



Australian Government

GENOMICS
AUSTRALIA.

GENOMICS AUSTRALIA SPOTLIGHT

Newsletter – First Edition



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A message from the Australian Health Genomics Commissioner -

Tiffany Boughtwood

Welcome to the first edition of the Genomics Australia newsletter – and thank you for becoming part of our networks. We are thrilled to share some of the great work we've undertaken since the establishment of Genomics Australia last July.

As Commissioner, I am committed to Genomics Australia's vision for a health system that routinely applies genomics to identify health risks, diagnose and treat disease, and support personalised care. Genomics Australia plays a national leadership role to support the health system to realise the benefits of genomics for all Australians.

A key focus of our early work is improving access to personalised cancer care by supporting its transition into sustainably funded routine health care. This will require a collaborative effort and Genomics Australia is committed to working with states and territories and across our networks on this priority.

We are also working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations to make sure our approaches are culturally safe, respectful and shaped by community needs. Ensuring all Australians, regardless of their background or where they live, can equitably access and benefit from health genomics is a foundational principle that guides all our work.

Working with states and territories is essential to strengthening health genomics nationally. By working with jurisdictions, clinicians, researchers, industry and community organisations, we aim to support approaches that are practical, evidence-based and responsive to real-world needs.

We are also building our international partnerships through Memorandums of Understanding with global counterparts. These partnerships support responsible sharing of knowledge and expertise, and ensure Australia remains connected to world-leading practice in health genomics.

Together, we are helping to build a future in which genomic medicine is not an aspiration, but an embedded and trusted component of Australia's health system — supporting earlier insights, more precise care, and equitable outcomes for every Australian. I look forward to working with you as we shape this next chapter for health genomics in Australia.

All my best,

Tiff

[Learn more about the Commissioner](#)

Genomics Australia Networks update

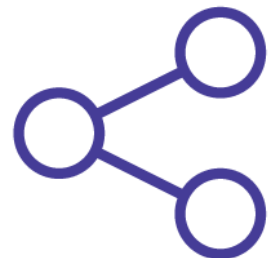
Genomics Australia's networks are designed to bring together people with shared interests in health genomics, creating a structured way to connect, collaborate and stay informed.

Through these networks, Genomics Australia will keep you updated about national developments, share key initiatives, highlight opportunities for involvement, and invite your feedback.

As a network member, you'll receive these newsletters along with invitations to attend webinars and other events. The networks also provide a direct channel for the Commissioner to share Genomics Australia's progress towards our vision.

Our networks include:

- Community
- Diagnostic and Clinical
- Industry
- Research



Anyone can join the networks, and you can join multiple networks or change networks at any time.

If you aren't already a member, you can sign up by following our webpage [here](#).

Coming Soon: First Genomics Australia Networks Webinar

Our first networks webinar will take place in April 2026, bringing together members across all networks.

The session will introduce the Australian Health Genomics Commissioner and outline Genomics Australia's vision and priorities.

Further details, including the full agenda and registration information, will be shared shortly. All network members will receive an email invitation once arrangements are finalised. Stay tuned for more information.

Establishment of the Genomics Australia Advisory Council



The Genomics Australia Advisory Council (Advisory Council) held its first meeting on Monday 8 December. The Advisory Council provides independent, expert advice to support the Australian Health Genomics Commissioner in guiding Genomics Australia's strategic direction and priorities.

Thirteen members have been appointed for a two-year term, bringing expertise and experience across clinical practice, research, industry, government, Indigenous genomics,

and consumer advocacy.

Focus of the first meeting

The first meeting of the Advisory Council focused on establishing appropriate committee governance arrangements and

providing contextual information to support future discussions. The Chair also led discussion vision setting for health genomics in Australia. Priority areas discussed included governance, community, services, workforce, data and sustainability.

The Terms of Reference and meeting communiques are available on our website [here](#).



Project Spotlight – Legislation to ban the use of genetic test results in life insurance

On 26 November 2025, the Australian Government introduced the [*Treasury Laws Amendment \(Genetic Testing Protections in Life Insurance and Other Measures\) Bill 2025*](#) to Parliament. If passed, the bill will amend the *Insurance Contracts Act 1984* and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* to ban life insurers from using genetic testing results when offering or determining the terms of life insurance. The ban will be supported by new criminal offences and civil penalties, monitored by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission.

The Treasury has led the development of the legislation, including several rounds of public consultation between November 2023 to October 2025. Genomics Australia has worked closely with Treasury during this process to provide health policy advice, to help ensure Australians are not discouraged from undertaking genetic testing or participating in health and medical research due to concerns about impacts to affordable life insurance.

The Bill is expected to be debated during the Autumn 2026 Parliamentary Sitzings. If passed, the reforms would come into effect six months later.

[Click here to learn more about the changes](#)



Community Spotlight – National Survey on Public Knowledge and Attitudes Towards Genomics Health Care

Genomics Australia is developing a national pilot survey to better understand public awareness, knowledge and attitudes towards health genomics. The survey will leverage existing research and establish a national baseline.

Survey insights will help identify gaps in public knowledge relating to health genomics and inform the development of clear, easy-to-understand education materials, as well as future policy development. Providing access to genomics-related health information will support greater public understanding of how genomics can be used in health care.

International Spotlight – Global Alliance for Genomics and Health

We are pleased to announce that Genomics Australia is now an Organisational Member and National Initiatives Forum member of the Global Alliance for Genomics and Health (GA4GH).

GA4GH is committed to uniting an international community dedicated to advancing human health through genomic data; building technical standards, policy frameworks and tools that will expand responsible, voluntary, and secure use of genomic and other related health data.

Participation in GA4GH will support Genomics Australia's international presence and continue Australia's leadership in health genomics. It will also benefit Australia through being at forefront of innovation and reducing duplication in standards and policies.

Have an idea for the Genomics Australia Networks?

We welcome your suggestions for future newsletters and activities.

Please email your feedback to us at genomicsnetworks@health.gov.au.



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