



PRIME MINISTER

MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AGEING

National Health And Hospitals Reform Commission

NR08/24

Federal Cabinet today formally approved the establishment of the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission.

Cabinet today directed the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission to develop a long-term health reform plan for a modern Australia.

The Commission has been tasked by Cabinet to provide an interim report on a long-term health reform plan to the Commonwealth Government by the end of 2008, and a final plan in mid 2009.

Following formal appointment by Cabinet, Dr Christine Bennett has today been appointed to Chair the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission.

Dr Bennett will chair a ten member National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission. Commission members have been selected to represent the vast range of experiences within the Australian health system.

The Commission will deliver better health outcomes for the community and provide sustainable improvements in the performance of the health system.

The National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission will provide a blueprint for tackling future challenges in the Australian health system including:

- The rapidly increasing burden of chronic disease;
- The ageing of the population;
- Rising health costs; and
- Inefficiencies exacerbated by cost shifting and the blame game.

The Commission will focus on health financing, maximising a productive relationship between public and private sectors, and improving rural health.



The National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission Board

Dr Christine Bennett will chair the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission. Dr Bennett has worked extensively in health care as a clinician and administrator across both the public and private sectors. She is currently Chief Medical Officer at MBF Australia Ltd.

Dr Bennett will bring a wide range of knowledge and experience to this important position. She is passionate about health care, and committed to delivering long-term improvements to the Australian health system.

Nine other Commissioners will assist Dr Bennett on the Commission:

- Rob Knowles, former Victorian Liberal Health Minister;
- Geoff Gallop, former Premier of Western Australia;
- Mukesh Haikerwal, Melbourne GP and immediate past-President of the AMA;
- Stephen Duckett, health economist and former Secretary of the Commonwealth Department of Health;
- Ron Penny, Emeritus Professor of Medicine, University of NSW;
- Sabina Knight, Senior Lecturer, Centre for Remote Health and remote area nurse;
- Sharon Willcox, Director of consulting firm Health Policy Solutions;
- Justin Beilby, Executive Dean of the University of Adelaide's Medical School; and
- Mary Ann O'Loughlin, Director, The Allen Consulting Group.

This experienced team of Commissioners will undertake an intensive work plan, with every member having committed one or two days a week to this important project.

The Commission will report to the Commonwealth Minister for Health and Ageing, and, through her to the Prime Minister, and to the Council of Australian Governments and the Australian Health Ministers' Conference.

The Commission will advise the Government on the key aspects of the framework for the next health care agreements between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories.

**Canberra
25 February 2008**

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