



Media release

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Healthcare sector collaboration drives enhancements to Provider Connect Australia™

The Australian Digital Health Agency has released an update to Provider Connect Australia™ (PCA™), an initiative that helps healthcare providers and business partners maintain accurate and up-to-date business information in a single place.

CEO Amanda Cattermole PSM said the Agency's commitment to innovate and enhance digital health services for all Australians is reflected in the latest PCA upgrade which was driven by close collaboration with the healthcare sector.

"PCA serves as a one-stop shop which reduces the need for multiple phone calls, emails or faxes to business partners when updating healthcare service and provider information. To achieve this, the Agency works closely with stakeholders and industry partners across the entire healthcare sector, such as PHNs, software vendors, peak bodies and professional associations," Ms Cattermole said.

"These valuable relationships led to a welcome suggestion from COORDINARE – South Eastern NSW Primary Health Network (PHN), to integrate mental health initial assessment and referral (IAR) into PCA to ensure patients were referred to the appropriate mental healthcare services."

The IAR tool supports mental health care across the primary care sector and enables healthcare providers to conduct an assessment of a consumer's mental health needs and preferences to generate a tailored referral to the most suitable service available in their region.

COORDINARE CEO Prudence Buist welcomed the Agency's responsiveness to the needs of the healthcare sector.


"The integration of the IAR into PCA is a pivotal development for COORDINARE and providers in our region. This enhancement will simplify the process for healthcare professionals to locate and engage with the most suitable mental health service for their patients. It ensures timely, appropriate, and location-specific care," Ms Buist said.

"We are very grateful to the Agency for working with us to make this happen, and we look forward to seeing the positive outcomes for our community."

Amanda Cattermole said the PCA upgrade had also opened a door for Clinical Information Systems (CIS) to connect through a SMART on FHIR interface.

"I encourage CIS software vendors to seize this opportunity to integrate with PCA as they develop and upgrade their products, as PHNs and practice managers across Australia are eager to see this priority connection that will save them significant time when updating healthcare practitioner information," Ms Cattermole said.

PCA significantly reduces the time that healthcare provider organisations spend updating their business partners, ensures that updates are not missed, and reduces the transcription errors that occur with manual updates.



Amanda Cattermole said PCA will also play a foundational role in the Health Information Exchange (HIE) that is under development by the Agency by leveraging it to receive complete, accurate and up-to-date information about healthcare providers, the services they provide and the places that those services are delivered.

“The HIE will create and use a consolidated directory of all healthcare provider organisations and practitioners, the services they deliver and the places those services are delivered - leveraging PCA and other existing services to receive complete, accurate and up-to-date healthcare provider information” Ms Cattermole said.

Healthcare providers and business partners can register for PCA at: www.digitalhealth.gov.au/healthcare-providers/initiatives-and-programs/provider-connect-australia

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Media contact

Mobile: [0428 772 421](tel:0428772421)

Email: media@digitalhealth.gov.au

About the Australian Digital Health Agency

When it comes to improving the health of all Australians, the role of digital innovation and connection is a vital part of a modern, accessible healthcare system. Against the backdrop of COVID-19, digital health has seen exponential growth in relevance and importance, making it more pertinent than ever for all Australians and healthcare providers.

Better patient healthcare and health outcomes are possible when you have a health infrastructure that can be safely accessed, easily used and responsibly shared.

To achieve this, the [National Digital Health Strategy](#) is establishing the foundations for a sustainable health system that constantly improves. It underpins and coordinates work that is already happening between governments, healthcare providers, consumers, innovators and the technology industry.

For further information: www.digitalhealth.gov.au.

The Australian Digital Health Agency is jointly funded by the Australian Government and all state and territory governments.