

Healthier Australians

Australia's health system is the envy of much of the world. The PC argues better integration and improved patient centred care could see it improved even further.

Reforms to the health systems can improve the health and quality of life of Australians and deliver savings that can be reinvested in the health system. For example the PC estimates that delivering better health care, including through more integrated care and limiting unjustified procedures, could result in \$200 billion of economic benefits over the next 20 years.

Australia's health system performs well

All Australians have access to universal health care. In fact, Australians are living longer, with less disability than ever before. Our life expectancy at 82.2 years is among the highest in the world.

Australia's health workforce is highly skilled and dedicated.

What the PC finds

The split of responsibilities for the health system across governments does not encourage coordination of care and prevention.

More integrated and better targeted health care would improve our standard of living by keeping Australians healthier for longer. Healthy and happy people are more likely to be able to look for a job, be free of dependency on welfare, and earn higher wages.

While our life expectancy is the third highest in the OECD, we also spend the most years in ill-health. We have reduced smoking and car accident deaths, but have high rates of obesity.

Many Australians have, or are at risk of developing, chronic conditions, including obesity and diabetes.

Health expenditure is expected to grow substantially over time as the population ages and demand for health care increases, placing pressure on governments and the quality of service delivery.

The patient will see you now

At the core of the PC's recommendations is a play on words borrowed from US author Eric Topol – The Patient Will See You Now.

The Turnbull Government has already recognised the need to put patients at the centre of care, with our Health Care Homes trial rolling out from October.

These practices will have holistic care for patients at their core, tailoring care plans that address all of a patient's health concerns across the health system.

The Turnbull Government's opt-out My Health Record platform will give practitioners and patients immediate access to records to improve and better coordinate their care.

Less than 20 per cent of Australian GPs are told when one of their patients has been seen in an emergency department, compared to 68 per cent in the Netherlands and 56 per cent in New Zealand.

The successful prevention of mental issues can increase workforce participation by up to 26 percentage points.

More than \$200 million could be saved every year alone by reducing knee arthroscopies that research shows have no benefit for the patient in most cases.

Find out more visit:

www.treasury.gov.au/pc-review