



Australian Government
National Health and Medical Research Council

Terms of Reference

National COVID-19 Health and Research Advisory Committee

The National COVID-19 Health and Research Advisory Committee ('the Committee') will report to Australia's Chief Medical Officer (CMO), and through the CMO, inform the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC).

The Committee:

- will provide rapid and evidence-based advice (or expert advice in the absence of evidence) on Australia's health response to the COVID-19 pandemic with the aim of preventing new cases, optimally the treatment of current cases and assisting in optimising overall health system readiness to deal with the pandemic as it progresses.
- members will have the capacity to provide rapid advice to committee on key issues (one-page briefs)
- will have the capacity to recommend to the CMO seeking rapid advice from members of the Australian health and medical research sector
- will be able to provide feedback on what measures appear to be working and what measures are not in different parts of the country
- may need to recommend to the CMO to quickly bring together experts to respond to requests for advice on public health risks and health management issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic
- will be available, in consultation with the CMO, to provide environmental scanning and advice on key issues as they arise, including the effectiveness of public health measures overseas, availability of ventilators and ICU beds, appropriateness of delivery and use of PPE, monitoring the effectiveness of the roll out of Telehealth item numbers, progress on rapid testing and vaccines, post-viral issues, and monitoring of key outcomes

Committee member appointments are time-limited and will be for 6-12 months or until the response to the pandemic has reached a point of contain and control, and advice is no longer required by the CMO.

Membership

Membership includes people residing in all states and territories and from rural and remote Australia and includes respected community leaders and parliamentarians, clinicians and researchers from infectious disease, public health, emergency response, hospital care, primary care, social science and bioethics backgrounds, as well as members able to represent the voices of the older people, people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, younger people and people with mental health concerns.

Logistics

- Meetings will be held by teleconference for one hour, from 5-6pm, up to 3 times a week, and revised over time as need demands
- Secretariat will be provided by the National Health and Medical Research Council