

MEDIA STATEMENT

Institute submission to Commonwealth consultation on Centre for Disease Control

Data and the digital enablement of health and public health will be critical to the success of an Australian Centre for Disease Control, says the Australasian Institute of Digital Health.

In its public submission to the Commonwealth Department of Health, the Institute says public health informatics has called for many years for a central, co-ordinated response to pandemics and other significant outbreaks of disease.

Commenting on the roles and functions of an Australian Centre for Disease Control (CDC), the Institute highlighted the critical importance of a CDC that:

- Is independent of political views and can always act in the public health interest
- Is staffed with personnel who are experts in health and public health informatics
- Has expertise and experience in public health informatics at all levels
- Fulfils the indisputable need for a central, co-ordinated response to health crises or other significant outbreaks of disease in Australia, and
- Is well connected with existing departments and agencies to ensure a 'whole of government' approach to addressing prevention, promotion, and the protection of Australians

Institute CEO Dr Louise Schaper said Australia's experience from the pandemic clearly demonstrated the lack of consistency in data storage and capability in data linkage among and between pathology services, primary health providers, hospitals and public health professionals.

"This highlights the indisputable need for a central, co-ordinated response to health crises or other significant outbreaks of disease, like an Australian Centre for Disease Control," Dr Schaper said.

"However, it would be remiss to establish such an entity without the necessary independence, the requisite health informatics personnel, and the essential data harnessing, storage, and analysis infrastructure – that is backed by a whole of government health data strategy," she said.

The Institute's submission can be found in full [here](#).

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