Australian Consensus Framework for Ethical Collaboration in the Healthcare Sector

A Consensus Statement of Shared Values and Ethical Principles for Collaboration and Interaction Among Organisations in the Healthcare Sector

FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Colleagues,

Australian Consensus Framework for Ethical Collaboration in the Healthcare Sector

The healthcare sector in Australia is the fifth largest contributor to national growth. It employs over 1.5 million people and includes healthcare professionals, professional bodies, industry – including medical device and biopharmaceutical sectors – patient groups, regulators, jurisdictions (federal and state), hospitals and health services, research and medical education institutions. Participants are committed to delivering the best outcomes for patients. Individually, and as organisations, all share similar challenges and hopes – including the desire to maintain and improve ethical behaviour.

Society's trust in government, business and not-for-profit bodies globally, including in Australia, as measured by the respected Edelmen Trust Barometer, has been in steady decline in recent years. A score below 50 per cent is defined as a trust deficit. All three sectors – government, business and not for profit – are currently in this trust-deficit zone. Unethical behaviour is one of the causes of this trust deficit.

In an innovative and pioneering initiative, participants in the Australian healthcare sector embarked on developing an Australian Consensus Framework for Ethical Collaboration (ACF). This initiative is sector-led, voluntary and inclusive, and embraces the support of Federal and state and territory jurisdictions. Having commenced in December 2017 with a group of five bodies representing medical professional groups, industry associations and hospital and health services, the ACF has grown to more than 60 bodies spanning the entire health system. The support from federal and state and territory jurisdictions is also significant.

The ACF stems from the foundation work progressed as part of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Business Ethics for Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) initiative, which commenced in November 2010 to strengthen and align industry practices across the region. This initiative began with the development of a common set of APEC principles for codes of ethics within the medical device and biopharmaceutical sectors.

APEC is a regional economic forum to promote sustainable and inclusive growth across 21 Asia-Pacific member economies spanning five continents. Australia plays a special role in APEC, having hosted the first forum in Canberra on 6-7 November 1989.

Since 2010, the Business Ethics for APEC SMEs Initiative has made impressive progress in raising awareness of and implementing ethical collaboration within the medical device and biopharmaceutical sectors. Australian representatives at APEC meetings have advocated for a more

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embracing and holistic approach, seeking also to more actively involve clinicians, professional groups, hospitals and health services, regulators and consumer groups.

In response to APEC's strategy to encourage member economies to develop consensus frameworks for ethical collaboration, the Australian healthcare sector has adopted a purposeful and particularly inclusive approach to raising the standards of ethical collaboration through the development of what will be the world's largest consensus framework to-date.

On behalf of the ACF leadership team, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all parties for their contribution, goodwill and positive spirit, as a consequence of which this inaugural statement has developed, achieving consensus amongst so many parties from varying sectors within health and education.

We acknowledge the support of the Federal Minister of Health, the Honourable Mr Greg Hunt, and the Federal Department of Health, which has provided secretariat support throughout the development of the ACF since December 2017.

Special mention must go to Professor Ian Kerridge of the Royal Australian College of Physicians and to Associate Professor Wendy Lipworth from Praxis Australia for their expert guidance in drafting versions of the statement.

Finally, I would like to thank the ACF leadership team comprising Ian Burgess, CEO MTAA, Deborah Monk, Policy Director, Medicines Australia, Krister Partel, Advocacy Director, Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association and Greg Witherow, Councillor, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, for their advice and wisdom in guiding the process over the past eight months.

There is much to be done… and we are only at the start. However, we are all driven by a shared objective… to do the right thing.

With thanks,

Adrian Cosenza
Chair
Australian Consensus Framework for Ethical Collaboration in the Healthcare Sector

Chief Executive Officer
Australian Orthopaedic Association
20 July 2018

PURPOSE AND GOALS

Since 2010, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) has supported the development of statements articulating ethical principles for business and the healthcare sector in order to maximise the interests of patients and consumers, enhance access to safe and effective healthcare, and build public trust. APEC statements of ethical principles have been developed or are under development in a number of APEC member economies.

The Australian "Consensus Statement of Shared Values and Ethical Principles for Collaboration and Interaction among Organisations in the Healthcare Sector" is a government-supported, sector-led initiative that has been developed collaboratively by professional bodies, industry organisations, hospital and health services associations, regulators, patient and advocacy groups and other related organisations.

The Australian Consensus Statement does not replace existing statements, codes and guidelines, nor does it supersede, relace or re-interpret relevant Commonwealth, State or Territory laws and regulations.

The Australian Consensus Statement describes the values and ethical principles that should form the basis of collaboration and interaction among organisations in the healthcare sector, and aims to:

- Promote collaboration and interaction among healthcare sector organisations and those who work within them that benefits patients, consumers, students, educators, communities, populations, healthcare systems and the healthcare sector.
- Encourage better dialogue, trust and respect between and amongst organisations in and working with the healthcare sector.
- Enhance the integrity and trustworthiness of organisations in the healthcare sector.
- Promote public confidence and trust in healthcare sector organisations by demonstrating a shared commitment to integrity and ethics.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES FOR COLLABORATION AND INTERACTION

SUBSTANTIVE PRINCIPLES

Those working together and/or making collaborative judgements and decisions should give due consideration to:

- *Benefit and welfare:* Acting in ways that advance the health, wellbeing and interests of patients, consumers, communities, populations, healthcare systems and the healthcare sector, and that avoid or minimise harm.
- *Justice:* Fair distribution of access, opportunities, and privileges, and reduction of socio-political and economic inequity. Justice also refers to fairness in the processes that allocate resources and resolve disputes.
- *Respect for patients, consumers, communities, students, educators, colleagues and organisations:* All interactions and activities are respectful of the dignity, worth, rights, beliefs, values, preferences, customs and cultural heritage of all involved.
- *Solidarity:* A collective commitment to equitably sharing costs and benefits for the good of a group, community, nation or global population.
- *Effectiveness, efficiency, safety, sustainability:* Continuous commitment to improving outcomes in healthcare through promotion of responsible innovation, generation and utilisation of evidence, economic cooperation, reduction of waste, and productive utilisation of limited resources.

PROCEDURAL PRINCIPLES

Collaborations and interactions should be characterised by:

- *Honesty:* Those engaged in collaborations are truthful in all their interactions.
- *Integrity:* Those engaged in collaborations are alert to competing and conflicting personal, professional and organisational interests and to the management of bias.
- *Reflexivity:* There is ongoing critical reflection on the values, principles and evidence underpinning collaborative judgments and actions.
- *Transparency:* The processes of collaboration, and the values, principles and evidence upon which decisions are made, are open to scrutiny.

- *Inclusiveness and shared understanding:* All relevant stakeholders should participate in collaborations in order to learn from one another and work together respectfully to generate mutually agreed outcomes.
- *Responsibility and accountability:* Those involved in collaborative processes take responsibility for, are able to explain, and are accountable for, their actions and decisions.
- *Reasonableness:* Those involved in collaborations act, and make decisions, on the basis of rationales that are widely accepted as relevant and fair.
- *Testability:* The judgments and decisions made by those engaging in collaboration are open to independent verification and revision.
- *Revisability:* There are procedures in place for appeals and for revising collaborative judgments and decisions in the light of challenges to them.
- *Oversight:* There are mechanisms in place to ensure that the principles described above are given due consideration.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSENSUS PRINCIPLES

- Signatories should work to align their own policies and processes with the consensus principles and should take the principles into account in all of their activities including education and training, research, advocacy, purchasing and resource allocation, and policymaking.
- Signatories will commit to these principles being the basis for collaboration and interaction both within the healthcare sector and between healthcare and other relevant sectors, including social care, aged care, disability services and so forth.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

ENDORSING JURISDICTIONS

- Federal Member for Flinders, Minister for Health, Minister for Sport – The Honourable Gregory Hunt MP
- NSW – The Honourable Brad Hazzard MP Minister for Health and the Minister for Medical Research
- ACT – The Honourable Meegan Fitzharris MLA Minister for Health and Wellbeing, Transport and City Services and Higher Education, Training and Research.
- NT – The Honourable Natasha Fyles MLA Minister for Health
- VIC – The Honourable Jill Hennessy MP Minister for Health Minister for Ambulance Services
- WA – The Honourable Roger Cook MLA Minister for Health
- QLD – The Honourable Dr Steven Miles MP Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services
- SA – The Honourable Stephen Wade MLC Minister for Health and Wellbeing

IN-PRINCIPLE SUPPORT

- TAS – The Honourable Michael Ferguson MP Minister for Health

AUSTRALIAN CONSENSUS FRAMEWORK FOR ETHICAL COLLABORATION IN THE HEALTHCARE SECTOR

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AUSTRALIAN CONSENSUS FRAMEWORK FOR ETHICAL COLLABORATION IN THE HEALTHCARE SECTOR

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The Royal Australian & New Zealand College of Psychiatrists
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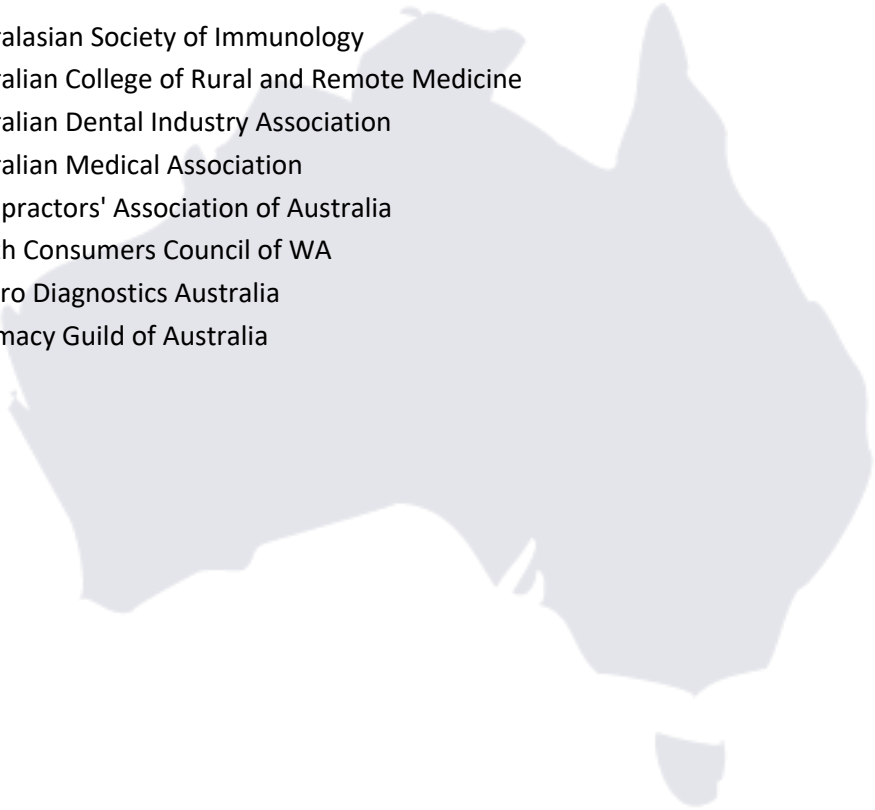
THE ACF ALSO ACKNOWLEDGES CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONSENSUS FRAMEWORK FROM THE FOLLOWING PARTIES. PARTIES ARE FREE TO PARTICIPATE, CONTRIBUTE AND BECOME SIGNATORIES AT THE TIME THAT BEST SUITS EACH INDIVIDUAL PARTY'S CIRCUMSTANCES.



- Australasian Society of Immunology
- Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine
- Australian Dental Industry Association
- Australian Medical Association
- Chiropractors' Association of Australia
- Health Consumers Council of WA
- In Vitro Diagnostics Australia
- Pharmacy Guild of Australia

SUBMISSION TO APEC

20 July 2018

Dear Business Ethics for APEC SMEs Initiative,

On behalf of the Australian Consensus Framework leadership team and signatories, it is our pleasure to present the first concluded version of this agreement during the Plenary Session of the 2018 APEC Business Ethics for SMEs Forum on 20 July 2018 in Tokyo, Japan. The Australian Consensus Framework, the largest arrangement of its kind in the world today, demonstrates our economy's commitment to strengthening ethical business practices above and beyond the commitments of the APEC Nanjing Declaration on Promoting Ethical Environments in the Medical Device and Biopharmaceutical Sectors.

We believe the Australian Consensus Framework is well positioned to serve as an enduring platform to strengthen healthcare in Australia as well as an international model for other economies to examine and consider in their collective action to achieve the same goal. We look forward to continuing to heighten our partnership with the Business Ethics for APEC SMEs Initiative as the Australian Consensus Framework is implemented and as the APEC region scales its focus on multi-stakeholder ethical collaboration.

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Jo Watson
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In the presence of

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Deputy Head of Mission
Australian Embassy in Japan

Tracey Duffy
Therapeutic Goods Administration
Federal Department of Health