

# Quarterly Report

October – December  
2025

INSIGHT – PERFORMANCE - INNOVATION

 **healthdirect**  
Australia



# Healthdirect Australia report

## October – December 2025

In this report we share insights drawn from operational service usage, consumer research and system data to show the opportunities, benefits and applications that analysis from our data has revealed.

Updates from a range of our strategic plan initiatives for FY26 are profiled from across our service portfolio to illustrate our progress against key focus areas including; removing barriers to access care, connecting the health system, driving measurable value, and partnerships and projects that support innovation at scale.

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# Key service performance measures

October – December 2025

HIAS			
Metric description	Q2 FY2026	Q1 FY2026	
Call volume (received)	360,919	366,047	
Grade of service; 80% answered in <20 sec	80.0%	68.6%	
Consumer satisfaction; target 95%	91.0%	88.0%	↑

HIAS Digital			
Metric description	Q2 FY2026	Q1 FY2026	
Website volume	9,181,458	10,380,011	↓
Symptom Checker accessed (landing page)	648,256	684,866	↓
Symptom Checker started (first question)	419,033	473,452	↓
Symptom Checker completed triages	72.5%	74.2%	↓
Service Finder sessions (Aus)	2,458,175	2,728,856	

Video Call			
Metric description	Q2 FY2026	Q1 FY2026	
System availability (99.95%)	100%	99.94%	
Facilitated consultation volume	450,754	450,734	

Medicare Mental Health			
Metric description	Q2 FY2026	Q1 FY2026	
Volume of referrals	1,310	1,316	

Virtual GP services			
Metric description	Q2 FY2026	Q1 FY2026	
Call volume (referrals received)	22,511	22,308	
Higher acuity – call back in 30 minutes	75.0%	72.2%	
Lower acuity – call back within 2 hours	56.0%	45.3%	↑

NHSD			
Metric description	Q2 FY2026	Q1 FY2026	
API Calls NHSD (excl Service Finder)	6.12M	8.05M	↓

Pregnancy Birth and Baby			
Metric description	Q2 FY2026	Q1 FY2026	
Call volume (Calls received)	8,322	9,100	↓
Grade of service (70% in 120sec)	82.0%	80.61%	↓
Customer satisfaction (95%)	96.0%	95.60%	

My Aged Care			
Metric description	Q2 FY2026	Q1 FY2026	
Call volume (calls received)	604,525	609,280	
Ave speed to answer (60secs) - Consumer Line	40	33	↓
Consumer Satisfaction (95%) - Consumer Line	94.0%	93.7%	

- (1) Quarterly variance of +/- 5% is indicated with ↑ ↓ . Stable indicated by no arrow.
- (2) Volumes and performance metrics are reflective of a 3-month period October – December 2025.



# Insights

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This section shares what Healthdirect is learning from our data, operational service usage and from initiatives where we have engaged consumers through qualitative research. These insights aim to inform service improvement and design – for our own services and for the broader health system.

1. Consumer insight | AI-enhanced Symptom Checker has potential to strengthen health literacy
2. Service insight | AI impact on website traffic
3. Data insight | AI to enhance national healthcare workforce shortage

# 1. Consumer insight | AI-enhanced Symptom Checker has potential to strengthen health literacy

We have now validated that the inclusion of clear, personalised self-care advice summarised by AI can improve consumer's confidence and knowledge following interaction with Symptom Checker.

## Background

User testing conducted in 2024 showed Symptom Checker's generic self-care tips and links to lengthy webpages do not satisfy consumer expectations for practical, tailored advice to manage symptoms.

In response, Healthdirect hosted a hackathon to evaluate the potential of RAG-AI to generate personalised guidance based on symptoms. The hackathon results provided the confidence that the technology could support enhancements to the Symptom Checker experience, subject to consumer and clinical quality assurance.

Consumer research was identified as a critical next step to understand consumer perspectives of AI readiness, impacts on trust and likelihood of following AI generated advice.

## Research partnership

In partnership with the University of Sydney Health Literacy Lab, we surveyed participants on

trust, understanding and intention to follow AI curated advice.

## Study

Several prototypes were developed and iterated based on feedback from consumers. These prototypes were then incorporated into a random control trial, with 2110 participants.

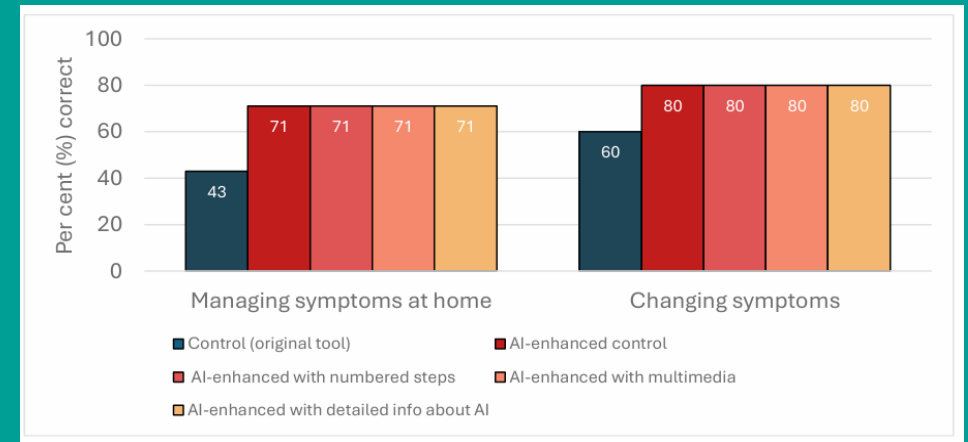
## Results

Participants who viewed the more tailored information in the AI-enhanced formats demonstrated stronger knowledge for managing symptoms than those who viewed the standard format of the existing tool. There was also some evidence that an AI-enhanced format may be more effective at reducing use of primary care services for symptoms that can be managed at home. Trust and acceptability of the Symptom Checker tool was high across formats, and the explicit use of AI did not impact significantly on these outcomes.

## What's next

During 2026, we will further investigate integrating AI Care Advice into the Symptom Checker, using this evidence to inform safe implementation and strengthen consumer health literacy.

## AI-enhanced experience performs better than existing Symptom Checker in random control trial



Participants were randomised to a symptom acuity level (low: self-care at home; or moderate: see a General Practitioner (GP) within 24 hours) and to one of five Symptom Checker formats. Higher-acuity outcomes were not included in the study following consumer feedback that it would not be appropriate to 'delay' seeking care by reading self care advice in emergent or urgent cases.

The standard format (control/original tool) displayed the existing Healthdirect Symptom Checker advice. The remaining formats were 'AI-enhanced' versions (for example, more tailored advice, rationale for the acuity level, and an AI disclosure statement). Other AI-enhanced formats included additional features such as numbered steps, multimedia and more detailed information about the use of AI.

## 2. Service insight | AI impact on website traffic: AI-enabled search

Consumers have always searched online for health information. For a decade, that meant typing a question into Google and clicking through to a trusted website like Healthdirect.

That behaviour is changing — and the change is increasingly significant.

More people are now getting health information directly from AI tools such as ChatGPT, Claude and Google's AI-generated search summaries, which answer questions immediately without the person ever visiting a website.

Globally, conversational AI use grew 81% in the year to March 2025, while traditional search traffic declined. Google's AI summary now appears in around 4 in every 10 health searches.

Healthdirect's purpose is a healthier Australia. We are not funded to generate website visits, but to reach Australians with trusted health information and to influence the decisions they make about their own care.

If a consumer is getting health information from an AI assistant they already trust, and that information is sourced from Healthdirect, our purpose is being served. The front end has changed; the mission has not. This is Healthdirect's content reaching further than a website link ever could.

### How we are responding

We are moving quickly and with confidence. We are restructuring our content so that AI systems can better understand, trust and correctly attribute Healthdirect information.

This includes schema markup that helps AI tools recognise the clinical basis of a page and identify Healthdirect as the authoritative source.

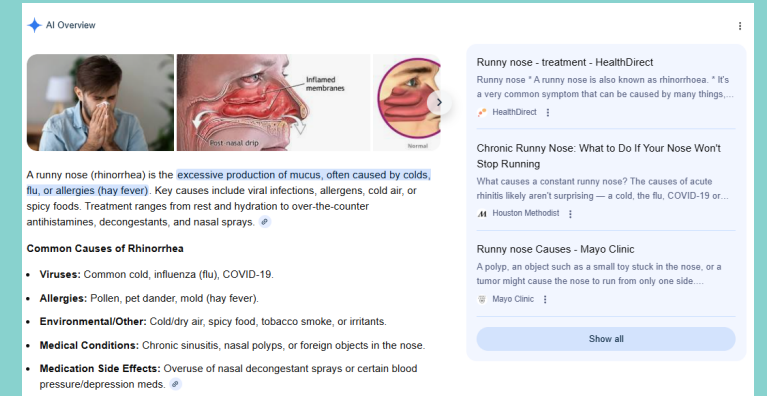
We are also investing in analytics capability to track how our content is performing across AI and search environments, so we can demonstrate impact through the channels Australians are actually using.

### Claiming the space

Healthdirect is actively positioning itself as a partner in the AI health information ecosystem, not a bystander to it. We are pursuing syndication and content-sharing arrangements through new channels and partnerships.

We are engaging with AI developers and LLM platforms on how Australians can continue to use the AI tools they love but in a way that improves safety, provides escalation to a human, and delivers accountability. Healthdirect has the clinical credibility, the national standing and the public interest mandate to be a shaping voice in those conversations and improving the experience so Australians can make health choices from personalised AI that reflects Australian safety, quality and security standards.

### Google GenAI summary and Healthdirect



### Healthdirect website traffic snapshot

- 10 million web searches to Healthdirect per quarter
- 1 million web searches to PBB per quarter

#### Sources:

Healthdirect website data from September 2024 – December 2025  
Healthdirect web referral traffic report, Jan 2024- Sept 2025  
AHRRefs Blog <https://ahrefs.com/blog/ai-overviews-reduce-clicks/> (accessed 11 Feb 2026)  
One Little Web <https://onelittleweb.com/data-studies/ai-chatbots-vs-search-engines/> (accessed 11 Feb 2026)

### 3. Data insight | Global virtual care learnings to tackle workforce shortage

Health leaders from Australia, Canada and New Zealand came together at the inaugural Global Health Access & Virtual Care Roundtable, hosted by Healthdirect Australia in November 2025 to tackle shared challenges in ensuring safe and equitable health services for all communities. Among the discussions was the critical role of technology and AI in addressing workforce and access challenges.

The shortage of healthcare workers in Australia affects a broad range of sectors, including nursing, GPs, psychiatrists and aged care workers. This gap between the supply of and demand for healthcare professionals is widening across the nation, driven by factors such as population growth, an ageing population and a greater prevalence of chronic disease.

Analysis from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing indicates that the national healthcare workforce supply is not expected to keep pace with increasing demand. By 2033, the shortage in the medical workforce is projected to rise dramatically up to 270% with the most significant needs being for psychiatrists, nurses and GPs.

#### Global learnings

Healthdirect has one of the largest virtual clinical workforces in Australia, supporting the community 24 hours, 7 days a week across multiple helplines. Therefore, the issue of workforce shortages has a critical impact on our future strategy and investment.

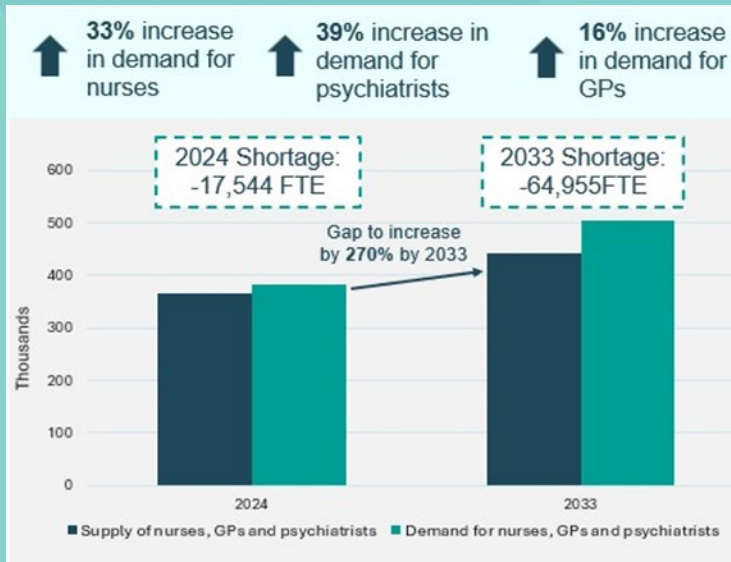
All countries who attended the Global Roundtable are tackling this workforce issue. Some of the responses include:

- Internationally in regions like Canada, and domestically in states such as WA, VIC and SA, virtual services leverage a centralised workforce management system to offer front line emergency physicians hybrid shifts in their Virtual Emergency service. Not only does this model ensure calls can be answered in the virtual care space, but it also helps integrate traditional and virtual models of care through clinician familiarity.
- In New Zealand, Healthline has connected pre-helpline triage screening via a questionnaire to reduce triage interactions with helpline nurses that could be immediately routed to an appropriate pathway.

For Healthdirect, an area of rapid exploration is AI. We have just completed a pilot of AI scribes with the Virtual GP service aiming to decrease time spent on administrative tasks and have commenced a trial of AI for quality monitoring of calls. Both of these initiatives can create efficiency for our workforce and support them to work at top of scope.

Healthdirect will continue to collaborate with global partners to understand how their models may be adapted to the Australian context.

#### Australian Health Workforce Predictions 2033



Data source: Department of Health, Disability and Ageing [GP Supply and Demand Study](#), [Nursing Supply and Demand Study](#), [Psychiatry Supply and Demand Study](#)



# Corporate initiatives

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# Optimising triage through Symptom Checker

## Virtual emergency care options to connect consumers with the right care

### Initiative overview

By continuing to add virtual emergency care options to Symptom Checker, consumers have faster direct access to the right care, reducing unnecessary pressure on emergency departments. This improves efficiency by guiding users to the right channel sooner and offers a digital option with pathways equal to the helpline.

### Objectives

- Facilitate timely access to virtual emergency and urgent care services, reducing unnecessary presentations to traditional emergency departments.
- Enhance operational efficiency for health services by streamlining registration and referral processes and reducing duplication.

### Approach

We partnered closely with states to ensure the pathways reflected local models of care while

still offering a consistent national experience. This allowed integration of virtual services in a way that feels intuitive to consumers and scalable for governments.

### Queensland

**July 2024:** In partnership with Queensland Health we launched the Queensland Virtual Emergency Care Service (Qld VECS) pathway via the healthdirect Symptom Checker, offering the first digital self-triage option of its kind. From December 2025, eligible consumers can complete a streamlined digital self referral form and be securely transferred to Qld VECS, along with their Symptom Checker triage outcome. Approximately 12% of consumers offered Qld VECS as a care option start the registration form.

### Victoria

**September 2025:** In partnership with Victoria Health, Symptom Checker enhanced to

enable the Victoria Virtual Emergency Department (VVED) as a care pathway option for consumers who would have otherwise attended an ED but still needed urgent care.

### New South Wales

**January 2026:** Work has commenced to build a new pathway on the Symptom Checker to include the NSW virtualKIDS and virtualADULTS, giving eligible consumers a seamless digital pathway into NSW's virtual emergency services. It introduces a self referral form, SMS entry into the virtual waiting room, and secure transfer of the Symptom Checker outcome to NSW Health to support safer, more streamlined care. This is scheduled to go live in June 2026.

### Status

Queensland and Victoria – completed.  
NSW – on track.

### Consumer Pathway

Symptom Checker



Meets eligibility



Connected to Virtual ED

### Strategic plan alignment >>

This initiative aligns to the Strategic Plan as indicated by **green >>**



**Priority 1**  
Access to care



**Priority 2**  
Connected system



**Priority 3**  
Measurable value



**Enabler 1**  
Accelerate innovation



**Enabler 2**  
Data & Insight partnerships



**Enabler 3**  
Scalable operations

**Services:**  
Symptom Checker

### This initiative's impact goals are:

By June 2026, enhancements to Symptom Checker will be provide a seamless digital pathway into NSW's virtual emergency services, leveraging existing infrastructure used with Queensland and Victoria.

# Data and AI Platform Modernisation

## *Faster, safer insights with secure AI*

### Initiative overview

To strengthen Healthdirect's core data and analytics capability, this initiative replaces fragmented and limited analytics tooling with a governed, enterprise data platform. Through data and AI platform modernisation Healthdirect will be able to deliver faster, more reliable insights with stronger security controls and a clear pathway to safe AI use.

The target is an up to 50% productivity uplift on priority reporting and analytics use cases.

Significant work has already been completed to bring the program to this point. Subject to approval, implementation will commence in late FY26 with targeted tactical enhancements, followed by the full platform build with the Technology division.

### Objectives

- Build a secure, scalable data platform to boost efficiency and provide better health system insights.
- Create a centralised, reliable data warehouse with unified business logic for high-quality reporting and advanced analytics.
- Develop AI, machine learning, and genAI capabilities to automate processes and accelerate insight delivery.
- Improve operational efficiency by enhancing data access, user experience, and reducing time-to-insight for teams and partners.

### Approach

A phased approach will begin with low-risk tactical enhancements within the Insights division to lift productivity and readiness ahead of the full platform build. Delivery

will be internally led, using a hybrid workforce model, with systems integrator advisory support for the foundational scope. Key steps include software selection, risk assessments, systems integrator selection and project planning and costing.

Change management, training and structured uplift will be delivered alongside the technical work to build capability, drive adoption and ensure teams can confidently use the new platform as it is introduced.

This approach aims to streamline reporting, strengthen governance, and phase out legacy systems, driving significant productivity improvements and supporting future AI adoption.

### Status

On track.



#### Strategic plan alignment >>

This initiative aligns to the Strategic Plan as indicated by **green >>**



Priority 1

Access to care



Priority 2

Connected system



Priority 3

Measurable value



Enabler 1

Accelerate innovation



Enabler 2

Data & Insight partnerships



Enabler 3

Scalable operations

Services: All

#### This initiative's impact goals are:

From late FY26, commence targeted enhancements to deliver faster, more reliable insights with stronger security controls and a clear pathway to safe AI use.

# NHSD supports bulk-billing practice incentive payment program

## Supporting Australians to find suitable care options with ease

### Initiative overview

The National Health Service Directory (NHSD) supported the Commonwealth Bulk-billing initiative to achieve the Commonwealth's goal of improving access to affordable healthcare across Australia.

The requirement for practices participating in the Bulk Billing Practice Incentive Payment (BBPIP) program to list themselves as bulk billing providers in the NHSD ensures the public can find suitable care options with ease. This supports Australians to easily locate bulk billing GPs.

### Objectives

- Provide consumers with visibility of GPs who provide bulk-billing services.
- Ensure consumers who were searching for a bulk billing practice could find one with ease.

### Approach

Collaborative effort between the NHSD and Commonwealth to develop collateral and information to support GP practices register or update their billing information ahead of the BBPIP program launch. Service Finder team developed a targeted search filter in Service Finder to more readily search for bulk billing GPs.

Since the Commonwealth implemented the BBPIP in November,

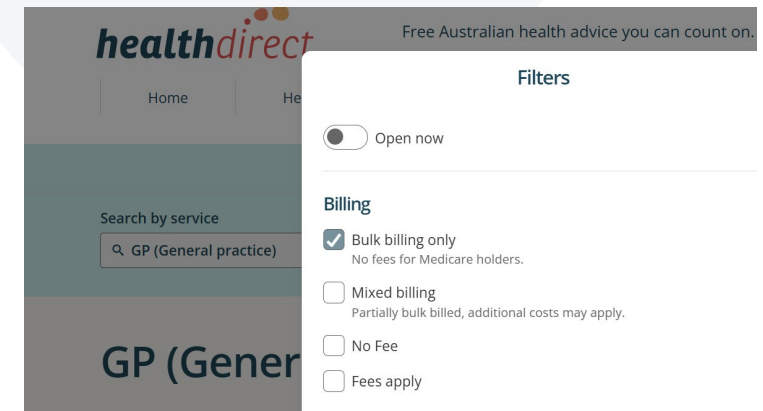
total registered GPs in NHSD increased by 4.2%, and GPs that now have Bulk Billing as their billing option increased by 67%.

### Status

Completed.

The Health Minister Mark Butler announced in February 2026 that bulk-billing rates across Australia have significantly increased, reaching 81.4% between November 2025 and January 2026.

**medicare**  
**Bulk Billing**



**NHSD: 67% increase in GPs listed with bulk-billing services**

### Strategic plan alignment >>

This initiative aligns to the Strategic Plan as indicated by **green >>**



**Priority 1**  
Access to care



**Priority 2**  
Connected system



**Priority 3**  
Measurable value



**Enabler 1**  
Accelerate innovation



**Enabler 2**  
Data & Insight partnerships



**Enabler 3**  
Scalable operations

**Services:** Service Finder, National Health Services Directory

### This initiative's impact goals are:

By November 2025, improve public access to affordable healthcare by making it easier for Australians to find bulk billing GPs

# My Aged Care Reform

## Supporting older Australians to make informed decisions about their care

### Initiative Overview

The introduction of the new *Aged Care Act* in November 2025 represents a significant reform in Australia's aged care sector, prioritising enhanced rights and quality of life for older Australians. The legislation empowers individuals to make informed decisions about their care, including the type, timing, and location, reflecting a consumer-centric approach.

Anticipating increased demand, the My Aged Care (MAC) contact centre expanded its workforce to over 1,000 agents and support staff, which enabled us to handle over 10,000 calls a day and operating 8am-8pm, 7 days a week in early November. We did this while achieving 95% customer satisfaction rate.

As a key driver of this transformation, the My Aged Care contact centre has supported consumers in navigating the

new Support at Home Packages. Over 85% of processes have been updated or replaced to align with the new system.

The ongoing expansion of the Healthdirect team demonstrates robust uptake of My Aged Care services, positioning the service for further growth as additional reforms are introduced in 2026 and 2027.

### Objectives

- Ensure the contact centre is equipped to manage increased demand resulting from legislative reforms.
- Empower older Australians to make informed decisions about their care, supporting their quality of life and satisfaction with services.

### Approach

In partnership with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, Healthdirect has played a central role in shaping

policies and processes for seamless implementation of the Act.

To facilitate this:

- The My Aged Care contact centre expanded its workforce and introduced a support line to advise industry partners, consumers, and their supporters on the new *Act* and its effects on consumer care.
- A cross-trained workforce now handles various roles for flexible deployment and quick response. Staff received updated training and materials covering new legislative and procedural requirements.

### Status

Implemented.



#### Strategic plan alignment >>

This initiative aligns to the Strategic Plan as indicated by **green >>**



**Priority 1**  
Access to care



**Priority 2**  
Connected system



**Priority 3**  
Measurable value



**Enabler 1**  
Accelerate innovation



**Enabler 2**  
Data & Insight partnerships



**Enabler 3**  
Scalable operations

**Services:**  
My Aged Care

#### This initiative's impact goals are:

By December 2025, to prepare the MAC contact centre to effectively manage increased demand due to legislative reforms to support older Australians to make informed choices about their care.

# Out of hours coverage - onboarding additional workforce

*Enhancing consumer experience and fast access to health advice during peak times*

## Initiative overview

To address critical workforce gaps impacting Grade of Service (GOS) performance during peak hours (2:00 pm – 10:00 pm), an additional nursing agency was onboarded to support the Healthdirect helpline. The introduction of the supplementary provider delivers rapid onboarding and flexible workforce coverage, ensuring continuity and resilience in service delivery.

The pilot went live on 15 October 2025. The YTD result for GOS up to this date was **68%**, post that date for the rest of the year it was **82%**. This early pilot data showing improved Service Level Agreement compliance and reduced call abandonment rates.

With the additional nursing agency,

consumers have immediate access to qualified nurses during peak hours, seamless call allocation ensuring minimal wait times that is consistent with Healthdirect quality.

## Objectives

- Improve consumer experience through consistent service availability and faster access to care during peak demand.
- Improve Grade of Service performance and maintain service continuity during vulnerable hours.
- Test Healthdirect’s capacity to scale, integrate new partnerships and maintain quality across a distributed provider ecosystem.

## Approach

The nurse provider is part of our existing panel arrangement for selection of service providers. Through structured planning, technology integration with existing onboarding, clinical governance and alignment to compliance and reporting frameworks, the new partnership was implemented for rapid workforce deployment.

## Status

Initial onboarding completed. Pilot operational during peak hours. Continuous improvement underway to optimise scheduling and reporting.

## Grade of Service performance pre- and post-pilot.



### Strategic plan alignment >>

This initiative aligns to the Strategic Plan as indicated by **green** >>



**Priority 1**  
Access to care



**Priority 2**  
Connected system



**Priority 3**  
Measurable value



**Enabler 1**  
Accelerate innovation



**Enabler 2**  
Data & Insight partnerships



**Enabler 3**  
Scalable operations

**Services:**  
Healthdirect,  
1800MEDICARE

### This initiative's impact goals are:

By October 2025, enhance consumer experience by ensuring consistently available, high-quality nursing care and faster access during peak periods.



Our inaugural Global Roundtable event brought health leaders from Canada, New Zealand, and Australia to share virtual care pathways and equity in access

# Company news

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## Annual Report



## Consumer Engagement



## Global Roundtable



## University of Sydney design showcase

We launched our FY25 Annual report which shares highlights of how digital and virtual services funded by the governments of Australia are connecting Australians with the right care, at the right time. It also reports on our final year of the 2024 - 2027 Strategic Plan and we are confident that our work in FY25 has assisted Australian governments in enhancing access to healthcare services for Australians to address their health needs by reducing barriers and increase connectivity to services. Read the report here [Healthdirect-Australia-Annual-Report-FY25.pdf](#)

Through our Consumer Engagement Group, over 50 consumers have shared their feedback on initiatives such as:

- Changes to helpline greetings
- A new online health tool
- How emergency departments are labelled in the healthdirect Service Finder.

Consumers have shared positive feedback about their involvement in the group: *“The environment was welcoming, supportive and safe. I really valued the facilitator looking out for the consumers and ensuring they were allowed to finish what they were saying without interruptions.”*

Health leaders from Canada, New Zealand and Australia came together to showcase their national virtual health services and how we provide consumers with safe virtual care pathways and equity in access, especially for groups that are difficult to reach.

There was strong agreement among the group that the health system needs to change; and virtual care is one of those threads of change. We need to be brave in looking for different ways to bring benefit to consumers in accessing healthcare and building consumer trust through codesign of solutions.

Design students from the University of Sydney presented their human-centered design research and innovative solutions to Healthdirect staff.

The partnership with the University of Sydney involved working with Healthdirect to explore how people understand and use our service channels. Students were tasked with designing real world solutions to remove barriers facing culturally and linguistically diverse communities and support access to healthcare.

Their insights and research highlighted key pain points in accessing health services and showcased creative ways to improve the experience.



## Making it easy to update clinic details

In collaboration with the Australian Digital Health Agency, we've made it easier for health services to keep their information up to date in digital tools, and across the health system.

As a key business partner of Provider Connect Australia (PCA), we recently launched a service registration page that provides service managers the choice of updating their clinic details via NHSD or PCA.

Working together with our partners in the digital health ecosystem, we aim to create efficiencies, encourage utilisation of national digital infrastructure and better connect the systems that support consumers to better access healthcare.



## Conferences: Equity Co-Lab & Wild Health Summit

At the Wild Health Summit, our CEO Bettina McMahon hosted a panel discussion on return of investment, funding, scalability and consumer-centricity. Nigel Shroot, Service Director, Health Information and Advice Service co-presented how Healthdirect is working with partners such as Aspen and the Victorian Virtual ED to help consumers navigate to the right part of the health system for their needs.

Deputy CEO, Travis Hogson presented at the Equity Co-Lab Summit on the gaps where people are missing out on our services and how we are using insights to fill these gaps.



## NSW VirtualADULTS – Royal Prince Alfred visit

The Healthdirect team visited the Royal Prince Alfred virtual hospital (RPAVirtual) to meet with the regional and metro teams from NSW Health to collaborate on ways to enhance access and referrals from Healthdirect to the virtual urgent care service.

This service is a NSW Health Single Front Door initiative. Since it launched in December 2024, Healthdirect has connected more than 4,400 consumers with the NSW virtual urgent care service for adults



## Sparked clinical design group

At the Sparked Clinical Design Group workshop, Dr Darran Foo, Medical Director shared how we've aligned to the standards being developed through Sparked and the AUCDI to design our Virtual GP platform.

We are aligning to key interoperability standards, building the foundation for future FHIR-based exchange for our services. This approach will ensure the smooth transition, national adoption and usage of FHIR standards, including through a modernised My Health Record, from our services starting with Virtual GP. Through collaboration on standards for the seamless exchange of information, we are contributing our part to better connected care.