

Ms Stephanie Sealy, Project Manager
Ms Hilary Bush, Consultant
Nous Group

Via email: to Ms Danielle McCagh, Executive and Project Assistant:
Danielle.McCagh@nousgroup.com.au

Dear Ms Sealy and Ms Bush

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) would like to thank the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) for the opportunity to provide input into the review of the [Commission's current Strategic Plan \(2014-2019\)](#) as well as considerations for the next Strategic Plan.

Below are ACN's responses to the five questions allocated.

1. *What aspects of the Commission's current Strategic Plan have been the most successful? Why?*

ACN values all priority elements of the current Strategic Plan and believe they are all successful.

Patient safety: the aim of this priority area is to have a safe health system that minimises harm to patients and consumers, and reduces costs associated with preventable adverse events.

ACN recently referred to the NSQHS Standards, Action 3.13 - workforce immunisation, in our soon-to-be-released adult immunisation discussion paper.

Partnering with patients, consumers and communities: the aim of this priority area is to have a health system that maximises the potential for safe and high-quality care by supporting and encouraging patients, consumers and members of the community to participate as equal partners in health care.

Quality, value and cost: the aim of this priority area is to have a health system that provides the right care to patients and consumers, improves health outcomes for patients and optimises the value of the healthcare system by improving productivity.

Supporting health professionals to provide safe and high-quality care: the aim of this priority area is to have a health system that supports safe clinical practice by having robust and sustainable improvement systems.

The inclusion of NSQHS Standards for mental health and cognitive impairment, health literacy, end-of-life care and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health has been an important addition. The development of tools and resources to support the implementation of these standards are excellent.

The Priority areas and the standards are timely, well-researched, evidence-based, easily readable and used across multi-disciplinary health care settings. They are easily accessible on line and in hard copy. They support all health care consumers to be active partners in design, delivery and evaluation of health care noting that health care can be improved when health care consumers share with their health care providers what is important to them and any issues that may impact on their care.

NSQHS Standards alongside the *National Model Clinical Governance Framework* provides health services with a clear understanding of their governance roles and responsibilities and its relationship to the safety and quality of the services they provide. The Framework is a significant enabler of safety and quality improvement in health services.

2. *How well has the Commission communicated its strategy to healthcare system stakeholders?*
The Commission has communicated its strategy effectively to health care system stakeholders. In ACN's experience The Commission aims to ensure timely, purpose-driven and effective communication that supports continuous, coordinated and safe care for patients, which includes communicating their overarching Strategic Plan.

3. *What do you see as the current strengths of the Commission as an organisation? Where are the opportunities for improvement?*
The Commission provides well-researched and timely evidence-based material that is respected, trusted and used across multi-disciplinary health care settings. An example is the release of the second edition of Antimicrobial Stewardship in Australian Health Care 2018, which was written by leading Australian medical, scientific, pharmacy, nursing and infection control experts to support improved prescribing of antimicrobials and patient care, and support strategies to contain the growing problem of antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

At this point in time ACN cannot suggest any further improvement opportunities. The Commission's contemporary work contribute to better health outcomes and experiences for all health consumers, and improved value and sustainability in the health system ensuring health care consumers are kept safe when they receive health care.

4. *What emerging issues in healthcare safety and quality do the Commission need to address in their next Strategic Plan?*
- ageing population,
 - access and equity to healthcare
 - health effects of climate change,
 - patient safety when undergoing cosmetic procedures,
 - safety in digital health noting that the Commission has already released two earlier reports. i.e. *The impact of digital health on the safety and quality in health care* and *Safety issues at transitions of care*.

5. *Do you have any other comments or questions regarding the Commission's strategic plan?*

Alignment of Strategic Plan

Align the Strategic Plan with the Department of Health document entitled '[Australia's Long Term National Health Plan](#)' released in August 2019.

Quality, value and cost: Value Based Health Care:

For example, The Commission's work with the Australian Government and state and territory partners to incorporate quality and safety into hospital pricing and funding to improve patient health outcomes is commendable. As part of this work, and in partnership with Commonwealth, state and territory healthcare safety and quality experts, clinicians, consumers and technical experts, the Commission has revised the national sentinel events list, developed a series of fact sheets to assist interpretation of the hospital-acquired complications (HACs) list, and finalised a list of conditions considered to be avoidable hospital readmissions.

[Atlas of Healthcare Variation](#)

These series of its Atlases include actions about variation in clinical practice and health outcomes are an excellent resource for reviewing clinical practice. Third Australian Atlas of Healthcare Variation focus on appropriateness of care in primary and acute care settings, examining the topic areas of cardiac tests, thyroid investigations and treatments, gastrointestinal investigations and treatments and paediatric and neonatal health.

ACN welcomes the opportunity to further discuss how we can help with the development of the new Strategic Plan. ACN is the pre-eminent and national leader of the nursing profession. We are committed to our intent of advancing nurse leadership to enhance health care.

Please do not hesitate to contact Dr Carolyn Stapleton FACN, Manager, Policy and Advocacy Carolyn.stapleton@acn.edu.au if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely



Marina Buchanan-Grey
Executive Director – Professional
RN, MSc (Nursing), MACN, FCHSM

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