Safe and Responsible Artificial Intelligence in Health Care

In October 2024, Cancer Council completed a submission to the Australian Department of Healthcare and Aged Care on the Safe and Responsible Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare – Legislation and Regulation Review. This public consultation considered current legislative and regulatory frameworks that support the safe implementation of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in high-risk settings, such as healthcare.

Cancer Council's submission included the following areas:

- Support for the recommendations of the Australian Cancer Plan to develop AI capability in cancer care safely and progressively through frameworks for policy and governance, ethics and infrastructure.
- The need to examine the current regulatory and policy environment as it relates to the digital health infrastructure, consumer and health professional digital health literacy, models of care and reimbursement pathways to support AI use in healthcare.
- The need for proposed regulatory and legislative changes to be developed in consultation with the biotechnology, pharmaceutical and medical technology industries, regulators, consumer groups and healthcare stakeholders to ensure they effectively balance the risks and opportunities of AI, while also supporting AI research and innovation.
- The need for a regulatory risk assessment framework to guide the development and implementation of AI, prioritising those that will influence resource allocation, access to care or clinical decision-making.
- A human rights-based approach to considering the risks associated with implementing AI technologies in healthcare and the principles of safety, fairness, data privacy, transparency and accountability should be considered in all policy and governance frameworks.
- The need to support healthcare professionals to meet professional obligations and standards to safely and ethically use AI in clinical practice, including the need for an urgent review of the healthcare workforce's capabilities and capacity to integrate AI into clinical practice.
- Cancer Council supports the need for a "Code of Conduct for the Safe, Responsible and Effective Use of AI by Health Professionals and Organisations" and the development of a "National AI Workforce Strategy" to address future requirements of the healthcare system to support healthcare professionals to safely implement AI technologies in clinical practice.
- Consumer awareness and understanding of AI implementation in healthcare should be promoted through open and accessible education, digital skills training, media and information literacy.
- The need for ongoing research into and evaluation of the clinical, ethical, legal and social aspects and impacts of AI in healthcare.

Information about the progress of the consultation can be found on the consultation's webpage: https://consultations.health.gov.au/medicare-benefits-and-digital-health-division/safe-and-responsible-artificial-intelligence-in-he/.