional development and wellbeing fund.</p> <p>5.7 Support an increased scope of practice for GPs, including an expanded role in the diagnosis and treatment of ADHD.</p> <p>5.8 Develop a health professional capability framework.</p> <p>5.9 Remunerate ACT clinicians for their time to undertake training related to Voluntary Assisted Dying.</p>	<p>6.1 Link in with the existing committees focused on career pathways and the transition of students into the workforce.</p> <p>6.2 Work with Education Providers and local health services to map ACT career pathways to understand where our health workforce comes from, how long they stay, why they leave and where they go.</p> <p>6.3 Develop a discussion paper on barriers and opportunities to increase flexibility and mobility across the health system.</p> <p>6.4 Map migration pathways for international recruitment.</p> <p>6.5 Convene a student round table/forum in 2023.</p> <p>6.6 Partner with local education providers to identify areas for professional development, credentialling and qualification pathways.</p> <p>6.7 Seek to employ an additional 800 health workers within the ACT public health system by the end of 2028.</p> <p>6.8 Work with the local primary care workforce and professional bodies to co-design recruitment and retention initiatives for the ACT GP workforce.</p> <p>6.9 Engage with school students and career counsellors to promote health workforce careers, including targeted engagement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</p>

		<p>students and students with a disability¹.</p> <p>6.10 Review the effectiveness of ACT Government scholarship programs to identify opportunities to improve attraction and retention of health professionals, and to target Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and workforce.</p> <p>6.11 Deliver the Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Study Incentive Program to support students studying eligible qualifications at University of Canberra and the Australian Catholic University and to reduce placement poverty when on clinical placements.</p> <p>6.12 Evaluate the capacity of the health system in the ACT to meet the clinical placement requirements of ACT-based students studying health workforce courses and develop appropriate strategies to address shortages in capacity.</p> <p>6.13 Investigate measures to recruit and retain allied health professionals in areas that have relatively small numbers.</p> <p>6.14 Continue engagement with ANU to support more medical student training places in the ACT being prioritised for local students.</p>
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Priority



7. Stepping into the future



8. Advocating for reform

¹ Note: This work complements other action plans related to the health workforce, including: the *Framework for Change: the ACT Mental Health Workforce Strategy* and its *Framework for Action 2023-2026, including 2024 Work Plan* in relation to the mental health workforce; and the *Skilled to Success Industry Action Plan* in relation to the care workforce

INTENT	Embracing the use of technology and innovation to support working to the top of scope, delivering effective, contemporary care that reflects best practice.	Working with other State and Territory governments and the Commonwealth to drive improved models of care for the Territory, taking advantage of national and international experiences to support service design.
ACTIONS	<p>7.1 Identify innovation in technology, models of care and service delivery occurring locally, nationally, and internationally for consideration in the ACT.</p> <p>7.2 Deliver a report that reviews the evidence for, the models to deliver and potential benefits of, formalised safe staffing levels within the ACT public health system where the evidence supports this approach.</p> <p>7.3 Continue the development of the Nurse Practitioner workforce in the ACT through the Nurse Practitioner Professional Practice Project to identify opportunities to enhance the Nurse Practitioner role and support the work to implement the National Nurse Practitioner Workforce Plan.</p>	<p>8.1 Support Health Ministers to advocate for health workforce supply and models that will be effective for the ACT.</p> <p>8.2 Support work to explore optimal and sustainable primary and community care models for the ACT.</p> <p>8.3 Seek to align pharmacy scope of practice with regional NSW where possible.</p>



Monitoring and evaluation

A Project Board: ACT Health Workforce Strategy 2023-2032 has been established to track and monitor the implementation progress of the actions from the Strategy and action plans. This work will be oversighted by the Territory-wide Health Workforce Planning Group.

A review and evaluation of the impact of the Action Plan 1: 2025-26 will be completed in 2026, with any findings implemented in the subsequent action plan. This will enable adjustments for changing demographics and health status of the community, innovation, new technology, as well as new and emerging models of care.

Accountability

The ACT Government will be accountable for the implementation of the actions, primarily through the ACT Health Directorate and Canberra Health Services.

Accountable lead	Actions
ACT Government	6.7; 6.11
ACT Health Directorate	1.3; 1.4; 1.5; 1.6; 2.5; 2.6; 2.7; 2.8; 2.9; 3.2; 3.3; 4.6; 4.8; 5.4; 5.5; 5.6; 5.7; 5.8; 5.9; 6.8; 6.9;6.10; 6.12; 6.13; 6.14; 7.2; 7.3; 8.3
Canberra Health Services	4.5; 4.7;





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