

A POLICY JOURNEY TO THE WA ALLIED HEALTH RESEARCH STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK UPDATE 2025

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INTRODUCTION: In 2018 the WA Chief Allied Health Office (CAHO) developed the *WA Allied Health Research Strategic Framework* (the Framework) to provide a strategic vision and evidence-based strategies to support WA Health to **embed allied health research and knowledge translation as core practice**. The WA Allied Health Research Strategic Framework was updated in 2025 following extensive collaboration and outlined a **contemporary and more focused set of priorities under 5 key strategy areas for the next 5 years**. The practical steps in the journey are outlined below.

2018

1. Development of the Allied Health Research Strategic Framework

The Framework was first released in 2018 based on Jo Cooke's principles of research capacity building 'close to practice' at individual, team, organisation and system levels.¹ This was **tailored for local WA needs** through extensive frontline stakeholder collaboration.



2. Build on existing strengths and opportunities

In the years following the release of the Framework, there was an opportunity to build on **existing achievements** including:

- Successful delivery of two National Allied Health Conferences in 2021 and 2023.
- New research capacity building grants delivered.
- Formation of strategic partnerships.
- Allied health research positions established.



3. Align allied health research priorities with key policy milestones

It was critical for allied health to be **responsive to the changed workforce and research policy landscape in WA**. Key policy milestones included:

- The WA Future Health Research and Innovation Fund established in 2020 as a sovereign wealth fund.
- The creation of a 10-year WA Health and Medical Research Strategy in 2023.
- The 10-year WA Health Workforce Strategy commenced in 2024 including allied health workforce direction.



4. Targeted stakeholder consultation in 2024

To inform the subsequent update of the Framework, CAHO engaged with allied health professionals across WA Health and key clinical, research and academic leaders, decision makers, funders and community advocates. This included:

- A **stakeholder survey and interviews** with key WA allied health research leaders.
- A **consultation workshop** held in August 2024 to **refine the identified strategic priorities** and focus areas for action.

5. Establishment of the WA Allied Health Research Strategic Framework Update 2025

The 2025 Framework Update reinforces **5 key strategy areas that have remained consistent** with uniform consensus since the 2018 Framework:

- Skills development and Confidence Building
- Partnerships and Collaboration
- Knowledge Dissemination
- Continuity and Sustainability
- Infrastructure and Investment.

2025

WHERE TO FROM 2025: The Update identifies **11 new priorities** under the 5 key strategy areas and draws together contemporary stakeholder feedback with existing opportunities and key policy milestones to **modernise the priorities for WA Health and guide allied health research, innovation and knowledge translation over the next 5 years**.

THE NEW PRIORITIES 2025-2030

1. Empower staff to excel in research and innovation
2. Establish supportive networks
3. Co-design and facilitate high priority research
4. Multidisciplinary research and innovation
5. Joint appointments for career development
6. Promote models of knowledge translation aligned with allied health research
7. Support the uptake of allied health research into clinical practice
8. Explore mechanisms to integrate clinical and research activity
9. Champion an active culture of allied health research and innovation
10. Targeted investment in building research and knowledge translation capacity
11. Identify key infrastructure to maximise research engagement