



Australian Council of Deans of Health Sciences Strategic Plan 2024-2026

Context

Our Strategic Plan represents a collective leadership response to the challenges of the changing landscape of higher education, health and social care in the 21st century. Demand for allied health professionals is projected to continue to be ahead of supply for the foreseeable future. Population growth and ageing, increasing chronic disease, the needs, expectations and preferences of the community and persistent workforce shortages in rural and remote Australia are among the many factors influencing this demand.

ACDHS is the peak body for the education of the future allied health workforce and research that harnesses our multidisciplinary strengths and perspectives to improve health outcomes and systems. We educate the allied health workforce for the disability, education and aged care sectors and lead research that improves participation and wellbeing of individuals and communities. We educate our future allied health workforce to deliver safe, high quality and appropriate care to the Australian population and international community.

In developing our strategic plan, we consulted with members and other stakeholders. Priority initiatives are adopted through Board oversight and governance for implementation through an annual budget cycle. Development and implementation of our plan is in collaboration with our members that form the Council.

Our Purpose

Who we are ...

The Australian Council of Deans of Health Sciences (ACDHS) brings together and represents members from Australia's university faculties engaged in higher education and research for allied health professionals.

What we do ...

ACDHS seeks to lead at the nexus of higher education and sectors including health, disability, ageing and education and to navigate complex contextual settings. Providing a forum for allied health member representation with the aims of developing an allied health workforce that is responsive to evolving system demands. Through engagement, education and research, members focus on improving the impact of allied health practice and the sustainability of the health systems they will work in.

Our Mission

The mission of ACDHS is to lead the development of the national allied health workforce, identifying and advocating on national issues in allied health professions education, training, and research. We aim to strengthen the education and training of allied health practitioners, promote research in allied health, and to meet the health needs of our communities.

We define our Objectives, and develop our Strategies as follows.

Objectives

Our collective efforts pursue the following objectives:

- 1) Achieve national advocacy outcomes for allied health education, practice and research.
- 2) Support the professional development of the academic allied health workforce.
- 3) Engage and partner with allied health stakeholders to improve clinical care models.
- 4) Develop member services that enable allied health academic leadership.

Strategies

- a) Embed First Nations perspectives and incorporate a culturally safe approach of supporting First Nations people, for students in allied health and in workforce capacity development.”
- b) Undertake activities to cultivate the growth and quality of WIL placements in allied health.
- c) Identify and undertake research projects, developing tools, publishing position papers, initiatives and other means of addressing allied health workforce issues.
- d) Undertake steps to drive allied health research and its impact. Facilitate sharing, dissemination, and access to relevant research and promote quality research practices.
- e) Establishing support and professional development assistance for allied health academic staff, allied health professional staff and communities of professional practice.
- f) Connect and cultivate international connections in allied health to pursue excellence in allied health research and teaching.
- g) Engage directly with regulators/authorities and other stakeholders on accreditation issues to enhance processes and outcomes nationally.
- h) Establishing improved member services including member and stakeholder communications, dialogue and feedback, and our authoritative voice on issues of strategic importance and as the single source of truth.
- i) Identify and support Subject Matter Experts among ACDHS members to assist and lead on strategic allied health issues.

