Federal, state and territory Health Ministers met in Canberra today at the COAG Health Council chaired by Meegan Fitzharris MLA, ACT Minister of Health and Wellbeing to discuss a range of national health issues.

Health Ministers noted the Queensland Parliament is in caretaker mode and the Queensland Minister was not present.

The meeting made progress in protecting patients with items dealing with the health risks associated with cosmetic procedures.

Ministers also agreed to pursue a national approach to supporting the mental health of health professionals including progressing reform of mandatory reporting. Ministers noted a suite of resources to help improve the safety and security of health professionals working in remote locations and protecting our children and seniors with advanced influenza protection, including the importance of investigating the benefits of flu vaccinations for children 6 months to 5 years. Significant progress was also reported by the Commonwealth towards the early roll out of a new Meningococcal Quadrivalent vaccine.

Other items discussed included:

**Long term health reform**

Ministers agreed on directions for long term health reform in the upcoming National Health Agreement noting that sustainable funding is a critical factor and requires further consideration.

**Commonwealth Activity Based Funding Determination for 2015–16**

Health Ministers noted the desire of all parties to finalise the independent review of funding and activity growth for 2015-16 and work to the earliest possible resolution.

**National Health Genomics Policy Framework**


The Framework agrees a high-level national approach to policy, regulatory and investment decision-making for genomics. Advances in genomics have the potential to help people live longer and better lives by reshaping clinical practice to fundamentally change the way we prevent, diagnose, treat and monitor illness, providing the opportunity to have more precise and tailored treatments. The ability to respond to this change is dependent on further
developing Australia’s capacity, capability and infrastructure needed to support integration of genomic technology into the national health system.

Health Ministers also agreed to the development of an Implementation Plan for the National Health Genomics Policy Framework that will identify actions to support the strategic priority areas.

**Framework on Mandatory Reporting under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law**

Health Ministers have made considerable progress towards consensus on a national approach to a Framework on Mandatory Reporting under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, including:

- Agreeing to progress with a predisposition to a national system that supports the mental health of the health professions whilst protecting patients, for consideration by the COAG Health Council out of session as a matter of urgency and
- Agreeing to continue finalising the CHC position noting that Queensland is in caretaker mode and any national legislation will need to be passed by the Queensland Parliament.

**Health Risks Associated with the use of Medicines in Cosmetic Procedures**

Health Ministers noted the recent investigations undertaken by New South Wales into cosmetic clinics and acknowledged the need for jurisdictions to continue to monitor and review regulation in this area to help reduce the health risks associated with the use of medicines in cosmetic procedures.

**Current and projected usage of the My Health Record and update on jurisdictional infrastructure scalability plans**

Health Ministers noted the current state of connection of state and territory health IT systems to the My Health Record, which shows variations in hospital systems connected across different jurisdictions and the degree to which information in the My Health Record is viewed.

Ministers agreed that the expansion of the My Health Record for every Australian will require changes to jurisdictional health IT systems and that all jurisdictions should assess the readiness of their infrastructure to handle increased uploading and viewing.

The Australian Digital Health Agency is working with jurisdictions on their readiness for the My Health Record expansion, including educating healthcare providers and preparing for increased load.
Options to reduce pressure on private health insurance premiums – feedback from the public consultation process

Health Ministers noted the Commonwealth summary of feedback received as part of the public consultation process on the paper Options to reduce pressure on private health insurance premiums by addressing the growth of private patients in public hospitals.

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