

Australia to establish independent Centre for Disease Control

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To protect against health threats from infectious diseases to environmental and climate-related risks



The government has passed legislation to deliver on its commitment to establish an independent Australian Centre for Disease Control (CDC). The legislation has been shaped to strengthen Australia's public health capability, improve pandemic preparedness, and safeguard the health and wellbeing of all Australians.

The CDC will bring together evidence from across Australia to protect against health threats – from infectious diseases to environmental and climate-related risks – and provide the public and governments with transparent, trusted, evidence-based advice.

The legislation gives the Director-General of the Australian CDC statutory independence to develop and provide public health advice based on the best available evidence.

Importantly, it also mandates the publication of the Australian CDC's advice, ensuring full transparency and accountability in how public health decisions are informed and communicated.

Previously, Australia was the only Organisation for Economic Cooperation (OECD) country without a CDC equivalent. The former government had not led a national pandemic drill for 12 years and were woefully under prepared for the COVID pandemic.

Preparations are now underway to transition the work of the interim CDC to the statutory agency, including the recruitment of an inaugural Director-General and establishment of foundational governance arrangements.