



Australian Government

Department of Health and Aged Care

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

# National Aged Care Data Strategy Consultation: chance to have your say



**AIHW**

# Introduction

Australia's older population is growing: the number of people aged 65 and over increased by 700,000 between 2016 and 2021, with older Australians now representing 17% of the population<sup>1</sup>. As part of its work, the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety (Royal Commission) considered the key role of data in supporting high quality aged care for older Australians. Of the final recommendations, 108 in particular targeted improved data governance for aged care, and the development of a national aged care data asset.

In response to the Royal Commission's recommendations to improve aged care data, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) and the Department of Health and Aged Care (DoHAC) are partnering to develop the National Aged Care Data Strategy (data strategy).

The development of the data strategy is an iterative process and non-government stakeholders will be closely engaged throughout. The final version of the data strategy will be delivered in June 2024, taking place concurrently with aged care reform activities overseen by the DoHAC and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and aged care data improvement activities undertaken by the AIHW (see Figure 1).

## Figure 1: Key aged care data improvement activities

National Aged Care Data Strategy (data strategy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vision for the future state of the aged care data system.</li><li>• Identification of current data and information gaps.</li><li>• Data improvement plan that articulates how this will be implemented.</li><li>• Guide the ongoing development of the NMDS and the data asset.</li></ul>
National Minimum Data Set (NMDS)	Core set of standardised data elements which are agreed for mandatory collection and reporting about aged care.
National Aged Care Data Asset (data asset)	Multi-sourced enduring linked data set that enables integration of people-centred data related to aged care.

Aged care data includes data relating to service use and provision, characteristics of people using or working in aged care, and service quality and compliance monitoring. Aged care data improvements will allow more efficient and effective forms of data collection and reusability. Over time, applications of the data include, but are not limited to, answering specific questions about dementia prevalence, palliative care use among older Australia, or life-course impacts on subsequent aged care use.

<sup>1</sup> ABS, 2022, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/snapshot-australia/latest-release#data-download>

## You can have your say

The data strategy will drive the approach for developing and continually improving a comprehensive national aged care data system. It is being developed in consultation with non-government stakeholder groups, particularly:

- Older Australians (including groups representing older Australians, their families, and carers)
- Aged care services and providers (including peak bodies, providers, and service delivery partners)
- Researchers and academics (including cooperative research centres, research institutes, think tanks, and universities)

AIHW has engaged Nous Group to conduct the consultation with non-government stakeholders. Consultation will be conducted through:

- **Webinars:** There will be 2 webinars that will cover our approach to developing the data strategy and detail other opportunities to get involved.
- **Focus groups** that will explore themes around the data strategy.
- **A survey** that will seek feedback on core elements of the data strategy that can be completed electronically.

If you would like to be involved in any of the consultations or for further information, please refer to the [GEN aged care data website](#).

Contact us through [agedcare.secretariat@aihw.gov.au](mailto:agedcare.secretariat@aihw.gov.au) if you would like to discuss this work, other emerging issues or the aged care data system more broadly.

# What is the data strategy?

The data strategy has 7 core elements that will be developed in consultation with you and other stakeholders. The table below provides some indicative content for each element.

Core element	Draft content
<b>Vision</b> Key to understand 'why' we are doing this and what the benefits will be	An aged care data system that provides robust information to support the better health ageing and wellbeing of older Australians.
<b>Purpose</b> A statement of what we are aiming to achieve	The data strategy will explain why we are improving the aged care data system, including providing information about aged care that will better support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• people to make informed choices about aged care</li><li>• services and providers to improve their provision of safe, high-quality and dignified care</li><li>• government to design, administer, evaluate and improve the aged care system</li><li>• secondary users of data (such as peak bodies and academic researchers) to study and provide insights that can improve the aged care system.</li></ul>
<b>Guiding principles</b>	The data strategy should be guided by a set of agreed principles, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• putting older Australians at the centre of aged care</li><li>• data that meets the needs of participants and stakeholders including consumers, providers (including aged care workers), governments and researchers</li><li>• safeguarding trust, privacy and security</li><li>• share data once, and use it often</li><li>• data that supports evaluating the performance of the aged care system and supporting future improvements</li><li>• leveraging existing data assets and capabilities</li><li>• data that continually improves.</li></ul>

Core element	Draft content
<p><b>Scope</b></p> <p>The range of considerations to be included – what is in and out of scope</p>	<p>The scope of the data strategy and that of the data system are interdependent. The data strategy applies to all aspects of the aged care data system: the comprehensive range of data related to aged care in Australia, and the arrangements that support capture, use and sharing of these data. These supporting arrangements include data governance, information standards and infrastructure arrangements associated with capturing, using, and sharing these data.</p> <p>The data system includes, but is not limited to, data in the planned NMDS and the planned data asset.</p> <p>The data strategy is not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an information management strategy</li> <li>• an ICT strategy, although we recognise that technology is fundamental to maximising the value of data</li> <li>• a people capability or workforce strategy, although we recognise that people are fundamental to implementing the new system.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategic priorities / focus areas</b></p> <p>Key areas requiring action within the data strategy</p>	<p>Strategic priorities / focus areas will be identified through consultation and research. They will articulate shared outcomes for stakeholders that complement existing investments and enable innovation and improved delivery of aged care. Strategic priorities will align with the vision and purpose and contribute to the outcomes.</p> <p>Strategic priorities / focus areas could include: governance; culture; capability (government and workforce); discoverable data; data sharing and release; and technology and innovation.</p>
<p><b>Roadmap</b></p> <p>Implementation plan for development of the data system, including data improvements</p>	<p>The roadmap will be informed by the responses to the Royal Commission, including the NMDS, data asset and stakeholder consultation.</p>
<p><b>Outcomes</b></p> <p>The benefits realised from an improved data system</p>	<p>Outcomes will be identified through consultation and will align with the Aged Care Outcomes Framework (in development). An example of an outcome could be ‘users can readily search for, identify and understand our data assets and the information they can provide’.</p>

## What happens next?

We are consulting with you and the broader non-government sector over the next 2 months. From late September, you will be invited to take part in webinars and a survey. We will conduct focus groups and interviews with selected stakeholders to hear feedback on the data strategy. We will analyse the results and identify the key themes that will inform the development of the data strategy. We anticipate that the draft data strategy will be provided to you in early 2023 for further input before its public release in 2024.

Figure 2: Timeline for the development of the data strategy

