

Australian Institute for Infectious Disease calls for strengthened global pandemic rules

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Ambitious and meaningful change is urgently needed before the next pandemic strikes

The Australian Institute for Infectious Disease (AIID) has called for improved international rules for surveillance, early detection and responses to new and emerging diseases in order to avoid a repeat of the inequitable and disjointed outcomes seen during the emergency phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The AIID has provided an expert submission as part of a comprehensive consultation process led by the Federal Government to guide its contribution to reforming the International Health Regulations (IHR) and the formulation of a new international pandemic accord.

The submission supports Australia's active participation in the ongoing negotiations coordinated by the World Health Organization (WHO) and encourages Australia to continue its leadership role supporting countries in preventing and responding to health emergencies, particularly within the Asia-Pacific region.

Within the comprehensive submission, the AIID supports increased sharing of pathogen samples, genomic sequences and data, emphasising the importance of equitable access to the benefits arising from their utilisation such as vaccines and treatments; and proposes maintaining regional stockpiles of pandemic countermeasures such as vaccines and protective equipment and creating new provisions which tie access to early disease reporting.