

Friday, 19 June 2026

## National standards to ensure safe, high-quality virtual care for all Australians

The [Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care](#) is pleased to announce it has been tasked with developing national safety and quality standards for virtual care, with the support of the Australian Government and the Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Ageing, and Minister for Disability and the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Virtual care, which is any interaction between a patient and clinician (or clinicians) that occurs remotely with the use of information technologies, has become an essential part of how Australians access health services.

In 2025, more than 11 million Australians had a telehealth consultation, reinforcing the need for nationally consistent standards to assure the safety and quality of virtual care, across all health settings.

The virtual care standards will establish clear, consistent expectations for high-quality care delivered virtually, whether through hospitals, primary and community healthcare, or commercial providers. The Commission will consider a range of options for implementing the standards, working closely with government and partners.

The Commission will develop the standards as part of a national approach to strengthen clinical governance, which aims to drive high-quality care and better outcomes for patients. Clinical governance is the combination of organisational culture, systems and structures that enables everyone in a health service to deliver care that is high-quality and continually improving.

The standards will be structured around the Commission's work to elevate clinical governance in health services and provide best practice, contemporary guidance on governing for consistently high-quality care. They will build upon the recently released [National Model for Clinical Governance](#).

**Conjoint Professor Anne Duggan, Chief Executive Officer of the Commission**, said the standards would bring the same rigour to virtual care that Australians already expect from in-person health services.

"Virtual care is an established and growing part of our health system, and it is important that the same expectations of safety and quality apply whether care is delivered in-person or virtually," said Conjoint Professor Duggan.

"Our leadership in clinical governance describes how health services can provide the right culture, structures, support and leadership to deliver high-quality care. Applying this to virtual care will provide a nationally consistent approach regardless of how or where care is delivered.

"We will work closely with our partners, including the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and the Australian Digital Health Agency, alongside clinicians, consumers and industry, to ensure the standards reflect best practice and support National Digital Health Infrastructure as a way to uplift and drive consistency in application across the health system."

**Minister Butler** endorsed the Commission's work to develop national virtual care standards.

"Australians deserve the same assurance of safety and quality when they receive care through virtual services as when they walk through the door of a hospital or clinic. These standards will ensure quality and safety are built into virtual care from the ground up," Minister Butler said.

The Commission expects to publish the standards by the end of 2027.

ENDS

**More information:** [safetyandquality.gov.au/virtual-care](https://safetyandquality.gov.au/virtual-care)

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### **About the Commission**

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care leads and coordinates national improvements in the safety and quality of health care based on the best available evidence. By working in partnership with patients, carers, clinicians, the Australian, state and territory health systems, the private sector, managers and healthcare organisations, the Commission aims to ensure that the health system is better informed, supported and organised to deliver safe and high-quality care. [safetyandquality.gov.au](https://safetyandquality.gov.au)