

## National plan needed urgently to combat growing burden of chronic disease

18 August 2015

The Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association has called for the urgent development of a national plan for chronic disease management in a submission to the government.

“To improve the prevention and management of chronic disease, a national plan is urgently required,” AHHA Chief Executive Alison Verhoeven said.

“It must be developed in genuine partnership with all levels of government, health service providers, health researchers, consumers and the broader health community.”

A growing burden of chronic disease in Australia has highlighted the significant structural issues in the current health system that prevent a coordinated response from primary care, hospitals and specialised community-based services.

The AHHA submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health Inquiry into Chronic Disease Prevention and Management in Primary Care has put forward a number of guidelines for a new national plan.

“We believe chronic disease management should be centred on patients, not diseases, so patients with multiple chronic conditions can be better treated,” Ms Verhoeven said.

“The plan should also support regional-specific approaches that are more coordinated and easier for patients to navigate.”

The AHHA has also called for the government to address the structural issues surrounding funding models, establishing arrangements that are patient-centred and supportive of the right care in the most appropriate environment.

The AHHA also believes it is crucial for the data gathered by Government projects and research into chronic disease management to be shared openly.

“Above all, patient equity, system efficiency and quality of patient care must be prioritised,” Ms Verhoeven said.

For more information on the AHHA, visit <http://ahha.asn.au>. The AHHA’s submission to the inquiry can be found [here](#).

**The Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association is the national peak body for public and not-for-profit hospitals, community and primary healthcare services, and advocates for universal, high quality and affordable healthcare to benefit the whole community.**

**Media enquiries:**  
**Alison Verhoeven**  
**Chief Executive, The Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association**  
**0403 282 501**