





Contents

At a glance	04
Overview	10
Healthdirect Australia services	. 11
Enhanced capabilities	32
Governance	34
Board committees	35
Risk management	36
Clinical governance	37

Our vision

To be a key part of a quality Australian health system by helping consumers manage their own health through leveraging technology to enable timely access to health and related services.

At a glance



4.84 million

4,838,765 calls have been handled by healthdirect nurses since the service's inception

☆ First trimester

was the most popular page on the Pregnancy, Birth and Baby website

The after hours GP helpline reached the 500,000th call mark in April 2014

The National Health Services Directory widget is now used on over 50 **Australian websites**



calls have been answered by the My Aged Care helpline since its inception in July 2013



Diabetes was the most viewed topic on the healthdirect website





1.3 million

visits were made to the healthdirect website this year



439,331

visits were made to the Pregnancy, Birth and Baby website



was the most viewed topic on the mindhealthconnect website



Aged care homes: costs explained was the most visited page on the My Aged Care website



Pregnancy, Birth and Baby handled **47,365** calls this year



An average of **130,000** transactions were made on the National Health Services Directory every day

Chair's statement

Welcome



At Healthdirect Australia, we recognise that in order to provide for the health needs of all Australians it is important to stay abreast of current trends, to understand how Australians want to access health and the technological changes driving their needs.

Advancements in technology mean that more and more people are relying on online health information, so this year we invested in our digital platforms to ensure that we achieve our aim of becoming the trusted source of aggregated clinically sound online health content.

This year we have also continued to open up access to medical and wellbeing services for people across Australia, helping them manage their own health and improve their health literacy. For example, our National Health Services Directory became truly national this year and now covers more than 300 health service categories.

The company has operated within budget this year, utilising funds held over from prior years. While this shows up as an operating deficit for the year, it simply reflects that we have used unexpended funds from previous years as new services are developed and rolled out over multi-year timeframes.



We will continue embracing innovation and dependability in equal measures, to ensure we deliver clinically sound 24 hour health information and advice through the most relevant channels.

On a personal note, I'd like to acknowledge the legacy and dedication of two Board members, farewelled this year. I'd like to thank Bob Sendt, former Chair, and Jim Birch, a key member of our Clinical Governance Advisory Group, for your service to Healthdirect Australia since its inception. Our achievements to date are, in no small part, due to your commitment and dedication to the organisation. Thanks must also be given to the CEO and his team for an outstanding effort in delivering new and innovative programs often under tight timetables, while achieving continuous improvement to our current offerings.

We have built an agile organisation, one that's nimble enough to be able to respond quickly to the evolving requirements of Australians, as well as the needs of our shareholders. We will continue in our approach, embracing innovation and dependability in equal measures, to ensure that we deliver clinically sound, 24-hour healthcare information and advice through the most relevant channels.

Patricia McKenzie, Chair

Patricia McKenjie

CEO's introduction

Creating access through innovation



At Healthdirect Australia, our vision is to be a key part of a quality Australian health system and we do this by facilitating services that provide all Australians with access to the right health advice, when and where they need it.

This year we have built on past successes to continue to offer Australian-focused health services and resources. For me, the year's key highlights include the innovative model for procurement that we used for the new nurse triage contract which will produce significant efficiencies in the future. Our move to a multiplatform offering of health information and advice under the healthdirect brand is another key highlight, providing consumers with the choice of accessing trusted health information and advice online or over the phone.

We enhanced our existing services by establishing new information partnerships, and developing our content platforms to make it easier and faster to utilise our digital services. In addition we successfully launched the My Aged Care Gateway, which consists of a contact centre and website. In June, the My Aged Care website launched a fee estimator so that members of the public can now find and compare prices of aged care home facilities or home care packages in the one place.

The mindhealthconnect website has grown substantially and has increased its offering from three to over 80 areas of content, providing access to information and resources on a comprehensive range of mental health issues and wellbeing.



This year has been one of considerable innovation at Healthdirect Australia as we have introduced several new resources including Symptom Checker and video call technology.

This year has been one of considerable innovation at Healthdirect Australia as we have introduced several new resources including Symptom Checker, a guided self-triage tool which will help Australians to determine if and where they need to seek medical attention, and video call technology which could soon allow callers to the Pregnancy, Birth and Baby service to have a face to face interaction with a counsellor. We see enormous potential for the newly developed video capability across the health system.

I'd like to personally thank every member of our growing team for their dedication and commitment, and our Board of Directors for their continued leadership and support. I would also like to acknowledge and thank our service partners for taking the journey with us over this past year. We look forward to providing services that will continue to give Australians the help and advice they need, anytime, anywhere.

Colin Seery, CEO

Our Board



Image from left to right

(Top) Anthony Lawler, Karen Dado, Patricia McKenzie, former Board Director Jim Birch (Bottom) Julie Thompson, former Chair Bob Sendt, Susan Forrester



We have continued to open up access to medical and wellbeing services for people across Australia, helping them manage their own health and improve their health literacy.

Ms Patricia McKenzie, Chair

Associate Professor Anthony Lawler, Director

Ms Karen Dado,Director

Patricia is an experienced Chair and Director in the energy, government, health and not-for-profit sectors. She is currently a non-executive Director of APA Group, the largest energy infrastructure company in Australia, and she is a former CEO of Gas Market Company Limited.

Patricia was formerly a Director of Australian Energy Market Operator Limited, and Chair of Sunnyfield Limited, a large service provider supporting people with disabilities. Patricia is a previous Chair of Diabetes Australia.

Patricia is Chair of Healthdirect Australia's Board.

Anthony is a specialist Emergency Physician and Vice President of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine, and is a member of the Governing Council of the Tasmanian Health Organisation - South.

He is also Associate Professor in Health Services and Deputy Head of the School of Medicine at the University of Tasmania. He is a member of the Australian Medical Council's Special Education Accreditation Committee, and the Director of Acute Health Services Planning and Design in Tasmania.

Anthony is Chair of Healthdirect Australia's Clinical Governance Advisory Group. Karen is a Principal with AFG Venture Group, a corporate advisory and consulting firm based in Asia and Australia. She previously spent 15 years with PricewaterhouseCoopers in their Management Consulting, Risk Management and Transactions Services practices.

Karen has conducted numerous performance improvement and governance reviews in leading healthcare organisations, research institutes and life science companies.

Karen is Chair of Healthdirect Australia's Project Review and Work, Health and Safety Committee.

Ms Susan Forrester, Director

Dr Julie Thompson,Director

Susan has more than 20 years' commercial experience in law, governance and strategy, and is Chair of the Oncore Group and Propell National Valuers.

Susan has held executive management roles in corporate treasury and professional services firms, and is a non-executive Director on the Board of G8 Education Limited.

Susan is the leader of strategy practice of Board Matters, a specialist governance consultancy, with a focus on the health and government sectors.

Susan is Chair of Healthdirect Australia's Finance, Risk Management and Audit Committee.

Julie is a General Practitioner with 25 years' experience as a Director on a range of health-related boards at a local, regional, state and national level, including community health, hospital, aged care and GP divisions.

Julie has broad experience in health service reform, including mental health, chronic disease management and primary care. Julie is a member of the Strategic Advisory Group for Breast Cancer Network Australia.

Overview

Facilitating access to trusted information and advice on health and related issues

Healthdirect Australia provides all Australians with access to health information and advice. No matter where people live, or what time of the day or night it is, they can talk to a health professional, find trusted advice online about the appropriate care for their health issue and find the closest local services that are open when they need them.

Our services support many Australians who would otherwise need to travel great distances to their nearest health service or medical practitioner. This support also extends to those living in the suburbs who might be seeking information and reassurance about newborn parenting issues or care options for an aged parent.

The company

Healthdirect Australia was established, and is jointly funded, by the federal government and the governments of the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Northern Territory, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia. It is a public company limited by shares, and is responsible for delivering services by contracting with service providers and managing ongoing operations.

We do this through:

- improving access to health information, triage and advice for all Australians, when and where they need it
- implementing robust governance structures to deliver safe health services that are consistent with national standards
- developing and delivering services that operate efficiently and achieve economies of scale
- developing and managing health and related information websites on a range of subjects including mental health, pregnancy and aged care
- playing an important role in supporting the transition to ehealth records
- having the ability to establish emergency support helplines within hours (for national, state and territory emergencies).

We have made considerable gains this year in bringing most of our online services onto one content platform, creating cost efficiencies and increasing the speed and quality of our websites. We have made extensive improvements to our comprehensive National Health Services Directory (NHSD) and the data within the directory repository supports the integration of care as a key component for the implementation of the national ehealth strategy. We also took an innovative approach to our nurse triage guidelines, identifying logic-based solutions that will improve outcomes in the next financial year.



Healthdirect Australia services

24 hour access to trusted health information and advice



healthdirect

- > 1800 022 222
- > www.healthdirect.gov.au

Access to a GP at night, on weekends and on public holidays



after hours GP helpline

> 1800 022 222

Access to counselling and information for pregnant women and new parents



Pregnancy, Birth and Baby

- > 1800 882 436
- > www.pregnancybirthbaby.org.au

Access to support relating to mental health and wellbeing



mindhealthconnect

> www.mindhealthconnect.org.au

Access to aged care information and support to navigate the aged care system





My Aged Care

- > 1800 200 422
- > www.myagedcare.gov.au

Access to free and confidential advice and coaching for a healthier lifestyle



Get Healthy

> 1300 806 258

Access to free, reliable and consistent information about health services



National Health Services Directory

> www.nhsd.com.au

Annual Report 2013 - 2014





healthdirect

The healthdirect helpline and website are our core services, giving Australians access to the health information they need, when they need it most, online or by telephone.

The healthdirect helpline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Callers can quickly speak with a registered nurse who can provide advice on how to manage their condition at home, or until they see their GP, or direct the caller to the most appropriate local health service. If the call is an emergency, the caller is transferred to Triple Zero (000).

Known as healthinsite until February 2014, the healthdirect website complements the call centre service by providing a reference point for consumers. The website is a trusted source of aggregated, clinically sound, quality health information covering hundreds of conditions and symptoms, and providing advice on staying healthy at every stage of life. A valuable library of dementia content was added this year.

All information on the website goes through a quality assurance review process and comes from a range of trusted health partners including major health organisations.

Top 5 clinical issues

- healthdirect helpline

	Clinical issue
1	Medication (adult)
2	Seen a health professional
3	Vomiting (child)
4	Abdominal pain/discomfort
5	Chest pain/discomfort

Top 5 web pages visited

- healthdirect.gov.au

	Web page title
1	Types of diabetes
2	Is your blood pressure healthy?
3	Chlamydia
4	Menopause: the facts
5	Diabetes

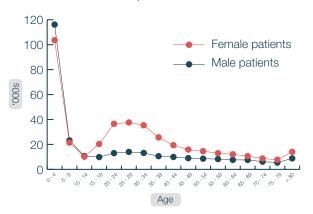
Advice given

- healthdirect helpline

Recommendation/advice	%
See a doctor (ranges from immediately to within 72 hours)	30.2%
Speak to telephone GP (after hours GP helpline)	21.1%
Home/self care	18.5%
Emergency department immediately	15.2%
Activate Triple Zero (000)	6.8%
Other	8.3%

Patient age and gender

- healthdirect helpline





Knowing that the information on the healthdirect website has been filtered and verified means you can really trust it.

Re-tender enhances value and performance

As a company, Healthdirect Australia seeks continual innovation and we are always monitoring clinical guidelines and working with our vendors to apply the latest thinking to our services.

This commitment was at the heart of the highly innovative approach to the nurse triage call centre re-tender for the healthdirect helpline this financial year.

healthdirect caller

Sheree Cardoza





The next day I was telling everyone about this service. I even posted a message on Facebook saying what a lucky country we live in, being able to ring a hotline at 2am and get such a professional and caring response.

It's a scene familiar to many parents with toddlers. Exhausted at two in the morning, you're pacing the house with a feverish child for the second night running, constantly checking their temperature and wondering whether to get everyone dressed and head to the emergency department.

Sheree Cardoza was about to drive the 12km to her nearest emergency department with her 14-month old daughter Eloise, when she thought of phoning the healthdirect helpline first.

"I had the magnet with the phone number on the fridge, and I remembered my sister and a few girlfriends had used it before. I decided to get some advice first, to see if we really should go to emergency or not," she recalls. "I didn't want to get there only to discover the Panadol had finally kicked in, and be sent home after a long wait."

Sheree says the nurse who took her call was incredibly thorough, which was reassuring from the outset. She still remembers her name — Sandy.

"She went through a heap of different tests, everything a nurse would have done at the hospital. She was so calm and collected on the phone, and I felt she really cared. By the end of the call, which took about 25 minutes, she had checked with another nurse, because Eloise had a rash earlier that week as well. We took her temperature a few times while on the phone, and Sandy didn't get off the call until she knew Eloise's temperature had gone down. That was really comforting."

By the end of the call, Eloise had fallen asleep on her dad's chest — and that's where she stayed for the rest of the night. Sheree was advised to take her to the GP the next day rather than rush to the hospital

"She had a viral infection. It was so good not having to leave the house in the middle of the night for that — there is nothing worse than taking a 14-month old to the hospital at that hour of the morning."

Sheree works for a health department that also runs a helpline for dental health, so she recognised the quality of care and service she received that night. "Sandy was so thorough – I really felt she left no stone unturned, she asked all the important questions."

"The next day I was telling everyone about this service. I even posted a message on Facebook saying what a lucky country we live in, being able to ring a helpline at 2am and get such a professional and caring response."



healthdirect Symptom Checker

Groundbreaking functionality was added to the healthdirect website in July 2014, with the launch of the Symptom Checker — a guided self-triage tool for those who prefer to start their health enquiry online.

We are currently rolling out various health symptoms on the Symptom Checker, starting with the most commonly experienced.

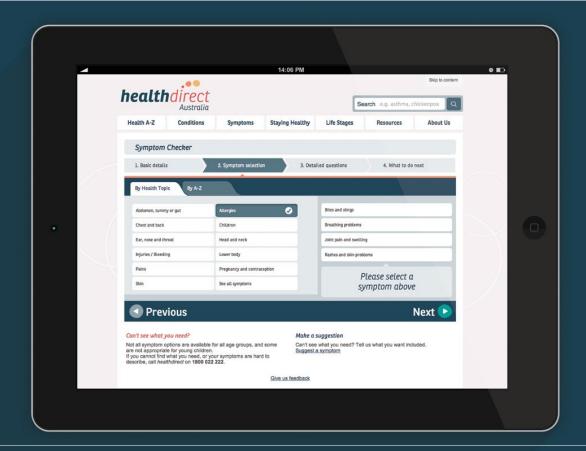
The Symptom Checker is the culmination of years of clinical and operational work, and was developed in partnership with the United Kingdom's NHS Direct. Our Clinical Governance team, working together with a national panel of medical and allied health experts, has localised the advice offered by the Symptom Checker to ensure it aligns with Department of Health and National Health and Medical Research Council guidelines. The logic is carefully tailored to the Australian context to reflect how doctors practice in Australia.

Users are taken through a short self-guided triage process, answering clear and simple questions. They then receive advice on the most appropriate action to take, whether it is to go to the emergency department or visit a GP, or manage their care at home. They will also be advised exactly how to describe their condition if they see a health professional.

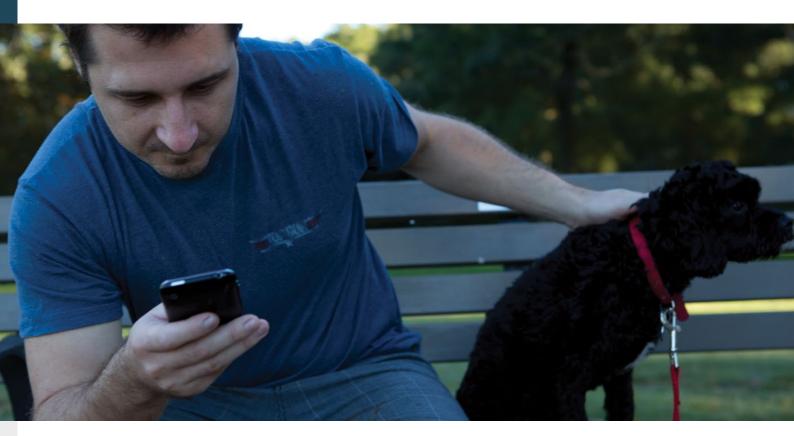


Over 80% of Australians* now go online to get information about their health or their symptoms, so Symptom Checker is a robust, clinically sound, evidence-based tool they can use to be more informed about what the problem might be.

*Market research conducted by Objective Digital in June 2013.



after hours GP helpline **health**direct



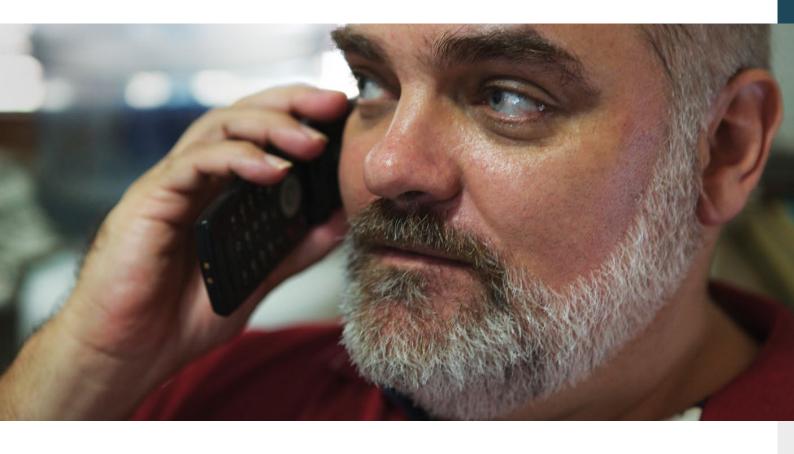
after hours GP helpline

The after hours GP helpline extends the clinical guidance offered by the healthdirect helpline, and supports existing face to face after hours medical services.

In the after hours period, the healthdirect nurse is able to transfer appropriate calls through to a telephone-based GP.

The GP will further assess the caller's condition, and if necessary refer them to the most appropriate after hours face to face service in their local area. Our GPs use the National Health Services Directory to identify local services that are open in the after hours period. If the call is an emergency, the caller is transferred to Triple Zero (000).

All healthdirect nurses and GPs hold unconditional registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Registration Authority. GPs also have unconditional registration with the Medical Board of Australia.

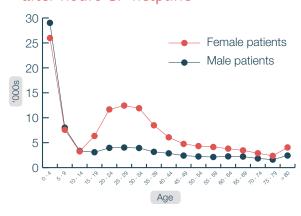


Top 5 clinical issues

- after hours GP helpline

	Clinical issue
1	Medication (adult)
2	Diarrhoea/change in bowel habits
3	Cough (child)
4	Rash/hives/eruptions
5	Nausea/vomiting

Patient age and gender – after hours GP helpline



Advice given

- after hours GP helpline

Recommendation/advice	%
Self care advice and see a doctor/health provider within normal operating hours	49.7%
See a GP immediately	13.8%
See a GP immediately (no GP available – go to emergency department)	10.5%
Self care at home	10.2%
Emergency department immediately	6.3%
Other	9.7%

Annual Report 2013 - 2014 17

after hours GP helpline healthdirect



General Pracititioner

Dr Amandeep Hansra

Dr Hansra has worked with the after hours GP helpline since it first began more than three years ago. She balances helpline shifts from her home in Newcastle with GP support at a local clinic and hospital.

She says one call this year was particularly memorable. "A young man called us from a very remote part of Western Australia. He was working on a mining site, it was 2am and he was alone. He was driving hundreds of kilometres back to his home but he was increasingly concerned about his leg, which was red and swollen. He pulled over and called us."

After a thorough phone assessment, Dr Hansra believed the condition could be cellulitis, and that his leg was possibly septic. It was certainly not safe for him to drive. So she used the National Health Service Directory to locate his nearest nursing post. The on-call nurse was able to locate a police officer nearby, who picked the young man up and took him to that nursing post, where he was transferred safely to the nearest hospital.

"It blew me away that we were quite quickly able to get this positive outcome by coordinating resources on the ground, and that I could manage such a sequence of events remotely from my home on the other side of the country. It also shows how a community can pull together to help."

Every call is unique, and Dr Hansra could spend the next call helping a first-time mum with a feverish newborn, or an elderly person living alone with underlying anxiety issues.

"Being a mother myself, I can appreciate how reassuring it is to be able to call a doctor at 2am – it's incredibly satisfying to give them peace of mind, and know they haven't had to make an unnecessary early morning trip to emergency."

"We get so many positive comments about the service, people really appreciate the fact you're there to help them at any hour of the night."

She says the technology behind the service is amazing, and continues to push new boundaries to make every call more effective.

"Our service directories are updated in real time – if a nursing post is unattended for a few hours, we get an alert. With the conference calling facilities, I can have a Triple Zero (000) operator, interpreter and

patient all on the same call with me, all in different states. And as soon as I pick up the phone, before I even say hello, I have a file open on my desktop saying who the caller is and what's wrong."

Dr Hansra says the after hours GP helpline is also reassuring for doctors on the ground.

"If I have a clinic patient I'm worried about, I give them the healthdirect phone number and ask them to call it if their condition changes overnight, or if they have any concerns. I know they'll get sound clinical advice. This gives me peace of mind, as much as it does them."

She says that anecdotally she hears that local after hours clinics see more appropriate referrals thanks to the service.

"It's been an incredible journey, and I feel privileged to be part of it."



We get so many positive comments about the service, people really appreciate the fact you're there to help them at any hour of the night.





Pregnancy, Birth and Baby

If Australians need advice about pregnancy, childbirth or parenting in their baby's first year, the Pregnancy, Birth and Baby service is available 24 hours a day. This telephone helpline and online information service provides reassurance and trusted advice on any of the emotional or physical concerns that may emerge for new or expectant parents.

This year, the number of calls to the helpline increased by 22%; however, the biggest changes have been to the website, which launched in February 2013.

Content has been enhanced with extensive, localised information on more topics, effectively more than doubling the number of pages, and the navigation and usability has also been improved so specialist information is easier to find.

One of our objectives this year was to increase traffic to the website, and we have hit our visitor targets every month thanks to the extensive work undertaken on search, content, and navigation design.

The website also complements the helpline service, as callers can be referred to specific information.

Top 10 issues

- Pregnancy, Birth and Baby helpline

	Issue
1	Constipation
2	Maternal and child health
3	Crying baby
4	Child health: nappies
5	Bottle feeding: formula
6	Drug and alcohol services
7	Breastfeeding
8	Australian Breastfeeding Association
9	Introducing solid food
10	General counselling

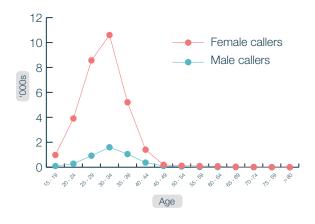
Top 5 web pages visited

- pregnancybirthbaby.org.au

	Web page title
1	First trimester (first three months)
2	Foods to avoid
3	Early signs of pregnancy
4	Second trimester (second three months)
5	Third trimester (last three months)
	,

Caller age and gender

- Pregnancy, Birth and Baby helpline



How do we make sure our content is clinically accurate?

Our website is intended to be a starting point in the journey for online health information, so it combines internal content publishing with external links to specialist partner websites. We have over 200 pages of internal content to give some initial context, and that can link to as many as 2,000 items of partner information. All content is reviewed by our Clinical Governance team.

Our Australian content partners include government websites and specialist organisations such as SIDS and Kids and the Australian Breastfeeding Association.

This year, we brought in highly specialised partners such as the Miracle Babies Foundation and RISA (Reflux Infants Support Association), providing direct access to valuable information for parents dealing with issues including premature birth and reflux. We are also able to support these small groups with our technical expertise and resources, helping them ensure their websites are searchable and accessible.





Pregnancy, Birth and Baby caller

Evie Stephens

Evie Stephens had always thought she'd rely on her own mother for advice when her first baby, Austin, arrived. But she became a little sceptical of what she calls 'the old remedies' after Austin experienced some complications immediately after birth.

"He had quite a few gut issues in the first few weeks. Of course I took on board mum's advice, but she never had a reflux baby and she also said 'it's been so long since I had a baby'," says Evie. So when Austin had quite bad constipation at six weeks, Evie decided to call the Pregnancy, Birth and Baby helpline for advice.

"A few people suggested I mix some prune juice with his milk," she recalls. "But given the problems he'd been having, I wanted to make sure that was the right thing to do. I had the magnet with the helpline number on my fridge, so I called that."

Evie says she got through to a customer service officer very quickly.

"It was so reassuring to speak with someone who really understood everything. She explained it all really clearly – why prune juice was not recommended as it's too much for their system at that age. She recommended massage and leg movements, and we also discussed whether the type of formula I was using could be the cause."

Evie immediately went out and bought new formula, and tried massaging Austin.

"Within a few hours he was fine, it all passed through. It was such a relief – and now I feel I know exactly what to do if it happens again."

Evie says she hasn't needed to use the helpline since, but she wouldn't hesitate to recommend it to others.

"You can talk with people who are professionals and they can answer every question in such detail. It's such a relief to know it's there."

Video adds a new dimension to health advice and information provision

Callers to the Pregnancy, Birth and Baby helpline may soon have the option of seeing a counsellor – on their smartphone, mobile device, or computer.

Video calling forms part of our commitment to improve access to services by providing a choice of channels that are consistent with modern communication methods and preferences.

Video consultation will transform service delivery through improved human communication — for example the potential for visual cues to enhance understanding between caller and counsellor, which in turn could help to build trust and confidence.

From people who prefer to access services online, to those that prefer face to face communication, and those managing disabilities or who are geographically isolated, access to a counsellor via video is expected to attract new users to the possibility of using our services.

Healthdirect Australia's Video Consulting Capability (VCC) provides consumers with a video call option that:

- supports their immediate needs
- matches the cost and accessibility benchmarks set by the telephone
- meets community privacy, security and sensitivity expectations
- harnesses new and efficient in-browser video technologies.

We anticipate that video consultation will become a significant part of consumer health expectations within the next two years, driven by the increasing availability of communications technology and the widespread opportunities it promises.





A poster from the mindhealthconnect marketing campaign

mindhealthconnect

mindheathconnect is a trusted online resource for those concerned with their own (or someone else's) mental health, and has a specific focus on depression, anxiety and stress.

Online support can be a highly effective (and costeffective) way to manage mental health issues — with early intervention proven as a way to reduce chronic problems. Mental health service providers are also now including trusted ehealth services (electronic management of health information to deliver safe and efficient quality care) as part of their resource toolkits.

Phase 2 of mindheathconnect was launched in December 2013, with extensive new functionality, including a multi-device fully-responsive design, improved user experience, and much more content — evolving the site from three mental health topics to more than 80, with a large focus on wellbeing and mental health literacy.

We currently have over 1,000 partner resources on the website, and with the new web platform in place the amount of content can scale further.

In April 2014, we launched a marketing campaign for mindhealthconnect, aimed at both men and women aged 35 to 55 years. This campaign used nine early warning signs of mental health conditions and urged friends and family members to visit the mindhealthconnect website for advice on what to do if they think someone they know might be developing a mental health issue. The mindhealthconnect website received a 91.28% increase in organic visits over the period of the campaign (April to July 2014). There was also a 62.78% increase in visitors accessing the website from mobile phones and tablet devices and a 143.02% increase in monthly returning visits.

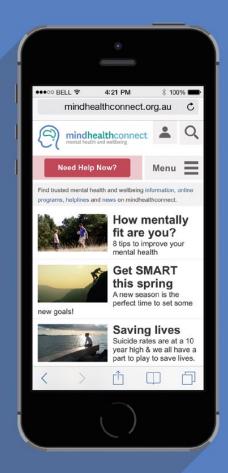
Top 5 web pages visited

- mindhealthconnect.org.au

	Web page title
1	Anxiety: types, symptoms, causes and treatments
2	Spot the difference
3	Anxiety
4	Depression
5	Depression: types, symptoms, causes and treatments



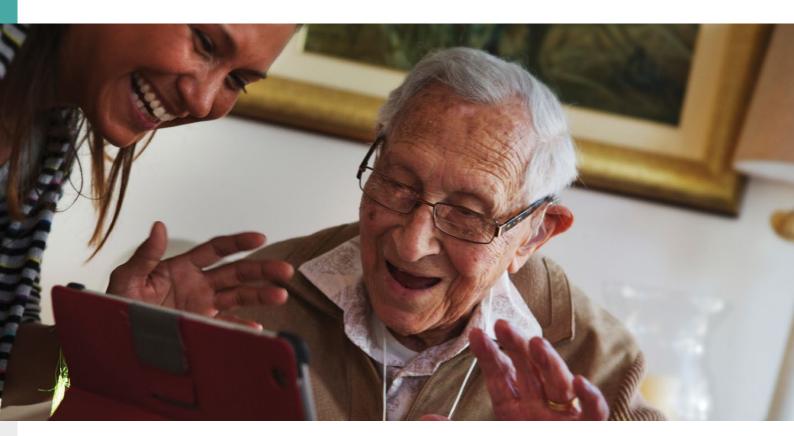
This year, we've broadened the mental health and wellbeing content substantially, with more partner content and more local content. It's now mobile-friendly so we can reach more people — especially those in remote or rural areas, or those without desktop access to the internet.











My Aged Care

The My Aged Care Gateway was launched on 1 July 2013 and is a key component of the federal government's aged care reform program. It helps people to navigate and understand the increasingly complex choices in Australia's aged care system.

In May, all accommodation pricing for nursing homes across Australia was published on the My Aged Care website — the first time this information has been made so comprehensively available.

In June, a new fee estimator tool was launched on the My Aged Care website by the Assistant Minister for Social Services, Senator Mitch Fifield. This estimator allows members of the public to calculate the approximate fee when looking for an aged care home or home care package.

The most popular pages on the website are the service finders with map functionality, which support a search by postcode or suburb of all available aged care facilities, including residential aged care and community care.

Call handlers at the My Aged Care contact centre also use the website to check the most current information, and will either print and mail it to callers who prefer a hard copy of these details, or refer callers to the relevant web pages if they have internet access.

The volume of calls to the contact centre has continually increased throughout the year, and the most recent nationwide print, radio and digital advertising program, which commenced in June 2014, is expected to have a significant impact on demand.

The My Aged Care contact centre is also compliant with the Australian Government Information Security Manual (ISM), so callers can be confident their personal information and call records are secure.



My Aged Care is a one-stop shop for information and guidance — people can phone a 1800 number and speak with a real person who can answer their questions and empathise with their concerns, or they can visit the website and be confident the information is up-to-date, validated and accurate.

Top 5 web pages visited

- myagedcare.gov.au

	Web page title
1	Aged care homes: costs explained
2	ACAT (Aged Care Assessment Team) assessments
3	Seniors and aged care Australia websites have been replaced
4	Home Care Packages
5	Help at home: costs explained

My Aged Care at a glance

Helpline callers	147,454
Web page views	4,213,760
Web page visits	815,816
Average handling time	576 seconds

Looking ahead

From early 2015, the scope of the My Aged Care Gateway will expand beyond information provision. Work is already underway to enable client registration and screening through the helpline and website, as the first stage of the assessment process. This will support the Aged Care Assessment Teams (ACAT) as well as the service providers, by providing standardised screening tools through the National Assessment Framework, and electronic data records to streamline the way information is collected and handled.

My Aged Care caller

Katrina Ryder





My Aged Care is a great place to start, because you need that advice on what to do first – and you really can't do anything else until you get the assessment.

When Katrina Ryder saw her father recently, she realised just how much he had deteriorated in the last few years. He suffers from chronic emphysema and can no longer drive as he has cataracts, but his mind is still sharp. Unfortunately, the 80-year-old also lives 1,900km from her Melbourne home, in Coolum, so it's difficult for her to keep an eye on him.

After her visit, he wrote to Katrina and her two brothers, both in Sydney, to say he was ready to move closer to her. Katrina was not going to be able to accommodate his needs at her home so she wanted to know what options were available — whether he would need to move into a care home or whether he could move closer to her and receive support at home.

A friend suggested she call the My Aged Care helpline for advice on how to get her father assessed, to see what care he needs, and whether there was an option for him to move closer to her.

"I spoke with a lovely chap who was so helpful. He gave me all the phone numbers I needed, for Melbourne and Coolum, and I went straight to the information I needed," she says.

Her father is now on a waiting list for assessment, and she is discussing interim options with her brother – which could involve her father moving in with her brother in Sydney, for the short term.

"I now have a reference number, a file with My Aged Care, so I know I can call them up and they'll have my details if his situation changes," she says. "We think it might be a good idea for one of us to be able to see how he is over a prolonged period of time. My biggest fear is that he'll have a fall and end up in hospital."

She says the helpline was very reassuring and saved her some time. "I could talk it all through with someone who understood, rather than having to find the information myself."

"That first call gave us everything we needed to get the ball rolling. Now we just have to find the right home for him, in the right location. I can't help him when he's so far away, especially with a young daughter at school and my job, but if he's nearby I can pop in to see him, or have him over to dinner."

She says she'd definitely recommend the service. "This is my first experience of having to manage this for one of our parents. My Aged Care is a great place to start, because you need that advice on what to do first — and you really can't do anything else until you get the assessment."





Get Healthy

Healthdirect Australia completed the procurement and commenced contract managing the Get Healthy program from 1 January 2014. The program provides motivational coaching via our outbound call centre service. Get Healthy operates in Queensland, NSW, ACT and South Australia.

Participants may be referred by their GP, or they may register directly after seeing an advertisement. They receive ten, free of charge, coaching sessions over the phone from dietitians and exercise physiologists, helping them set healthy goals, make better food choices and exercise more.

In the first six months of Healthdirect Australia handling the Get Healthy contract, close to 3,300 people participated in telephone coaching sessions and over 300 people graduated from the program.



We've found many of our participants are rural, and older people, and they all have different goals. They might want to lose weight, or they might want to train for a half marathon. Sometimes you do need someone to say to you, 'How are you going to achieve this?' and help you make a plan.



National Health Services Directory

The National Health Services Directory (NHSD) is a national directory of health and human services information. The data within the directory repository is used to support a growing number of initiatives in the areas of health, human services and ehealth, for consumers and providers.

The directory includes GPs, hospitals, emergency departments, pharmacies, allied health providers and specialist services, providing fast access to their service details, including location and opening hours.

The breadth and depth of service information will continue to increase including such things as languages spoken by health professionals.

It is available online and as a smartphone app, and this year a widget (a small software application that can be installed and executed within a web page) was developed that makes it simple and affordable for our partner organisations to embed the directory into their own websites.

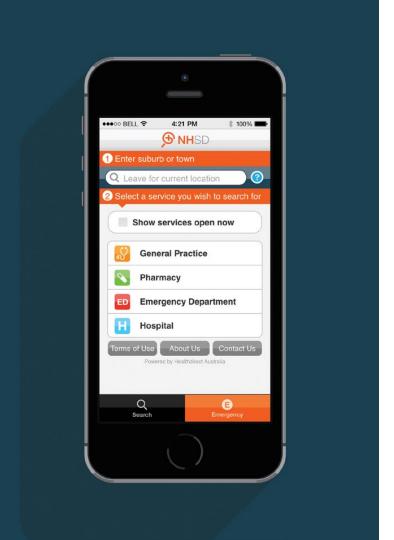
The NHSD supports secure messaging and is playing an important role in the transition to ehealth. This enables the transfer of referrals and discharge summaries across jurisdictional borders, another example of the value of a national directory capability.

Content in the NHSD

The usage of the directory has increased 250% over the past year. The amount of content on the directory has also more than doubled. We now have 116,000 services and over 300,000 records, with more than 300 categories of services.

One data repository powers it all

The new NHSD widget can now be easily configured to meet the needs of our partners, and over the last 12 months more than 50 partners have started using it — including the Department of Veterans' Affairs, NSW Health, Medicare Locals, and Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP). For example, RACGP can take one part of the directory and create a 'Find a GP' search on their website, knowing we'll ensure the data is up-to-date. The Pharmacy Guild has added 'Find a Pharmacy' functionality to its website, using the directory.



CEO of Nepean-Blue Mountains Medicare Local

Sheila Holcombe





The feedback about it has been excellent so far, and we are hoping to further expand the information that can be found through the directory, such as including the languages health practitioners speak.

Nepean-Blue Mountains
Medicare Local works
with consumers and local
healthcare providers to
address the health service
needs of the Blue Mountains,
Hawkesbury, Lithgow and
Penrith communities, and to
keep them informed about
local health services. This
year, they started using
the NHSD widget on their
website.

"Our primary health care support team has always worked extensively with general practice and allied health professionals to make sure we have the most up-to-date health service information for our region," says Sheila Holcombe, CEO of Nepean-Blue Mountains Medicare Local.

By working with the NHSD team, they made this information available online via the widget – a valuable resource for both consumers and healthcare providers, as GPs and allied health professionals use the directory for referrals.

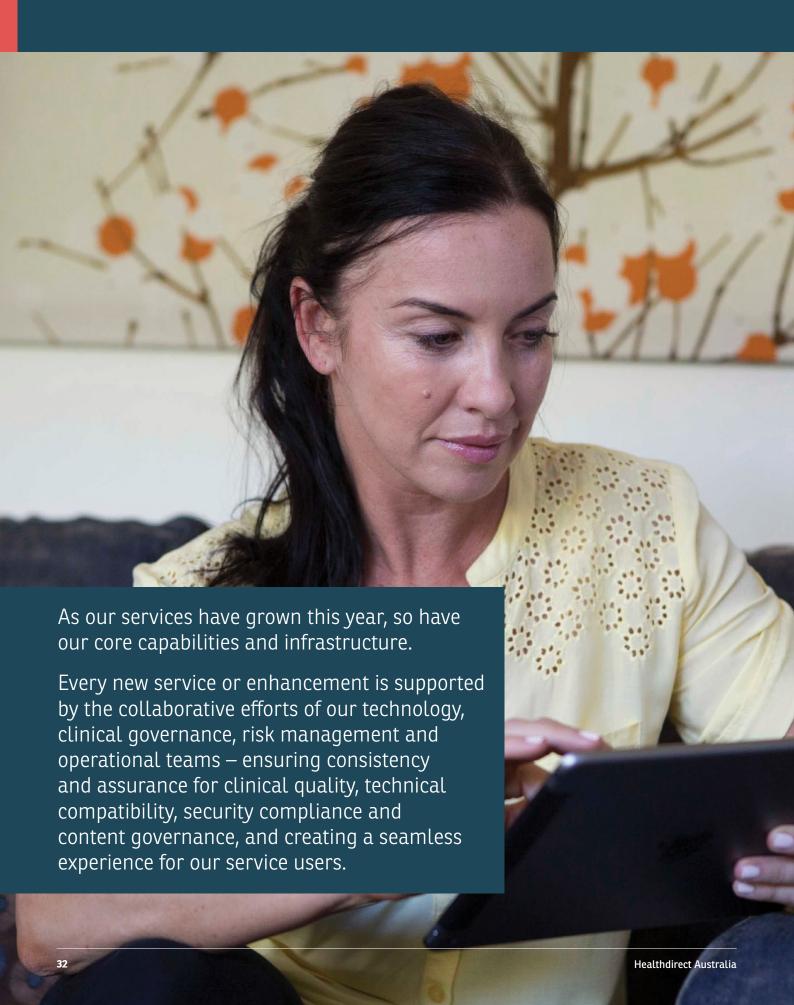
"The general public and healthcare professionals have quite different search needs, yet we are able to cater for this diversity with the functionality of the new NHSD widget," explains Sheila.

Sheila and her team are pleased with how well the new NHSD widget has added functionality to their website. "The feedback about it has been excellent so far, and we are hoping to further expand the information that can be found through the directory, such as including the languages health practitioners speak."

Sheila says she would recommend the widget to others. "In today's world, the ability to find information very quickly is paramount. This widget allows us to make it easier for the local community to find and access appropriate health care in the local area."

The depth of health service information in the NHSD will expand as additional NSW health service records continue to be added in future months.

Enhanced capabilities



Digital services

A new platform for growth

As Healthdirect Australia's services continue to expand and grow, managing content to ensure it is consistent, clinically correct, and reliable to use, is an ongoing priority. Developing an in-house platform that can scale with the organisation, and provide optimal user experience, has been a key focus for the Digital team this financial year.

Most websites within the Healthdirect Australia portfolio are now on this platform. This six-month project involved significant software changes and improvements to create a better website content management system within the existing Health Portal Platform (HPP).

We are also able to share this advanced digital capability with our partner organisations, helping them benefit from the scale of our web publishing technology. The new platform has pushed the boundaries on traditional content management systems and makes new web service development far more cost-effective.

Interoperability of services

New widgets, such as those developed using the National Health Services Directory, make it simpler to use our content on any website. Our integration capabilities make it easy to provide a fully functional directory that can be customised to meet the needs of individual websites.

Improved interoperability between digital assets will also become crucial as we move into ehealth messaging and support a potential My Health Record initiative.

Data security

Our online services capture and store an increasing amount of sensitive data. As part of our requirements for government, we have spent this year preparing for Australian Government Information Security Manual (ISM) compliance. This has involved significant upgrades to all security infrastructure, and we now have weekly vulnerability reports, security monitoring for threat management, and centralised detection and prevention services.

Marketing

We manage marketing campaigns aimed at building awareness and utilisation of specific services, especially amongst under-represented groups. With each marketing campaign, we learn more about our consumers and we get a better understanding of which media works for our different audiences. This year our key activities included marketing campaigns for:

- healthdirect helpline and health information website
- · Pregnancy, Birth and Baby
- mindhealthconnect.

External Governance

At Healthdirect Australia we have a responsibility to our shareholders, including the state, territory and national governments, to deliver high quality, safe and cost-effective services.

Healthdirect Australia is directly accountable to the federal, state and territory governments as both shareholders and customers. The Standing Committee and the Joint Customer Advice Committee support this role.

The Standing Committee represents the interests of the federal, state and territory governments as shareholders.

This committee is responsible for:

- Appointing directors to the Board
- Liaising with the Board and CEO to advance national health policy and priority issues
- Approving the company's Strategic Plan
- Providing advice on the annual Corporate Plan
- Assessing business cases to improve existing services and develop new jointly funded services
- Reviewing the company's performance.

The Joint Customer Advisory Committee (JCAC) represents the interests of the federal, state and territory governments as customers.

JCAC is responsible for reviewing and monitoring the service and performance levels of operations, particularly in regards to:

- Increasing awareness and utilisation of Healthdirect Australia's services among defined under-represented groups in Australia
- · Reporting on service quality
- Overseeing a quality and accurate National Health Service Directory
- Ensuring that the health information we offer is of a high quality.

JCAC meetings bring our customer representatives and the Healthdirect Australia management together.

Internal Governance

Strategic level Board of Directors Clinical Governance Advisory Group Finance, Risk Management and Audit Committee Project Review and WHS Advisory Committee Chief Executive Officer Operational level Healthdirect Australia management

Finance, Risk Management and Audit Committee

The Finance, Risk Management and Audit Committee (FRMAC) supports the Board in ensuring the accuracy of the company's financial reporting, risk management processes and internal controls. It oversees the development and monitoring of Healthdirect Australia's risk and compliance frameworks and coordinates the company's internal and external audit processes.

Key activities in this financial year have included:

- continued consolidation of the risk management framework with standardised risk tools and techniques rolled out across all new projects and initiatives.
- using Information Security Management systems to ensure our IT practices are consistently in line with Australian Government IT standards.
- internal auditing.

In addition to Board members, FRMAC includes one external member:

Wendy Gerahty, an experienced senior financial services executive with over 20 years leadership and boardroom experience.

This year an initiative to reduce overheads and improve internal workflows saw key finance functions operate in-house for the first time. The implementation of our new internal finance framework and systems means that project managers and cost centre owners will have increased visibility and faster access to financial information. In addition, the change to a cheaper outsourced payroll provider, along with the implementation of an Employee Self-Service HR system, delivered tangible benefits.

Clinical Governance Advisory Group

The Clinical Governance Advisory Group (CGAG) supports the Board in ensuring our telephone and online services are nationally consistent, high quality, equitable and sustainable. CGAG advises the Board on clinical governance and clinical risk management, and manages the clinical governance framework to ensure quality control.

In addition to Board members, external members of CGAG include:

Dr Jenny Bartlett, an experienced clinician now consulting in clinical governance, healthcare improvement and medical management

Dr Leonie Katekar, Chief Rural Medical Practitioner, Remote Health Branch, Northern Territory

Dr Nick O'Connor, Clinical Director of North Shore Ryde Mental Health Service.

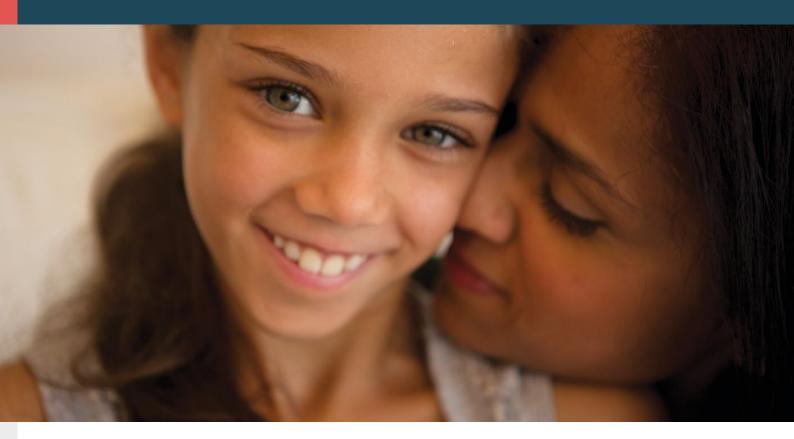
Project Review and Work Health and Safety Advisory Committee

The Project Review and Work Health and Safety Advisory Committee (PROWAC) has two key objectives:

- 1. Overseeing and monitoring progress of key projects within the company's project portfolio, and advising the Board on relevant matters
- 2. Delivering active leadership in work health and safety (WHS) matters, and monitoring the policies and practices of the company in respect to WHS compliance.

The committee advises the Board on project governance and portfolio risk, and seeks endorsement for significant projects.

Risk management



This year we have harmonised Healthdirect Australia's approach to risk management by implementing a consistent, company-wide approach across all functional areas. We now have a holistic view of risk that reduces duplication and builds useful intelligence back into the business.

We achieved this by defining the company's 'Risk Universe,' which outlines the key sources of risks and their potential impact. We then aggregated 126 different risk areas into seven key risks, providing a concise profile of the company's key risks which are easily understood and managed. The Board can now easily identify the relationship between risks, their underlying causes and mitigating controls. The approach also helps us to identify and remove duplicated controls and target internal audit activities towards the most critical control activities.

As our internal capabilities grow, this highly scalable approach will ensure we continues to deliver safe, effective and dependable services in a cost-effective manner.

Clinical governance

Healthdirect Australia's clinical governance framework provides assurance that our services are safe, effective and appropriate. This framework includes ensuring we provide best practice clinical advice, and applies to the services we deliver as well as those we procure.

Importantly, clinical governance provides accountability by setting out our governance and management principles. We encourage continuous improvement and share experiences with our services through Services Improvement and Development Committee (SIDC) meetings.

Clinical governance is involved at an early stage in the development of every service we provide. This year, the Clinical Governance team were deeply involved in ensuring the clinical integrity of the following projects:

- Development of the Symptom Checker for the healthdirect website.
- Tender process for the healthdirect helpline (nurse triage), including the evaluation and selection.

New guidelines for nurse triage

As a result of the healthdirect nurse triage tender, our clinical guidelines are an innovative approach to nurse triage. Through a rigorous assessment process, we selected a proven, evidence-based and logic-driven approach that enables better coordination of the triage process and appropriate movement between guidelines.

This means there are fewer guidelines in total, but with built-in logic that recalls previous caller answers it will be more intuitive for the nurse.

As the new guidelines that have been selected were originally developed for use in the United Kingdom, a panel of clinical experts reviewed the whole set to ensure they utilised the best 'Australian' evidence, and are appropriate to the Australian health setting.

Health Emergency Response Plan (HERP)

The Health Emergency Response Plan was developed a year ago and is currently going through a review process with our shareholders.

This will include a round of consultation with the jurisdictions to capture any outstanding requirements for the plan.

The internal processes regarding the HERP are also undergoing review and will be detailed in our updated plan.

Our telephone healthcare network



WA

- healthdirect
- after hours GP helpline
- Pregnancy, Birth and Baby
- Medicines line
- Non-occupational post exposure prophylaxis helpline
- Residential care line
- Ambulance secondary triage
- Country patient transport assistance
- Outpatients direct

NT

- healthdirect
- after hours GP helpline
- Pregnancy, Birth and Baby
- Medicines line

SA

- healthdirect
- after hours GP helpline
- Pregnancy, Birth and Baby
- Medicines line
- SA Parenting Helpline
- Accident and incident management system
- Non-occupational post exposure prophylaxis helpline
- Get Healthy

QLD

- after hours GP helpline
- Pregnancy, Birth and Baby
- Get Healthy

NSW

- healthdirect
- after hours GP helpline
- Pregnancy, Birth and Baby
- Ambulance secondary triage
- Medicines line
- Get Healthy

ACT

- healthdirect
- after hours GP helpline
- Pregnancy, Birth and Baby
- Medicines line
- Get Healthy

VIC

- after hours GP helpline
- Pregnancy, Birth and Baby

ΤΔΟ

- healthdirect
- Pregnancy, Birth and Baby
- Medicines line
- The Parent Line

Our Shareholders

Healthdirect Australia was established, and is jointly funded, by the federal government and the governments of the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Northern Territory, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia. It is a public company limited by shares, and is responsible for delivering services by contracting with service providers and managing ongoing operations.





Department of **Health**













Level 19 133 Castlereagh Street Sydney NSW 2000 **Phone:** (02) 9263 9000 **Email:** info@healthdirect.org.au

