



# AUSTRALIAN CONSENSUS FRAMEWORK FOR ETHICAL COLLABORATION IN THE HEALTHCARE SECTOR

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## Australian health leaders launch Health Care Ethical Framework

TOKYO. A consensus framework for ethical practices in health care, developed in collaboration by a large group of Australian health leaders, and endorsed by Australian federal, state and territory health ministers, will be launched in Tokyo today.

A total of 50 signatory bodies have signed the framework, which was developed in collaboration with a host of Australian professional health bodies, industry organisations, hospital and health services associations, regulators, patient and advocacy groups and other related organisations.

Signatories to the Australian Consensus Framework for Ethical Collaboration are committed to delivering the best outcomes for patients. Collectively they share similar challenges and hopes – including the desire to maintain and improve ethical behaviour.

Australian Federal Minister for Health, The Hon. Greg Hunt MP, praised the Australian health sector for developing the voluntary initiative.

“The new Australian Consensus Framework has come about from the hard work of a dedicated group of people in the health care industry who want to do things better. That work has been led by the Australian Orthopaedic Association, with representatives from the Medical Technology Association of Australia, Medicines Australia, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and the Australian Healthcare & Hospitals Association.

“The Consensus Statement, and the number of signatories to it, is a clear commitment from the Australian healthcare sector to ethical behaviour, collaboration and interaction. It demonstrates how Australian healthcare is driven by the values and principles of honesty, integrity, transparency, accountability and oversight. Most importantly, the statement also gives further certainty to patients about the behaviour they should expect from providers, facilities and companies.

Chair of the Australian Consensus Framework for Ethical Collaboration and CEO of the Australian Orthopaedic Association, Adrian Cosenza, said that the framework “has been designed in an environment where society’s trust in government, business and not-for-profit bodies globally, including in Australia, as measured by the respected Edelman Trust Barometer, has been in steady decline in recent years. Unethical behaviour is one of the causes of this trust deficit.”

“As the fifth largest contributor to national growth and in employing over 1.5 million Australians, it is important that the healthcare sector exhibits and practises high levels of trust to the standards expected by the community. Open collaboration, dialogue and communication across all players in the health care sector is key. The Australian Consensus



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Framework for ethical collaboration provides a platform for this engagement,” said ACF Leadership Team member and MTAA, CEO, Ian Burgess.

“Every day in Australia, 578,000 people visit a doctor or hospital and there are 777,000 prescriptions for innovative and generic medicines filled. Australians place their trust in the entire healthcare ecosystem and need to know that they are going to be looked after from the discovery of a new medicine, right through the supply chain. Australians also want to know that their healthcare provider is acting in an honest, transparent and accountable way,” said Medicines Australia CEO and ACF Leadership Team member Elizabeth de Somer.

“The Australian healthcare sector has come together in an unprecedented collective effort to develop the Australian Consensus Framework for Ethical Collaboration, aimed at setting the standards for ethical behaviour across the sector to best serve the people of Australia,” said ACF Leadership Team member and Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association Chief Executive, Alison Verhoeven.

“Consumer organisations play an increasing leadership role in shaping policy, standards and services that take into account community expectations and trust that the best possible care is going to be delivered. This Consensus Statement sets the yardstick for the behaviours the community should expect from providers,” said Consumers Health Forum of Australia CEO, Leanne Wells.

“There is much to be done, and we are only at the start. However, we are all driven by a shared objective – to do the right thing for the future of Australia’s health system,” said ACF Leadership Team member and Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, Councillor, Greg Witherow.

The launch of the framework will take place in Tokyo today with an address by the Federal Minister for Health the Hon. Greg Hunt MP as part of the 2018 APEC Business Ethics for SMEs Forum.



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## **About the Australian Consensus Framework for Ethical Collaboration**

The Australian Consensus Framework for Ethical Collaboration is a government-supported, sector-led initiative that has been developed collaboratively by professional bodies, industry organisations, hospital and health services associations, regulators, patient and advocacy groups and other related organisations.

Having commenced in December 2017 with a group of five bodies representing medical professional groups, industry associations and hospital and health services, the Australian Consensus Framework for Ethical Collaboration has grown to more than 60 bodies spanning the entire health system. The support from federal and state and territory jurisdictions is also significant.

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