

MEDIA RELEASE

Health Ministers Endorse Implementation of Safety and Quality Accreditation Reforms

Health Ministers have given in principle endorsement to the Commission's Alternative Model for safety and quality accreditation in health care.

Professor Chris Baggoley, the Commission's Chief Executive, said "Ministers have agreed to the need for reform to expand the coverage of accreditation in the health sector starting with high risk services and to establish Australian Health Standards in priority areas to promote safe, quality care."

The Alternative Model proposes a range of reforms to existing safety and quality accreditation processes, including the new Quality Improvement Framework, formal obligations to comply with accreditation requirements and improved data and information collection about accredited health services.

The Ministers' endorsement followed an extensive consultation process about possible improvements to safety and quality accreditation of health care. The Commission acknowledged the important contribution stakeholders had made in the reform process.

Consumers have welcomed the endorsement of the Commission's accreditation process, to which health consumer groups have contributed.

"This will be the framework on which to build reform in safety and quality that consumers have been demanding. It will lead to better health outcomes for individuals and the community," Executive Director of the Consumers' Health Forum of Australia, Helen Hopkins, said.

The Commission believes that the reforms can build upon existing accreditation processes to promote improved safety and quality care for consumers. "These reforms will strengthen our accreditation system and complement the Commission's other priority programs on health care safety and quality," said Professor Baggoley.

The Commission is commencing the next phase of its work, which will include developing a preliminary set of Australian Health Standards, and preparatory work on implementation of the Alternative Model.

'The Commission will continue its collaborative approach to the reform process,' Professor Baggoley said. "I look forward to building on the positive relationships that the Commission has developed with its stakeholders as we move together towards a new model of safety and quality accreditation of health care."

Further information is available on the Commission's website www.safetyandquality.gov.au .

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