

Annual Report
Business Highlights
2014 - 2015



Connecting — Informing — Innovating



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Connecting — people to the information and advice they need to manage their own health and wellbeing.

Informing — through sharing trusted knowledge, quality health information and advice.

Innovating — to address current and future health challenges.



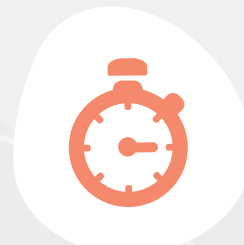
8 million
visits

to our websites
this year



Over 7 million
transactions

on the National Health
Services Directory each month



Every
30 seconds

one of our telephone
operators manages a call



Over 25,000
website links

to resources from our
information partners



Over 1,000
new pages

created across our
websites this year



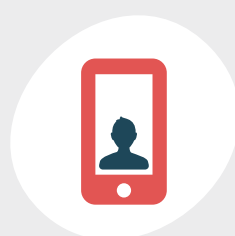
5 million
calls

to healthdirect helpline
since inception



1,000
people

use the healthdirect
Symptom Checker every day



Video Call
added

to Pregnancy,
Birth and Baby



85

National Health Services
Directory widgets on
external websites

CHAIR'S STATEMENT

WELCOME



“We are realising the benefits of our investments in our digital platforms and other areas of operations to expand access to health and related services.”

This year, Healthdirect Australia has continued to embrace innovation and new technologies to deliver clinically sound, 24-hour health information and advice to all Australians – from practical and emotional support during pregnancy through to advice about aged care.

Building on the success of previous years, we are realising the benefits of our investments in our digital platforms and other areas of operations to expand access to health and related services. For example, this year we launched a new Video Call option for callers to the Pregnancy, Birth and Baby service.

We have also enhanced our organisational capabilities in a range of areas, achieving Australian Government Information Security Manual (ISM) accreditation for our online platform and further developing our strategic sourcing capability. Every new service or enhancement is supported by the collaborative efforts of the digital, clinical governance, risk management and operational teams - ensuring consistency and quality across all services, and delivering the best value for our shareholders.

This year, the company recorded an operating surplus due primarily to a timing difference in the receipt and expenditure of grant funding. When funds are received but not fully expended before the financial year end, this tends to show as a surplus 'profit', however, the funds will be used in the subsequent year to develop and rollout services.

Healthdirect Australia continues to play a leading role in the country's healthcare landscape. We look forward to working with our shareholders to realise opportunities for the company to develop and grow over the upcoming months.

I would like to congratulate the CEO and his team for delivering a challenging program of work this year and acknowledge the work of my fellow Board members and Board committees for their commitment and dedication to the organisation.

The future of Healthdirect Australia is very positive, and we will continue working towards our vision of ensuring all Australians have access to trusted health information and advice, when and where they need it.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia McKenzie".

Patricia McKenzie, Chair

CEO'S INTRODUCTION

CONNECTING, INFORMING, INNOVATING



“To improve access, we provide a choice of innovative channels that are consistent with modern communication methods and preferences.”

At Healthdirect Australia, providing every Australian with 24/7 access to trusted information, and the advice they need to manage their own health and related issues, remains our highest priority.

We operate in a challenging and dynamic environment. Rapid changes in technology and consumer expectations are transforming the way people access services. To meet these expectations and to improve access, we provide a choice of innovative channels that are consistent with modern communication methods and preferences.

This year saw the finalisation of healthdirect Symptom Checker, a guided self-triage tool that helps people determine what healthcare action they need to take. Our healthdirect website has grown substantially both in terms of the content it covers and also the number of visits. Along with the healthdirect helpline, which this year achieved the milestone of 5 million calls since its inception, healthdirect is providing Australians with comprehensive access to trusted advice, online and over the phone.

Another important step for us this year was the establishment of a new Fund Provider Committee for the National Health Services Directory. The committee supports us to provide better access to information about health and human services for consumers, and to ensure that the directory remains an important component of national ehealth infrastructure.

Going forward, the My Aged Care Gateway will have a greater role in identifying and connecting people with suitable services. A second call centre, with over 100 new staff members, has been opened to facilitate additional demand.

The guidance of our Board of Directors, under the leadership of our Chair, Patricia McKenzie, and the support of our Standing Committee and Joint Customer Advisory Committee, have been critical to our successes this year. I would also like to thank each member of the team at Healthdirect Australia for their outstanding efforts.

Looking ahead, there are many exciting projects on the horizon, including a new healthdirect app, an extension of our Pregnancy, Birth and Baby service to cater for parents with children up to five years of age, and a revised model for the after hours GP helpline which will better target those without face to face access to a GP in the after hours period. We look forward to the next 12 months and to continuing our work to ensure that all Australians have access to timely and appropriate information and services.

Colin Seery, CEO

OUR BOARD



Ms Patricia McKenzie Chair

Patricia is an experienced chair and director in the energy, government, health and not-for-profit sectors. She is currently a non-executive Director of APA Group, the largest energy infrastructure company in Australia, and Transgrid, owner of NSW's high voltage electricity transmission network.

Patricia was formerly a Director of Australian Energy Market Operator Limited; CEO of Gas Market Company Limited; Chair of Sunnyfield Limited; and Chair of Diabetes Australia.

At Healthdirect Australia, Patricia is Chair of the Board and member of both the Finance, Risk Management and Audit Committee (FRMAC) and the Project Review and Work Health and Safety Advisory Committee (PROWAC).

Associate Professor Anthony Lawler Director

Anthony is a specialist Emergency Physician; Director and President-elect of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine; and Director at the Postgraduate Medical Education Council of Tasmania.

Anthony is also Associate Professor in Health Services at the University of Tasmania; a member of the Australian Medical Council's Special Education Accreditation Committee; and the Director of Acute Health Services Planning and Design in Tasmania.

At Healthdirect Australia, Anthony is Chair of the Clinical Governance Advisory Group (CGAG).

Image from left to right:
(Top) Susan Forrester, Anthony Lawler.
(Bottom) Julie Thompson, Patricia McKenzie, Karen Dado.

Ms Karen Dado Director

Karen is a Business Development Adviser with Accelerating Commercialisation, Entrepreneurs' Infrastructure Programme, AusIndustry, where she is focused on facilitating commercialisation of novel health and life sciences technologies. She is also an accredited facilitator of the Strategy and Risk Foundation Director courses run by the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Karen previously spent six years with AFG Venture Group, a corporate advisory and consulting firm based in Asia and Australia and 15 years with PricewaterhouseCoopers in their Management Consulting, Risk Management and Transactions Services practices.

At Healthdirect Australia, Karen is Chair of the Project Review and Work Health and Safety Advisory Committee (PROWAC).

Ms Susan Forrester Director

Susan is a professional chair and company director with 25 years' commercial experience founded in law, business and governance and her portfolio is focused on the healthcare sector (health, aged, community and child care and veterinarian sectors).

Susan chairs NVC Ltd, Propell National Valuers and the Oncore Group and is a non-executive Director of G8 Education Ltd and UnitingCare Qld. She also serves on two audit committees in the government infrastructure sector.

Outside her Board portfolio, Susan leads the strategy practice of Board Matters, a specialist governance consultancy.

At Healthdirect Australia, Susan is Chair of the Finance, Risk Management and Audit Committee (FRMAC).

Dr Julie Thompson Director

Julie is a General Practitioner and member of the Cancer Australia Advisory Council, the Strategic Advisory Group for Breast Cancer Network Australia and a Director of the Rural Workforce Agency Victoria.

Julie has 25 years' experience as a Director on a range of health-related boards at a local, regional, state and national level, including community health, hospital, aged care and GP divisions. She has broad experience in health service reform, including mental health, chronic disease management and primary care.

At Healthdirect Australia, Julie is a member of the Clinical Governance Advisory Group (CGAG) and the Project Review and Work Health and Safety Advisory Committee (PROWAC).

OUR VISION

To be a key part of a quality Australian health system by helping consumers manage their own health through leveraging technology to enable timely access to health and related services.

OVERVIEW

Healthdirect Australia designs and delivers innovative services to provide every Australian with 24/7 access to trusted information and the advice they need to manage their own health and related issues.

We are uniquely positioned as an organisation funded by the Council of Australian Governments with a mandate to work across jurisdictional boundaries to deliver telehealth and online services to the whole population.

Our services cater for people at many different stages of life, and range from practical and emotional support during pregnancy through to advice about aged care, helping many Australians who would otherwise need to travel great distances to their nearest health services or medical practitioner.

No matter where people live, or what time of the day or night it is, they can talk to a health professional, find trusted advice online about how to care for their health issue, and locate their closest appropriate and open health service.

We provide value and benefits to governments and the Australian public by:

Sharing trusted knowledge

Our rigorous clinical governance protocols and partnerships with leading health organisations ensure our services provide consistent and quality national standards of information, triage and advice.

Addressing challenges through innovation

We have a proven track record of designing, procuring and delivering integrated programs and tools that are responsive to current needs and use innovation to meet the challenges of tomorrow. We can also use our infrastructure to respond to emerging needs, such as public health emergencies.

Offering real value

Our national reach allows us to achieve economies of scale in service delivery and our efficient use of innovation and technology reduces cost, duplication and risk for our shareholders and customers.

Caring about health consumers

We are committed to improving health literacy by providing people with the trusted information they need to manage their own health and related issues. We use our consumer insight to make sure our services meet community needs.



HEALTHDIRECT AUSTRALIA SERVICES

24-hour access to trusted health information and advice



healthdirect

- > 1800 022 222
- > www.healthdirect.gov.au

Access to a GP at night, on weekends and on public holidays

after hours GP helpline
healthdirect

after hours GP helpline

- > 1800 022 222

Access to free, reliable and consistent information about health services



National Health Services Directory

- > www.nhsd.com.au

Access to counselling and information for pregnant women and new parents



Pregnancy, Birth and Baby

- > 1800 882 436
- > www.pregnancybirthbaby.org.au

Access to support relating to mental health and wellbeing



mindhealthconnect

- > www.mindhealthconnect.org.au

Access to aged care information and support to navigate the aged care system



My Aged Care

- > 1800 200 422
- > www.myagedcare.gov.au

Access to free and confidential advice and coaching for a healthier lifestyle



Get Healthy

- > 1300 806 258



healthdirect provides access to free, trusted, quality health information and advice both online and over the phone. It is available 24/7, to help Australians make informed health decisions.

The healthdirect helpline has been advising callers about their health concerns since 2007, and achieved the significant milestone of five million calls this year. No matter what time of the day or night it is, people can call and speak with a registered nurse to get advice about their condition, whether to manage it themselves at home or see a GP; they can even be directed to an appropriate local health service. If it is an emergency they can be transferred to Triple Zero (000). This service is truly appreciated by the community, with customer satisfaction at 95%.

A new Client Relationship Management (CRM) system was introduced this year and includes an automated workflow to ensure that following triage, callers are appropriately and efficiently referred to relevant services in their local area. The CRM also facilitates new interfaces with our websites so that nurses can direct callers to further health information online, look up specific information to give to callers, and search the National Health Services Directory to find information for referrals.

Complementing the helpline is the healthdirect website - a trusted source of online health information.

A new addition to the website this year has been the healthdirect Symptom Checker, an online self-triage tool that allows users to check their symptoms and receive personalised advice on what healthcare action to take. It provides evidence-based information and advice about the most appropriate entry point into the health system. People can sometimes feel very uncertain about 'what to do next', including whether to seek medical advice and treatment – healthdirect Symptom Checker helps guide users through a series of questions to make an informed decision.

The healthdirect Symptom Checker was developed in collaboration with NHS Direct (a part of the UK National Health Service) and an Australian clinical panel consisting of 40 clinicians. In addition to the work to ensure the clinical safety and appropriateness of healthdirect Symptom Checker, we undertook extensive user testing to ensure that the interactive tool is easy to use. healthdirect Symptom Checker now has 42 different symptom flows available, covering the most commonly searched symptoms.

We have also worked to make our website content more comprehensive over the past year, including a new section on medicines, the production of content aligned with the healthdirect Symptom Checker, and more links to content from our trusted information partners.

We have ensured that our content now addresses the most commonly searched health terms by using search intelligence to analyse what health information Australians are looking for online. The website received almost three million visits this year – 140% more than the previous 12 months.

“ Lifesaving advice. I used the Symptom Checker because I had chest pain. The advice given was to go to emergency, it turned out that I'd had a heart attack. I might have left it another day if it wasn't for this site. ”

healthdirect Symptom Checker user

HEALTHDIRECT SYMPTOM CHECKER ANNE STEFFENSEN

Anne Steffensen is a pharmacist and was part of the Australian clinical panel that developed healthdirect Symptom Checker. She says that the information in the tool has been tailored to suit the unique Australian health system.

“The main benefits of the Symptom Checker are that it is evidence based and easy to navigate. It's a checklist people can work through which will guide them in the right direction, rather than an internet search which can lead to people fearing the worst.”

“There is such a lot of information on the internet, it can be quite confusing working out where it is from, whether it is good quality and whether it applies to your situation. The Symptom Checker is useful and relevant – its information won't panic you, but it will advise if you need to do more.”

Anne has also been able to use healthdirect Symptom Checker in practice with a patient who attended a community pharmacy.

“One weekend a man came in who was very anxious after being bitten by a spider. I was able to use the Symptom Checker as a tool to reassure him. We used one of the computers in the pharmacy and went through the checklist. By the end he was much more relaxed.”

“In community pharmacy you get many diverse enquiries and I tell people that if they are unsure in the future, the Symptom Checker is a good tool they can use.”

“There's also the additional benefit of being able to refer people to the healthdirect helpline to get clarification. It really is a fabulous resource.”



When Katie Head's 18 month old daughter, Lucia, had a cold that just wouldn't go away, she feared it might be developing into something serious and turned to the healthdirect helpline for advice.

"My daughter had a cold for about three weeks and had started to develop a cough. I was worried that it had turned into bronchitis or something more serious. It was one of those things where I just wasn't sure what to do. Our usual medical centre wasn't open and we didn't want to take her out if we didn't need to, so I called healthdirect."

While Katie thought she might be overreacting, Sharon, the healthdirect nurse, reassured her that she had done the right thing.

"I was originally hesitant to call but my husband, Neale, convinced me to for reassurance. I was worried about sounding like a dramatic, overprotective mum but Sharon put me completely at ease and made me feel that my concerns were warranted without alarming me."

"All of the questions she asked were really helpful and she went through all of Lucia's symptoms. We were advised that she did need to see a doctor to get her chest looked at that evening, and Sharon was able to look up the closest medical centre that was open. The whole process was so smooth and seamless."

Katie runs a website for parents in Sydney's Inner West and had come across healthdirect through the recommendations of other mums on her website who had used the service, so she had the healthdirect number to hand when she needed it.

"We get a few people, on our Facebook group in particular, who often post about an illness their child has, for example a rash, a bite, or vomiting. It amazes me that people would waste time asking questions on a Facebook page rather than seeking proper medical help. The worst cases are when there are some people who like to play Dr Google and make a diagnosis which is inevitably wrong and usually incites panic."

"I always advise them to make the call to healthdirect. You have absolutely nothing to lose and everything to gain. It's free, professional advice that can either put your mind at ease or give you the information you need on how to get help. Don't waste time on Google or Facebook, if you're going to ask a question, always ask a professional."

"It is amazing to have access to a service like this that is available 24/7. It is a necessary and invaluable service. I would think that particularly for new mums, anyone without access to a car or a nearby open medical centre or hospital, this is an essential service."

"I can see how this service literally saves lives but also offers support and advice to those not in an emergency situation and can potentially prevent people from making unnecessary visits to the hospital or doctor. I would and do recommend this service to anyone who will listen - especially my mothers' group."

Top 5 clinical issues healthdirect helpline

	Clinical issue
1	Medication question (adult)
2	Vomiting (paediatric)
3	Abdominal pain or discomfort
4	Chest pain or discomfort
5	Trauma - head (paediatric)

Advice given healthdirect helpline

Recommendation/advice	%
See a doctor (ranges from immediately to within 72 hours)	31.1%
Speak to telephone GP	21.5%
Self care	16.2%
Emergency department immediately	17.0%
Activate Triple Zero (000)	7.6%
Other	6.6%

Top 5 symptoms healthdirect Symptom Checker

	Symptom
1	Abdominal pain
2	Rashes and skin problems
3	Diarrhoea and vomiting
4	Sexual health and lower body
5	Chest and back pain

Top 5 health topic pages healthdirect website

	Web page title
1	Diabetes
2	How to lower blood pressure
3	Staph infections
4	Skin conditions
5	Insect bites and stings

LOOKING AHEAD

We will be launching the healthdirect app, bringing together all the tools people need to make informed decisions about their health.

Search for trusted health information

All information in the app will be sourced from Australia's leading health organisations and will go through a clinical quality assurance review.

Check your symptoms

The healthdirect Symptom Checker will guide users through a series of questions and help them make an informed decision about what to do next, whether it is self care, seeing a health professional or going to a hospital.

Find a health service

The app will allow users to easily find the health service they need, when they need it, using the national directory which covers a range of health services and provides their contact details and directions from the user's current location.

The after hours GP helpline is an extension of the healthdirect helpline, providing people with access to medical advice and support from a telephone-based GP at night, on weekends and public holidays.

Callers are first assessed by a registered nurse and, based on their symptoms, may be transferred to the after hours GP to have their condition assessed further. In the majority of cases (over 65%), people are given further advice that enables them to manage their condition at home or until they can see their regular GP in business hours.

If a caller needs to see a health professional in person immediately, the after hours GP is able to use the National Health Services Directory to identify services that are open in the caller's local area and refer them to the most appropriate service. If it is an emergency, the caller is transferred directly to Triple Zero (000).

Medication queries continue to be the most popular topic of calls to the after hours GP helpline, and this year we strengthened our capacity to provide callers with advice about specific medication concerns.

LOOKING AHEAD

The after hours GP helpline service model is being revised to better support all Australians who do not have access to face to face GP services in the after hours period.

We are working to implement the most effective model for the after hours GP helpline. The service will transition from the current inbound service to a more efficient outbound call model, with eligible callers to the healthdirect helpline having the benefit of a call back from a GP to discuss their issue.

Top 5 clinical issues after hours GP helpline

	Clinical issue
1	Medication question (adult)
2	Diarrhoea or change in bowel habits
3	Rashes, hives or eruptions
4	Cough (paediatric)
5	Nausea or vomiting

Advice given after hours GP helpline

Recommendation/advice	%
Self-care advice and see a doctor/health provider within normal operating hours	47.2%
See a GP immediately	17.0%
See a GP immediately (no GP available – go to emergency department)	9.7%
Self care at home	9.2%
Emergency department immediately	9.0%
Other	7.8%

AFTER HOURS GP HELPLINE

GRAEME DOOLAN



Graeme was in the kitchen preparing dinner one evening when he experienced a tingling sensation in his chest. He was concerned he could be having problems with his heart.

"I'd had triple bypass surgery in February 2015 but had never experienced a feeling like this before. It was like a heart palpitation or a muscle flicking. I thought it was in my best interest to find out what it was."

He called the healthdirect helpline, a service he had used before when his children were sick. Graeme was transferred to the after hours GP helpline to get advice from the telephone GP.

"The doctor told me to describe what I was feeling and asked lots of questions about my heart. She thought my blood pressure might be out of whack and as I have a blood pressure monitor at home, I was able to hook myself up to this and get a reading."

"Luckily there was nothing wrong with my blood pressure and the doctor was satisfied that I wasn't having a major event. She advised me to keep a close eye on how I was feeling and if it got worse to go to hospital."

Graeme says he was impressed with the comprehensive assessment undertaken by the GP and was confident with the advice he was given.

"I felt very relieved after the call. It was almost like being in the clinic with the doctor face to face, going through all the correct types of questions based on my medical history. It was like they had my file in front of them."

"Not only that, it was a relief not to have to make the two and a half hour drive from our home in Bunbury to Sir Charles Gairdner hospital and clog up the emergency department waiting to see a doctor unnecessarily."

Graeme would recommend the after hours GP helpline to anyone who needs professional advice.

"I think you know within yourself when there is something seriously wrong and you need to go to the emergency department, but at other times you just need some reassurance about what to do and with the helpline you can speak to a professional and put your mind at ease."



The National Health Services Directory is a comprehensive, reliable and accurate directory of Australian health and human services. It provides a national view of health and related services, gives health providers access to information to support referrals, and forms a key component of the national ehealth infrastructure.

This year we have been working with the National E-Health Transition Authority, SA Health and NT Health to develop the National Endpoint Proxy Service (NEPS), which uses the directory to provide a single point through which health providers can access information to send secure messages. NEPS will be an important enabler for ehealth in Australia.

The directory was also linked to the clinical pathway tools Map of Medicine and HealthPathways, supporting referrals by allowing clinicians to directly access a list of local providers during a consultation using their practice management software.

Content in the directory has more than doubled each year since inception. It now stores details of over 150,000 services and 50,000 practitioners across 300 health and human services categories. The content is managed by the National Health Services Directory team and other authorised content managers who maintain and enhance information in their respective catchments. We have taken a strategic approach to refining content management processes over the past year. Data are validated using external sources of information, such as Medicare and the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency, and by contacting services directly.

This year, the directory became the host directory for the National Disability Insurance Agency's (NDIA) approved service providers list. The National Health Services Directory team now manage this content on behalf of the NDIA and the NDIA's website has been equipped with a searchable directory interface so that consumers can find relevant services.

The directory is widely recognised as the single source for information about health and related services across Australia and there are over 4.6 million searches of directory content each month.

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES DIRECTORY

DR ANGUS RITCHIE



Dr Ritchie is a Nephrology Staff Specialist at Concord Repatriation General Hospital and Clinical Lead for HealthPathways Sydney.

"HealthPathways is a web-based program to better connect GPs and private allied health providers with hospitals and specialists by creating agreed pathways of care between the two. The whole program is built around improving care coordination and better integrating care across all the different services within the Local Health District."

"The role of the National Health Services Directory within HealthPathways has been to manage the service directory and content, which is a very important part of being able to navigate the health system."

Clinicians have access to localised content from the directory through a widget on the HealthPathways web portal.

"It might be used for referring patients or for contacting someone for advice or guidance in the management of a condition. It doesn't just mean a fax number or an endpoint for referral, but how you access advice as well."

"The directory is particularly useful with some of the non-traditional resources like details around nursing staff that are a bit harder to access because you don't know they exist or operate in a particular specialty."

Dr Ritchie says the value of the directory is that it's a trusted source of information and you can be assured that the content has been curated.

"The benefit of having the directory brought together with the rest of the HealthPathways information is that you're getting everything you need in one place, rather than having to hunt around on 10 different websites."


"Plus, it integrates very nicely with Google Maps so you can locate services even if you don't know the exact address but you know the suburb. It also has richer information such as the opening hours and languages spoken within those practices, so you can find niche or specialty groups."

HealthPathways Sydney is working with the National Health Services Directory team to look at ways of expanding the data set in the near future.

"Once the content is in the directory we can use it for other purposes, and we've only just started to scratch the surface with that. We can make the information available through the widget and we can also deliver it through an interface directly into a pathway, rather than having to move back and forth through different pages."

"We have looked at private practitioners as an area we would like to develop. We need to provide that information to GPs and can do that by customising the display of information using the directory."

"We are hopeful that the benefits of working with the directory will spread to lots of other HealthPathways sites so that the work we've done can be shared with others."



“The quality of the data is the main reason the National Health Services Directory is of such value to both consumers and health professionals.”

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES DIRECTORY

GABRIELA HERNANDEZ

As the Service Desk Lead for the National Health Services Directory Content Team, Gabriela oversees the management of help requests from directory users and services listed in the directory, providing support to ensure information in the directory is accurate and up to date.

"We receive help requests from the general public, service providers, government departments, and third parties such as Medibank Health Solutions, the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and secure messaging vendors who we store data for."

"Most help requests are made online but we also handle telephone requests. We don't have a queue which always surprises people as they expect a call centre environment. People make comments that it was lovely to be helped straight away and not to be passed from one department to another."

Gabriela says that the directory works differently depending on who is using it, a consumer or a health professional.

"The public facing directory contains a great deal of information for a wide range of services, including hospitals, GPs, specialists, pharmacies, allied health professionals and community health services. The back end of the database is used to store information that cannot be viewed by the general public, including secure messaging identifiers which are used by participating health practitioners to send and receive confidential information about patients, such as discharge summaries or referrals."

Gabriela says she would recommend the National Health Services Directory to anyone who needs to find a health or related service.

"As a consumer myself, the directory has helped me to find a service in my area when I didn't know where to go. I know how much effort goes into making sure that the data are correct."

"We regularly contact services and confirm their details. We also check their opening hours, so if people are searching the directory to find a service that is open in their area, they can see this information. The quality of the data is the main reason the National Health Services Directory is of such value to both consumers and health professionals."

LOOKING AHEAD

Work has been undertaken to ensure full integration between the National Health Services Directory and the healthdirect website. In the next financial year, visitors to the website reading about a particular health condition will also see information about related health services displayed on the same web page.

The National Health Services Directory will also form a key component of the new healthdirect app. Data from the directory will be integrated into the app, helping users find information about local health services, including their location and opening hours.



The Pregnancy, Birth and Baby service provides non-judgemental support for new and expecting parents when they need it most. It is a multiplatform service providing support online, by phone and by video call. The service offers free, confidential information and advice to women, their partners and families through pregnancy and the first year of parenthood.

The Pregnancy, Birth and Baby helpline is uniquely placed to offer emotional support at the same time as practical advice, to help parents with personal and parenting issues. The helpline is available 24/7 with counsellors available between the hours of 7am and midnight.

Counselling calls are 25 minutes in length on average, and customer satisfaction with the service is extremely high, averaging over 90% for the year. In late 2014, we added our Video Call solution to the service, offering a face to face option for speaking to the counsellors.

The helpline and the Pregnancy, Birth and Baby website work in synergy, with staff in the contact centres referring to the website to provide additional information to callers, and visitors to the website calling the service.

Website traffic has increased significantly, with over one million visits this year - three times greater than in the previous 12 months. About 75% of people access the website via mobiles and tablets, which is consistent with consumer trends for accessing the internet via mobile devices, as opposed to desktop computers. Practical advice is the most popular type of content, with *Foods to avoid when pregnant* the most visited page.

In December 2014, we added the Due Date Calculator to the website. This tool gives people an estimated date of when their baby is due and provides a pregnancy timeline with useful information about things they need to consider as their pregnancy progresses, such as check-ups, tests and scans, tips on how to stay healthy, and information about their baby's development.

Earlier this year we surveyed new and expecting parents to unearth the realities of pregnancy, birth and having a new baby. The survey found that parenthood is a major life change for the majority of parents and many need significant emotional support but don't always ask for help. We then commenced a media campaign, based on the research findings, where parents who had used the Pregnancy, Birth and Baby service talked about their personal experiences to encourage others to contact the service for support (see page 39 for more on our findings).

Top 5 issues

Pregnancy, Birth and Baby helpline

	Issue
1	Constipation
2	Crying babies
3	Bottle feeding (formula, cleaning and sterilising)
4	Nappies, poos and wees
5	Baby development - birth to 12 months

Top 5 website pages visited

Pregnancy, Birth and Baby website

	Web page title
1	Foods to avoid when pregnant
2	Labour – the signs and stages
3	First trimester
4	Screening for Down syndrome
5	Being pregnant



“There's something comforting about knowing that there's help just a call away, 24/7.”

PREGNANCY, BIRTH AND BABY

EBONY STEADMAN

When Ebony was pregnant she felt excited about meeting her baby daughter, Charli, but couldn't help being concerned for Charli's wellbeing when she was born.

"I had no idea what a normal pregnancy was. I could envisage up until the labour, but not beyond. At first, I was hesitant to share these concerns as I felt embarrassed and self-conscious about reaching out for help. I found it quite difficult to know if what I was experiencing was okay, normal, or something to be more concerned about."

Despite having supportive family, friends and doctors, Ebony found she had many unanswered questions and decided to call the Pregnancy, Birth and Baby helpline for advice.

"I called the helpline when Charli was about six weeks old. She had screamed all day until my husband got home and, even though I had tried everything I could possibly think of to settle her, nothing seemed to be working."

"I was so stressed and drained by the end of that day that I needed to talk to someone. Was I doing the right thing? Did I miss a clear sign which would have stopped her screaming hours ago? Was I just the worst mother in the world? I spoke with someone for about 20 minutes. It was a great relief to talk about my day, debrief and recoup."

"I was reassured that I had tried almost everything suggested, and I was being a good mum. Our little girl was simply having an unsettled day. Having a listening ear on the end of the line was amazing. I was incredibly grateful that I could speak with someone at this time, especially after so many distressing hours."

"There's something comforting about knowing that there's help just a call away, 24/7. Someone is always ready to listen, reassure and offer advice if necessary. From time to time, all of us need someone to talk through our challenges with, no matter what our background or experience as a parent. Our babies are precious gifts, but will throw us curve balls every now and then. It's at these moments that I pick up the phone."

LOOKING AHEAD

We are expanding the Pregnancy, Birth and Baby service to become a parenting service and both the website and helpline will provide advice and support for parents with children up to five years of age.

In addition to counsellors, who are on hand to offer emotional advice and support, maternal and child health nurses will be available via the helpline for callers who wish to discuss child behavioural and developmental issues.

The website will be updated with useful information about a range of personal and parenting issues that could occur from pregnancy through to preschool.



mindhealthconnect is a national online portal that provides access to a range of trusted mental health and wellbeing resources.

The content on the mindhealthconnect website has been expanded substantially this year, with a particular focus on practical information that helps people navigate the often confusing and complex mental health system. New pages such as *Mental Health: where to get help* and *Bullying* have proven popular. In December 2014, our National Health Services Directory was embedded into the website, providing visitors with a simple way of searching for mental health services in their local area.

We have continued to emphasise trusted resources, online tools and programs from our information partners, and identify opportunities to work collaboratively with them. We introduced a social media framework this year for the whole company and piloted it on mindhealthconnect's social media channels. The framework was developed with input from our information partners ReachOut and BeyondBlue.

The Mood Monitor Tool was relaunched in November 2014 with a more consumer-friendly design. The tool aims to help track factors that influence mood and wellbeing, such as energy, sleep, stress and self-esteem, and can help people identify stressors and uncover tips to improve their mood and sense of wellbeing.

As with other Healthdirect Australia websites, mindhealthconnect is mobile-responsive, which is important as people increasingly choose to access health information online via mobile and tablet devices – over 50% of mindhealthconnect's audience access the site this way.

The expanded content and new functionality on mindhealthconnect, and the introduction of social media, has resulted in more visitors to the website - organic search traffic has increased 140% in the past 12 months.

MINDHEALTHCONNECT

JACQUI GIBSON



Jacqui is a consumer representative on the Service Improvement and Development Committee for mindhealthconnect. She is passionate about ensuring that mental health advice is focused on community needs.

“Being the voice of the consumer on the committee is a big responsibility. The fact that mindhealthconnect does have a community member on its reference group says a lot about its commitment to building partnerships and collaboration.”

“I am really excited to be involved with a service that is at the ‘cutting edge’. We are all using the internet a lot more to access information on the go, and I wanted to be a part of delivering good quality information through an innovative service like mindhealthconnect.”

Jacqui says that the committee and the clinical review processes in place ensure that mindhealthconnect website content is accurate and appropriate.

“I would recommend mindhealthconnect as the information has been verified, there is a clinical reference group behind it, and you can be sure the information is of good quality. The information partners we have on the website are fantastic and there are thousands of links to reputable sources.”

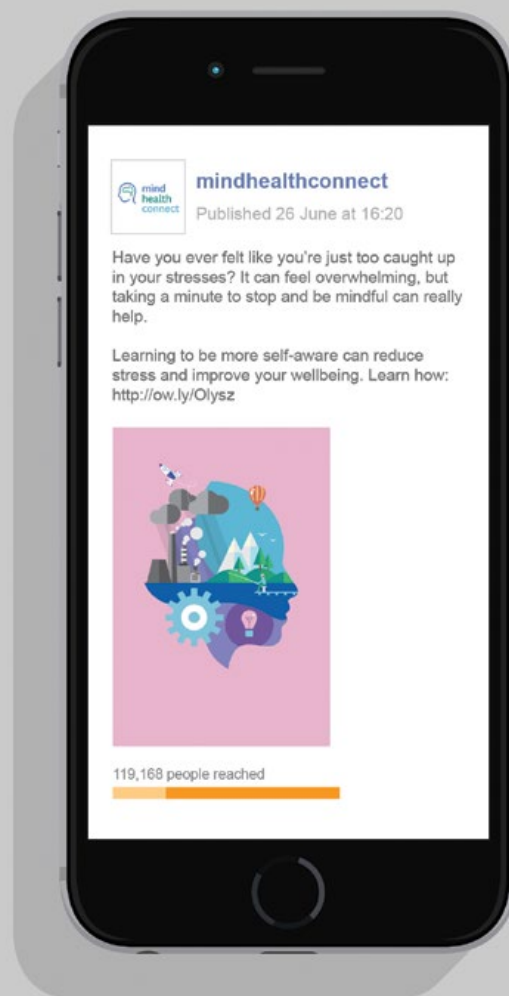
“The benefit of the website is that it is for everyone, whether that’s a person with mental illness, their family, friends, neighbours, or just anyone wanting to find out general information about mental health and wellbeing.”

Jacqui says mindhealthconnect is the first place people should visit to access information about mental health and wellbeing.

“The mental health system is very hard to navigate and can be very confusing for patients and carers. mindhealthconnect is like one large signpost – telling people they have come to the right place, giving them the information they need, and letting them know where they need to go for additional help.”

SOCIAL MEDIA

The mindhealthconnect social media platforms are an important way for us to direct people to mindhealthconnect’s trusted information about mental health and wellbeing. This year we piloted our new social media approach and have had some popular posts, such as the mindfulness post below. More than 20,000 visits to mindhealthconnect in the past 12 months have been driven by Facebook alone.



MINDHEALTHCONNECT

DR NICK O'CONNOR

Dr O'Connor is a psychiatrist and Clinical Director of the Royal North Shore Ryde Mental Health Service. As a member of the mindhealthconnect Service Improvement and Development Committee he believes mindhealthconnect can support mental health professionals and GPs in providing the best information and advice to their patients.

"I am involved with mindhealthconnect because I see the really great potential of a national mental health web portal that can assist people to find what they need to know about their mental health problem. There is a huge amount of information out there on the web, something like mindhealthconnect is required to filter and sort it. Much of the information available is of questionable quality and accuracy. mindhealthconnect provides access to information you can rely on."

Dr O'Connor thinks that mindhealthconnect has considerable potential.

"We started with the really common disorders like stress, anxiety, depression and borderline personality. The key priorities for mindhealthconnect in the future are to expand the available information for other disorders."

"We think that mindhealthconnect has the potential to fit with the 'stepped care' model of managing the spectrum of mental health problems in the community. This idea lines up with the recommendations in the recently published review of mental health programs and services by the National Mental Health Commission. Mental health promotion, self-management and online therapies are part of this model. Finally, I think mindhealthconnect's potential for supporting mental health professionals and GPs has only started to be realised."



LOOKING AHEAD

Mental health is a national health priority, with nearly half of Australians affected by a mental health issue in their lifetime*, and online support is a highly effective way to manage mental health issues.

Over the next year a Program Finder will be introduced to the mindhealthconnect website – a tool to help people find online support programs based on their specific needs. The Program Finder can also be used by health professionals to make recommendations to patients about online programs.

*2007 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, ABS



Healthdirect Australia manages the Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service for New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia.

The program offers free and confidential motivational coaching via telephone to support people to make lifestyle changes, such as eating healthily and being physically active, to achieve or maintain a healthy weight and so reduce their risk of developing chronic diseases, such as diabetes and heart disease.

Each participant receives 10 individually tailored telephone coaching sessions over a period of six months. Through setting goals and maintaining motivation Get Healthy aims to change participants' behaviour, supporting them to make sustainable lifestyle choices.

Since we started managing the service 18 months ago, nearly 10,000 people have participated in Get Healthy. In addition to the general program there are two tailored programs, one for those at risk of developing type 2 diabetes and another that supports the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

For the second year running, Get Healthy formed an integral part of the NSW Healthy Towns Challenge, in which five towns from across the state competed to win the title of the healthiest town in NSW. The winning town is the one that collectively achieves the highest total weight loss and participation (calculated on the number of people registering for the Get Healthy Service).

LOOKING AHEAD

We are introducing a Get Healthy, Stay Healthy SMS service where graduates from the Get Healthy telephone coaching service will be offered the opportunity to receive six months of tailored text messages, providing them with ongoing support towards their lifestyle goals.

We have also initiated a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) retention study led by the University of Queensland, NSW Health and the University of Sydney. The study will investigate strategies for retaining Get Healthy participants.



The My Aged Care Gateway forms a key component of the federal government's aged care reform program and was established to help people navigate the aged care system. Consisting of a website and national telephone contact centre, it is designed to give people more choice and control, and easier access to a full range of aged care services and information.

Going forward, the My Aged Care Gateway will have a greater role in identifying and connecting people with the services that suit their needs. A new Client Relationship Management (CRM) system and a new screening process to assess client needs were piloted in April 2015 in the Kingston area of Victoria. We worked closely with the Department of Social Services and the aged care industry in the pilot region to identify and implement improvements ahead of a national rollout in the next financial year.

Contact centre staff will ask a series of screening questions and collect information about the client before issuing an electronic referral to a service provider or assessment team using the new CRM.

A significant increase in calls is anticipated and a second call centre on the Gold Coast has been opened to facilitate this additional demand. The new contact centre also includes a dedicated service desk team to support aged care service providers and assessors with technical issues.

The number of visitors to the My Aged Care website continues to increase, with over 60% of traffic driven from organic search results. Over one million people visited the website this year.

MY AGED CARE

DAVID TRAN

David has been Knowledge Manager at the My Aged Care Gateway since its inception and believes it provides a valuable service to older Australians, their families and carers.

“Before My Aged Care started there were different parts of the aged care sector that weren’t working well together. Now, everything is in one place. It’s a lot more cost effective, with greater visibility across how things are run, and it helps people to better understand the whole aged care system.”

David and his team have been involved in piloting a new screening process and use of a CRM to help better connect people with the services they need.

“Previously callers would have been passed onto another organisation to do the screening and then onto a service provider. Now, we can screen clients over the phone, to understand their care and health needs, and then use the CRM to refer them to appropriate services by sending an electronic notification to the service provider.”

The creation of a shared client record provides greater visibility over the My Aged Care screening and referral processes.

“Everyone who deals with the client can see their journey from start to finish, and that includes the contact centre providers, assessors, health professionals, and the clients themselves.”

The new client screening process and CRM are set to rollout nationally in the new financial year.

“The pilot has been challenging but we’ve pulled it off, and if it’s a sign of things to come then the national rollout will be very successful and that’s very exciting for us.”

David says that the My Aged Care Gateway also benefits service providers with a new service desk established to answer their queries.

“Service providers have portals they access the My Aged Care system through and we can help them with registering and logging in, all the way through to how to process things in the system. The service desk also acts as a helpdesk if they are having any technical problems.”



Top 5 issues

My Aged Care contact centre

	Issue
1	Community based care information
2	Financial assessment
3	Accommodation fees and charges
4	Community based care/eligibility of access
5	Care fees and charges

Top 5 website pages visited

My Aged Care website

	Web page title
1	Find a service
2	Aged care homes
3	Aged care homes: costs explained
4	Residential care fee estimator
5	Help at home

LOOKING AHEAD

An enhanced Find a Service tool will be launched on the My Aged Care website, displaying Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth funded services. Enhancements have been introduced following in-depth consumer research undertaken in early 2015.

The Aged Care website will be moved onto Healthdirect Australia’s in-house digital platform, which will enhance the website’s digital capability, such as making it mobile-responsive.



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ENHANCED CAPABILITIES

Healthdirect Australia continues to develop enhanced capabilities and industry expertise that can be leveraged by our shareholders to develop new, or enhance current, services and products.

We work to ensure the delivery of the most cost effective and efficient solutions by consulting across jurisdictions, designing new approaches, procuring services, and managing contract delivery.

Through our advanced digital and telephony solutions, clinical governance and risk management capabilities, and relationship management expertise, the company is an industry leader in providing quality, remotely delivered health and related services to Australians.

PLATFORM AND OPERATIONS

Following 18 months of significant improvements to our security infrastructure, in June 2015 our online platform became the third public sector cloud-based environment, and the first platform environment, to be certified to Australian Government Information Security Manual (ISM) standard.

Our entire digital infrastructure, including our websites, content publishing platforms and National Health Services Directory, is now ISM compliant for unclassified information. ISM compliance removes barriers and increases opportunities for Healthdirect Australia to manage and provide new services, ensures that we capture and handle sensitive data securely and provides a leading example to public sector organisations.

Content Platform

Over the past year we have made improvements to our content platform that have seen an increase in traffic coming to our websites from organic search results. The improvements have also reduced the costs of developing and adding new websites, resulting in cost efficiencies for our shareholders.

Identity and Access Management

We are introducing identity and access-related improvements across our digital platforms, which means that visitors will be able to create a single profile to use across all our websites. This enables a more personalised approach to information and advice provision and means a visitor can use the same login information across all of our websites, set their own preferences and consent to different levels of information collection. The National Health Services Directory will be the first product to launch this capability as part of its new management user interface.

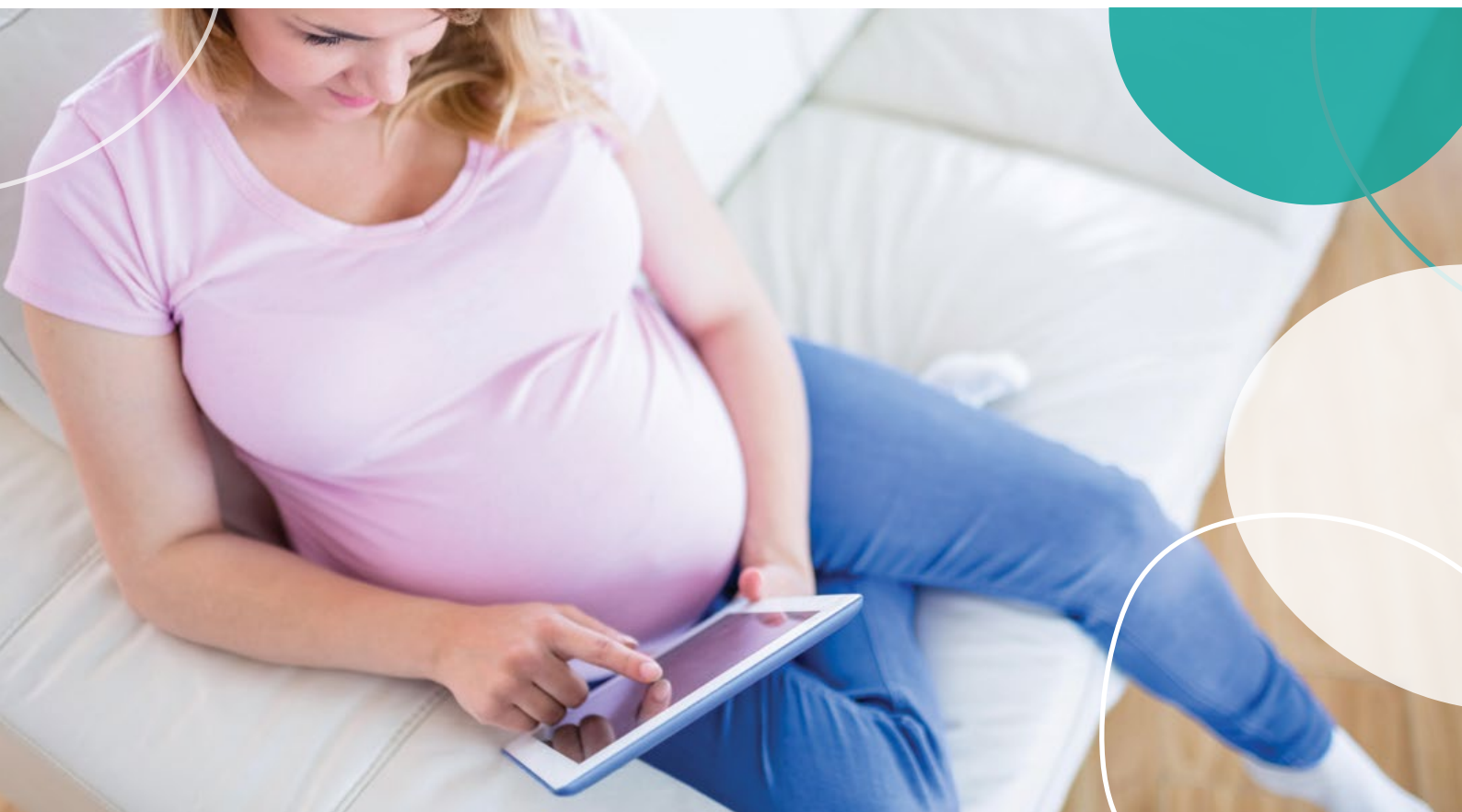
STRATEGIC SOURCING

Healthdirect Australia has developed a sophisticated strategic sourcing capability to continuously improve and re-evaluate the procurement, purchasing, sourcing and contract management activities of the company.

Our procurement function is our key business strategy enabler. Our recent focus has been on increasing our capabilities by deepening category and functional procurement expertise in the digital area to support our organisational evolution from a strategic outsourcer to a thought leader in the development of telehealth services. An important part of this is the development of an innovative agile procurement model to facilitate the delivery of complex and creative initiatives on time, on budget and to the highest level of quality.

The procurement team looks after all strategic sourcing, procurement and contract management activities at Healthdirect Australia, delivering high value outcomes of national significance to shareholders.

VIDEO CALL



Telehealth is an established feature of many health services in Australia. More often than not it is costly for providers, challenging for users, or restricted by the limitations of consumer technologies. Meanwhile, the increasing availability and popularity of personal video and web technologies is changing consumer expectations.

Video Call meets the increasing demands from consumers for flexible access to health services. It forms part of our commitment to improve access to services by providing a choice of channels that are consistent with modern communication methods and preferences.

Video Call brings an easy to use, cost effective, robust, secure and accessible video call capability to the health sector in Australia. Our Video Call offering is a unique combination of technologies, services and expertise that represents a new level of thinking for video consulting in health.

We introduced Video Call to our Pregnancy, Birth and Baby service in October 2014. Parents now have the option of speaking to a counsellor via Video Call between 7am and midnight each day.

This year we have also collaborated with a number of organisations to facilitate video call access to their health services. Focusing on primary care and 'direct to consumer' healthcare settings, our aim has been to demonstrate how Video Call can be a simple extension of existing health provider processes and achieve good patient experiences – at a cost and convenience in line with telephony.

VIDEO CALL

PENELOPE WATSON

Penelope manages the **headspace** National Youth Mental Health Foundation's National Telehealth Service which provides young people, at regional and rural **headspace** centres, with access to psychiatrists for MBS-funded (Medicare Benefits Schedule) video consultations.

"There are small numbers of psychiatrists specialising in youth mental health, particularly in regional, rural and remote areas, and Video Call makes it easier for young people visiting **headspace** centres in these locations to see psychiatrists via the National Telehealth Service."

"**headspace** Darwin, for example, knows of young people travelling all the way to Melbourne for face to face appointments with psychiatrists specialising in gender dysphoria and now, because we are able to offer consultations for this type of referral via Video Call, it will make such a difference to these young people."

Penelope says one of the benefits of Video Call is that it is simple to use, which has made the national rollout of the **headspace** telehealth service a lot easier.

"There are no barriers to using the technology, in that you just need Google Chrome. I don't need to provide too much technical support to the **headspace** centres because it's a very simple solution. Working with regional and rural centres across the country, it's great not to need any specialised equipment, or technical support, and to just access the service via a web browser makes it really easy to use."

"One of the previous barriers with trying to get doctors to do video consultations with the **headspace** centres was the whole process of making sure equipment and software was compatible. With this project you don't need to worry about that; the beauty of Video Call is that it's all web browser based, which makes it so easy and cuts out all those barriers."

Penelope is hoping to expand the service substantially in the next year.

"I'm hoping to double the number of centres using the service. My target is to deliver it to 20 **headspace** centres nationally by the end of this year."

"One of the best things about this project is that Video Call demonstrates that the health sector doesn't need to be locked into using expensive hardware or software to successfully and securely consult with consumers via video."

BENEFITS OF VIDEO CALL

Our Video Call solution is a sophisticated management software purpose built for health, and uses WebRTC (Web Real-Time Communications) video technology. WebRTC is a free feature of the latest web browsers and a leading web standard for video, audio and data communication.

The benefits of Video Call include:

No installation

There is no need to download specialised software or plugins.

Easy to use

No specialised support or technical skills required.

User experience optimised

Users simply click on a provider's website to enter their own private waiting room, where any authorised provider can consult with them. Providers are notified when they have a patient waiting, and simply 'collect' them online, instead of from a physical waiting room.

Facilitates meetings and case conferences

Supports four to six individual sites in one call and gives everyone the ability to share documents.

Low cost

There is no special IT infrastructure required (except for a webcam). There are no licence fees for the video technology, and most calls travel between browsers, not through a central server. This means we are able to support very high volumes of concurrent calls at a minimal incremental cost.

SUPPORTING HEALTH EMERGENCY RESPONSES

DEDICATED HEALTH ALERT LINES

Our expertise and experience in setting up health-related helplines means we can develop responsive and adaptive emergency health alert lines within short timeframes.

Our dedicated alert lines can provide initial triage advice and information, and link callers with the most appropriate health service providers.

Ebola

We contributed to Australia's response to Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), working with the Commonwealth Office of Health Protection to establish a 24/7 national health alert line. Travellers could call the phone number if they had visited West Africa and developed Ebola-like symptoms within 21 days of their return to Australia.

We developed a triage guideline for EVD, to be used by nurses working on the alert line. If callers were identified as at risk of Ebola, they were referred to their state's communicable disease department who could organise appropriate health management.

Every international passenger entering Australia, estimated at 16 million people per year, was given a pandemic screening form (below) on arrival with the unique alert line number attached.

BESPOKE REQUESTS THROUGH HEALTHDIRECT

The registered nurses on the healthdirect helpline are trained to triage symptoms and are also able to provide bespoke responses such as directing callers to the most appropriate services, according to their needs and the postcode from which they call. The helpline infrastructure enables rapid deployment of such responses in the case of an emergency situation.

NSW storms

During the NSW storms in April, a large number of people had questions about whether they could continue to use their refrigerated medicines after experiencing power cuts.

Working with the NSW Ministry of Health, we developed a briefing sheet for the healthdirect helpline nurses so they could respond specifically to callers' concerns. Local media then also encouraged people to call the healthdirect helpline to get the advice they needed, rather than going to emergency departments with questions.

COMPLEMENTARY WEBSITE CONTENT

Healthdirect Australia's websites can be used to provide health information during emergency situations by linking people to the appropriate places to access information.

Hepatitis A scare

In February 2015, the healthdirect website was used to respond promptly to the frozen berries hepatitis A scare, with the publication of new, clinically safe content to inform the public and link them to related content from our information partners.



CLINICAL GOVERNANCE

Our clinical governance team govern and monitor our services to ensure safety and quality targets are consistently met.

Assuring that our health services are safe, appropriate and of a high quality is a key component of Healthdirect Australia's Clinical Governance Framework. The framework:

- focuses on best practice clinical care, designed for online and phone service models
- sets governance and management principles and provides accountability
- applies to both Healthdirect Australia and its service providers, and encourages the sharing of experiences

- outlines the infrastructure needed for effective coordination, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of service quality
- encourages continuous quality improvement for better delivery and outcomes.

In addition to monitoring our telehealth services to ensure quality, the clinical governance team contribute clinical content to our websites, and coordinate our many and various service improvement and development committees to ensure continuous review and improvement of all services.

These service-centred committees report to the Clinical Governance Advisory Group and act as forums for Healthdirect Australia to meet with service providers and discuss clinical and operational issues that contribute to the delivery of clinically safe, nationally consistent and evidence-based services.

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Healthdirect Australia's Research and Evaluation Strategy was launched in October 2014. It provides a set of principles and activities that can be used to support the delivery of high quality research and evaluation. This year we have contributed to:

Data Linkages

In partnership with researchers at the University of Western Sydney and the Centre for Big Data Research, University of New South Wales, this study involved linking records of calls to the healthdirect helpline with patients' health records to determine the extent to which advice is being followed. This is the largest study of health contact centre data in the world.

Primary Care Alternatives to Emergency Departments

This project explored the feasibility of offering a community or primary care based alternative to referring callers from the healthdirect helpline to emergency departments, and the potential economic savings of these alternatives.

LOOKING AHEAD

Almost 60% of the Australian population struggle with understanding health messages*. We are developing a Health Literacy Strategy, working with parents and carers in the first instance, to ensure the services we deliver meet the needs of Australians and empower individuals to improve their own health.

*Health Literacy: Taking action to improve safety and quality, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (2014).

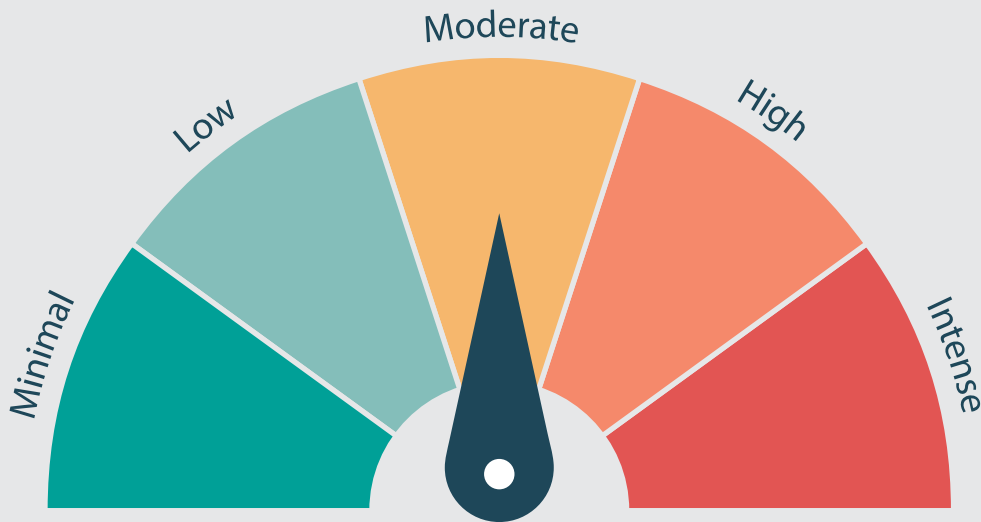
Experiences of Ageing and Early Parenthood

We engaged Healthtalk Australia, a research consortium based at Monash, La Trobe and Sydney Universities, to conduct two qualitative research projects:

- **Emotional Experiences of Early Parenthood in Australian Families** helped our understanding of how new parents might best emotionally adjust to pregnancy and early parenthood, and how they may be supported.
- **Experiences of Ageing** aimed to improve our understanding of people's experiences of getting older, and provide resources to support older people, their families and health professionals involved in their care.

LEVERAGING OUR DATA

FLU RISK INDICATOR



Data captured through Healthdirect Australia's products and services can be used in a number of ways, for example to improve existing services or to contribute to national disease surveillance.

Health Map

Health Map is a simple to use, online geospatial tool designed to help with service planning and program implementation. Through one interface, Health Map facilitates access to a range of validated health data sets for the Australian population, including social and economic data, population distributions and projections, data from the National Health Services Directory, healthdirect and after hours GP helpline call data and consumer profiles.

It can be used to support health service and program planning, development and management by allowing users to view a geospatial representation of an aggregation of data from various sources in a single interface; access national, state-wide or local statistical information about population profiles and health services; compare health and social characteristics between neighbouring areas; and generate bespoke reports.

Flu Risk Indicator

We collect and analyse data about flu symptoms from the healthdirect helpline and provide these to the Australian Government during flu season to contribute to the fortnightly Australian Influenza Surveillance Report.

We also use these data to inform our Flu Risk Indicator, a simple and interactive graphic, which appears on the healthdirect website and shows visitors the current risk of exposure to influenza in Australia (above).

In addition, the healthdirect website has a graph that reflects the quantity of calls the healthdirect helpline receives each week about flu. The graph shows flu trends across the whole year, and data for the previous year, allowing for a direct comparison between flu seasons.

healthdirect has a range of other complementary resources to support people during flu season, including self-care information and the healthdirect Symptom Checker, so they can check their flu-like symptoms and get advice about if and when to seek medical attention.

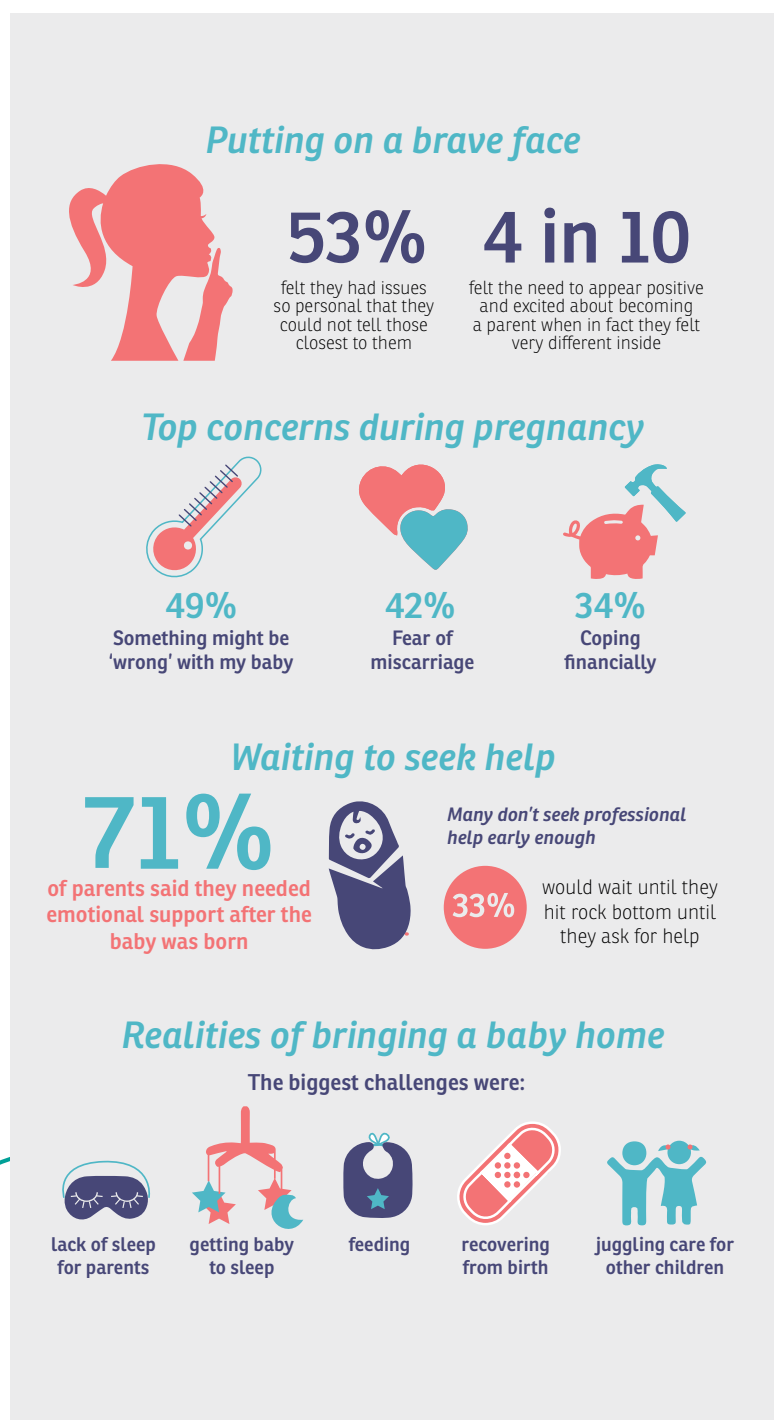
MARKETING AND STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS

Healthdirect Australia has expertise in marketing, communications and stakeholder relations. We focus on building relationships in the health industry, growing awareness of our brands, and increasing the utilisation of our products and services – particularly among specific population groups who have unique health needs and would most benefit from using our services.

Fostering strong and collaborative relationships is critical to our success. We work with a diverse range of stakeholders in the development and ongoing operation of our services. Our engagement staff have extensive experience in health and related services and ensure that we understand, and are flexible to meet, the needs of our shareholders and other stakeholders.

Through our marketing campaigns and consumer research activities we gain an understanding of the needs of our target audiences. We use these insights to determine what types of media will best reach our audiences, what we can do to increase customer satisfaction and, ultimately, to make sure our services meet community needs.

This year we have delivered a range of marketing campaigns across all of our services.



(Above) Results of a Healthdirect Australia research survey of new parents, 2015.

INFORMATION PARTNERSHIP

Healthdirect Australia works with a selected group of information partners who share our vision to improve the health of Australians by providing relevant and reliable health information and services.

Our information partners include organisations such as peak bodies, government agencies, research institutes, educational institutes and not-for-profit organisations.

Our online services operate as gateways to the high quality, trusted health information on partners' websites. We link to a range of resources from our partners, such as fact sheets, articles, apps, online programs and information about support groups.

This year we have recruited more than 20 new partners, bringing the number of partnerships to 136. We have over 25,000 links to trusted partner content across all of our websites.

INFORMATION PARTNERSHIP STELLA WYNN

Cancer Australia is one of Healthdirect Australia's longest standing partners. Stella is a Senior Project Officer at Cancer Australia, and explains how the two organisations collaborate with a shared vision of improving cancer outcomes.

"The key benefit of this partnership, for Cancer Australia, has been the promotion of our information on Healthdirect Australia websites – currently we've got over 150 shared resources. Also, the promotion of our events, awareness messages, campaigns and resources through Healthdirect Australia's other channels, such as the newsletters and on social media, is fantastic."

"We are delighted to continue our collaboration with Healthdirect Australia as it's a great way to share knowledge, leverage off each other's experience, and form relationships which create positive impacts in the health sector."

Information partnership assists Cancer Australia to provide Australians with access to trusted health information online.

"There is a lot of information about cancer out there and we see it as our role to have the latest evidence-based information available to all Australians, and to link them to other sources if we don't have it on our website. Information partnership is a really great opportunity for us to share content and ideas, and to ensure that trustworthy information is available to people when they go looking for it."



Stella attended the inaugural Partner Forum held in November 2014, and found it to be a valuable experience.

"The Partner Forum was a fantastic networking opportunity as we were able to talk to other information partners about what they're doing, and about how they've managed some of their own projects."

"We were blown away by the National Health Services Directory – how Healthdirect Australia built that and how it's maintained is just incredible. We also found out that Healthdirect Australia builds widgets, which gave us the idea of adding a widget to our own website, something we're investigating at the moment."

"We are always looking for opportunities to collaborate on any work we are doing and we always keep the partner managers updated on all of our projects, and they do the same. It's a really valuable partnership and I think there is a lot to gain from it."

RISK MANAGEMENT

This year we have focused on enhancing Healthdirect Australia's risk-based internal audit program. The enhanced program provides the Board and management with a valuable resource for testing that core business systems and risk controls are operating effectively and efficiently.

We achieved this through the launch of our new Internal Audit Guide and templates. The guide provides a systematic approach to ensuring that internal audit resources are deployed where they are needed most, to test key risks and control systems. The guide has also refocused the outcome achieved from audit reports, moving beyond simple compliance and towards the continuous improvement of core risk controls.

This enhanced internal audit capacity will ensure that core risks are well managed and in turn this will support the delivery of safe, effective and dependable services in a cost effective manner.

BESPOKE TELEPHONE SOLUTIONS

Central to Healthdirect Australia's work is the procurement and management of telephony services. In addition to providing cost efficiencies through large scale national networks, we work with our shareholders on bespoke telephone solutions that meet their local needs.

We also operate:

- Medicines Line (WA, NT, SA, NSW, ACT, Tas)
- Non-occupational post exposure prophylaxis helpline (WA, SA)
- Residential aged care line (WA)
- Ambulance Secondary Triage (WA, NSW)
- Country patient transport assistance (WA)
- Outpatients direct (WA)
- SA Parenting Helpline (SA)
- Accident and incident management system (SA)
- The Parent Line (Tas).





“A really big part of why I am proud to work here is that I love working with my team.”

OUR VALUES

CAMILLA SVENSSON

The people and development division at Healthdirect Australia has introduced a number of initiatives this year to celebrate accomplishments and enhance our offering to our employees, including a new learning and development function and company values.

Our Staff Quarterly Update meetings are themed around the values, offering a platform for different teams across the company to demonstrate their work in these areas and presenting an opportunity to award the employee who best represents that value.

In December 2014, Camilla became the first recipient of Healthdirect Australia's new Values Award – an award for staff members who have best represented the organisation's values over the year.

Camilla joined Healthdirect Australia in June 2012 as a digital content producer.

"The company was much smaller when I started. Inductions were less structured and formal than they are now. Having said that, people in different teams took time to show and explain things and I was introduced to both colleagues and projects."

Camilla, who took up the role of senior content producer in July 2014, says that the past year has been a rewarding one.

"My role involves line management of a team of digital producers. One major highlight for me over the past year has been launching all 42 of the Symptom Checker flows. They were complex to produce and it was a big challenge for our team to pull together."

Camilla says it is the people and the culture at Healthdirect Australia that keep her motivated.

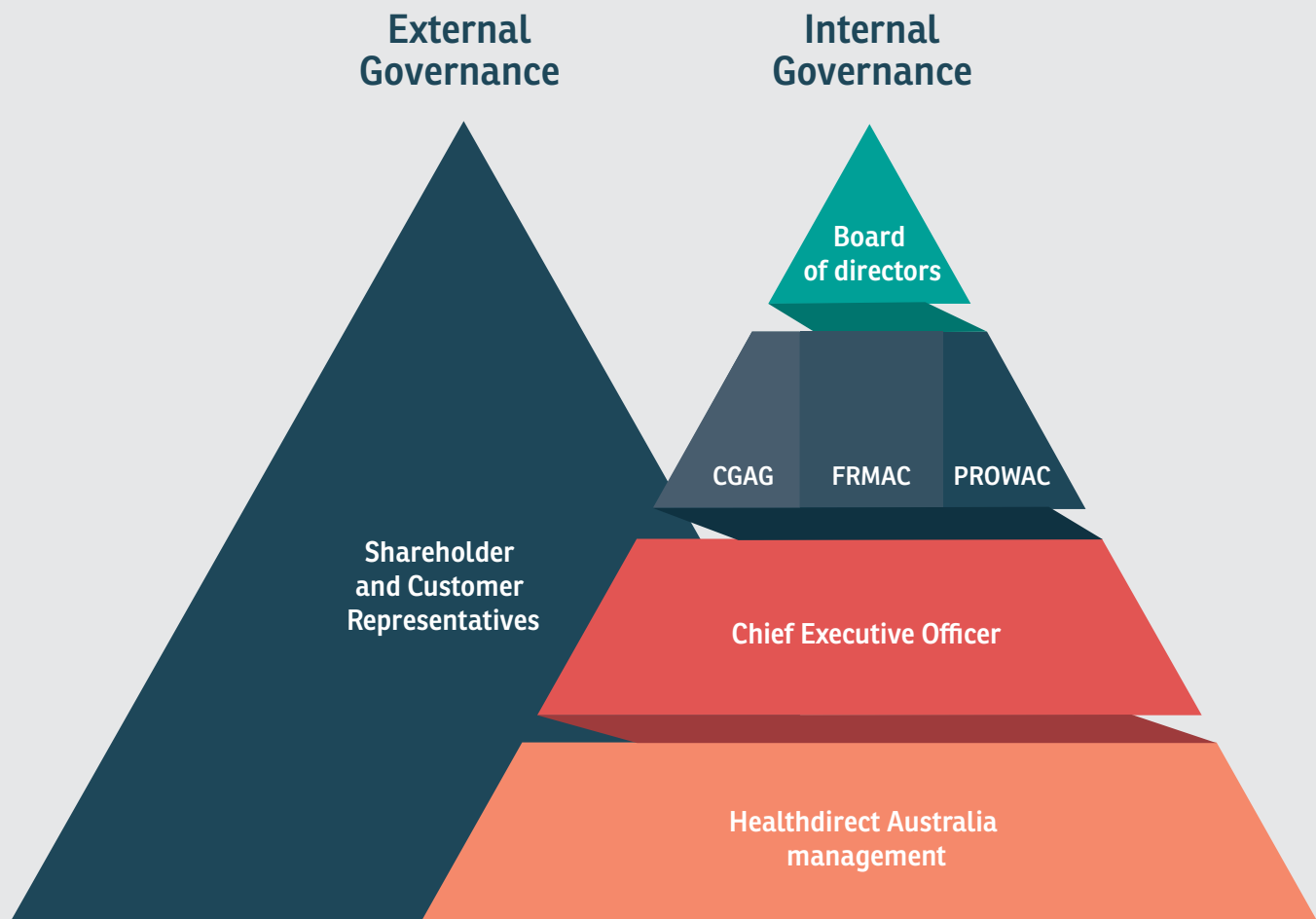
"A really big part of why I am proud to work here is that I love working with my team. We have quite a lot of fun between the busy and challenging times. I learn a lot working here, and sharing knowledge is an integral part of my responsibilities as a content producer and manager. We collaborate with all of the other teams, and we also share knowledge with the Australian public by making trusted health information available online."

Camilla is looking forward to what the future holds for her at Healthdirect Australia.

"With the rollout of the performance and development review system and the introduction of a learning and development function, there is a greater focus on professional goals and skills development. I think the organisation is definitely listening and making efforts to support us."



GOVERNANCE AND
BOARD COMMITTEES



GOVERNANCE AND BOARD COMMITTEES

At Healthdirect Australia we have a responsibility to our shareholders, including the state, territory and federal governments, to deliver high quality, safe and cost effective services.

External governance

Healthdirect Australia is directly accountable to the federal, state and territory governments as both shareholders and customers. The Standing Committee and the Joint Customer Advisory Committee support this role.

The **Standing Committee** represents the interests of the federal, state and territory governments as shareholders. This committee is responsible for:

- appointing directors to the Board
- liaising with the Board and CEO to advance national health policy and priority issues
- approving the company's Strategic Plan
- providing advice on the annual Corporate Plan
- assessing business cases to improve existing services and develop new jointly funded services
- reviewing the company's performance.

Healthdirect Australia has a number of customer advisory committees, including the **Joint Customer Advisory Committee (JCAC)**, which represents the interests of the federal, state and territory governments as customers.

JCAC is responsible for reviewing and monitoring the service and performance levels of operations, particularly in regards to:

- increasing awareness and utilisation of Healthdirect Australia's services among defined under-represented groups in Australia
- reporting on service quality
- ensuring that the health information we offer is of a high quality.

JCAC meetings bring our customer representatives and Healthdirect Australia management together.

We also have additional committees representing customer interests for a range of services, including My Aged Care and the National Health Services Directory.

Our Board run several subcommittees to support our internal governance, ensuring that we meet legal, compliance and financial obligations while developing and delivering high quality, clinically safe services.

Internal governance

The **Finance, Risk Management and Audit Committee (FRMAC)** supports the Board in ensuring the integrity and robustness of the company's financial reporting, risk management processes and internal controls. It oversees and monitors the effectiveness of Healthdirect Australia's risk and compliance frameworks and coordinates the company's internal and external audit functions.

In addition to Board members, FRMAC includes one external member:

- Wendy Gerahty, an experienced senior financial services executive with over 20 years' leadership and boardroom experience.

The **Clinical Governance Advisory Group (CGAG)** supports the Board in ensuring our telephone and online services are nationally consistent, high quality, equitable and sustainable. CGAG advises the Board on clinical governance and clinical risk management, and manages the clinical governance framework to ensure quality control.

In addition to Board members, CGAG includes three external members:

- Dr Jenny Bartlett, an experienced clinician now consulting in clinical governance, healthcare improvement and medical management
- Dr Leonie Katekar, Chief Rural Medical Practitioner, Remote Health Branch, Northern Territory
- Dr Nick O'Connor, Clinical Director of Royal North Shore Ryde Mental Health Service.

The **Project Review and Work Health and Safety Advisory Committee (PROWAC)** has two key objectives:

- Overseeing and monitoring progress of key projects within the company's project portfolio, and advising the Board on relevant matters. The committee advises the Board on project governance and portfolio risk, and seeks endorsement for significant projects.
- Delivering active leadership in work health and safety (WHS) matters, and monitoring the policies and practices of the company in respect to WHS compliance.

**JOINT CUSTOMER
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
SUSAN BURKE



Susan Burke is the Acting Associate Director of the Integrated Care Branch within the NSW Ministry of Health and Chair of the Joint Customer Advisory Committee (JCAC).

“Australia’s health system is one of the best in the world but it can be difficult for consumers to navigate, find information and access the care they need, when they need it. The health system does not always work as well as it could for those with complex and chronic health conditions who are frequent users of health services, for those in regional and rural areas, and for Indigenous Australians.”

“In the last 12 months, Healthdirect Australia has invested in innovative ways for consumers to access health information and advice through, for example, adding the healthdirect Symptom Checker to the website, launching Video Call for Pregnancy, Birth and Baby and expanding the content of the National Health Services Directory.”

“Healthdirect Australia’s services enable more integrated and coordinated care, and can help improve the reach and equity of access to services for vulnerable population groups.”

“The committee take an active interest in the activities of the clinical governance, digital services, service delivery and marketing and stakeholder relations teams. A highlight for us this year has been working with these teams to rationalise the number of reports we receive and capture more data from the online services within them.”

“We are also delighted to be able to support the company in its journey to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan which will outline practical actions that the company will take to build strong relationships and enhanced respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians.

“Looking ahead, Healthdirect Australia undoubtedly has a vital role to play in reducing future costs of delivering quality care through effective technology, more efficient use of highly skilled professionals, ehealth, prevention and early intervention, and better chronic disease management.”

OUR SHAREHOLDERS

Healthdirect Australia was established, and is jointly funded, by the Australian federal government and the governments of the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Northern Territory, South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia.

We are a public company limited by shares, responsible for delivering services by contracting with service providers and managing ongoing operations.



Australian Government

Department of Health



**Government
of South Australia**

SA Health



**Tasmanian
Government**



**Northern
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**ACT
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Health



Health



**Department of
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