Review of Australia's Health System Performance Information and Reporting Frameworks

Response to the consultation

February 2017

Submitted by:

Dr Merran Smith

Chief Executive, PHRN

About the Population Health Research Network

The Population Health Research Network (PHRN) supports world-class research through privacy-preserving linkage of administrative data. The PHRN invests in infrastructure that boost's Australia's capacity to link population data. Our network includes leading universities, research institutes and government agencies. Research conducted using the linked data generates new knowledge and supports improvements in the delivery of a wide range of health and human services.

Response to the consultation

The PHRN welcomes the opportunity to make this submission. We have restricted our comments to the proposed model for the collection, supply and use of health data.

The proposed framework for whole of health system performance information and reporting

Q1.   The proposed consolidation of Australia's health system performance information and reporting frameworks is supported. It should help to reduce demands on data suppliers and as well as reducing the quantity and improving the quality of reporting.

Q2.   The paper identifies a number of characteristics of the proposed information and reporting framework. While many are sound, others might benefit from further thought. For example, while strategic priorities are important, they may change from time to time. A good framework should enable performance monitoring over a medium to long term timeframe. While sub-jurisdictional analysis is supported, Statistical Level 3 and/or postcodes may not be the optimal level of aggregation. With respect to indicators, the need to include clinical outcomes information is supported as is the need for data from not for profit and private sector providers. The need to map the patient journey is also supported. A robust data linkage capacity at jurisdictional and national level is vital for such mapping. Fortunately Australian states and territories already have a robust jurisdictional data linkage capacity.

1.   What are your views on the proposed model for health data collection, supply and use, including the recommendations on what should be included in the model? Is there anything missing from the model?
(400 words maximum)

The PHRN agrees with the establishment of a national model for data collection supply and use for health system performance information and reporting. In particular the PHRN supports "*data linkage across the health system and with other sectors*". The PHRN already supports data linkage infrastructure for every state and territory and the Commonwealth which links data between sectors (e.g. health and education) and between jurisdictions. The PHRN infrastructure should be an integral component of the national model.

In order to establish an accurate picture of the Australian health system as a whole it is necessary to be able to track a patient's progress through the health system even when they move from state to state. The PHRN is currently funding a project with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare to establish a national master linkage key which will streamline and improve the efficiency of access to cross-jurisdictional linked data for a range of purposes including health system reporting and monitoring.

A national model for data collection, supply and use for health system performance information and reporting will have significant benefits beyond government reporting and monitoring on the health system if the national data collection is made available to researchers in the academic and industry sectors. The national system should be set up in a way that maximizes public benefit uses within and outside of government. This approach is consistent with the principle of single provision, multiple use of health data.