



CareSync Exchange Annual Report

2025-26

Acknowledgment

The Department of Health acknowledges the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the country and the power and resilience that is shared as members of the world's oldest living culture.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First People and recognise the richness and diversity of all Traditional Owners across Victoria.

We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Victoria practice their lore, customs and languages, and nurture Country through their deep spiritual and cultural connections and practices to land and water. We are committed to a future based on equality, truth and justice.

We acknowledge that the entrenched systemic injustices experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people endure, including in our health system, and that Victoria's ongoing treaty and truth-telling processes provide an opportunity to right these wrongs and ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the freedom and power to make the decisions that affect their communities.

We express our deepest gratitude and pay our deepest respect to ancestors, Elders, and leaders – past and present. They have paved the way, with strength and fortitude, for our future generations.

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Where the term 'Aboriginal' is used it refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Indigenous, First Peoples or Koori/Koorie is retained when it is part of the title of a report, program or quotation.

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Secretary's Foreword

I am pleased to support the release of the first CareSync Exchange annual report and to reflect on the progress and innovation achieved through Victoria's centralised, secure patient information sharing system.

CareSync Exchange exemplifies the Department of Health's ongoing commitment to a safe and sustainable health, wellbeing, and care system, in line with our broader digital health strategies and objectives.

Over the past year, CareSync Exchange has expanded across more Victorian health services, giving more clinicians timely, secure access to patient information. Daily users and the number of patient records accessed have risen steadily, supporting more coordinated care and better-informed clinical decisions.

CareSync Exchange delivers on the Department of Health's strategic plan to create an integrated, equitable and efficient health system for Victoria, aligning with our digital health strategies and directly supporting the goals of improved decision-making, streamlined care delivery and enhanced patient outcomes.

By empowering clinicians with timely access to vital information, the system enables the delivery of high-quality care to all Victorians, reflecting our commitment to innovation and excellence across the health sector.

Over the next year, we will focus on expanding access to patient health information, making CareSync Exchange easier for clinicians to use, and connecting it with other digital health systems to support better care.

I thank our clinicians, health service teams, consumer representatives, and department staff whose dedication underpins our progress to date.

Together, we are working towards a more connected health system that supports all Victorians to lead healthier lives.

Jenny Atta PSM

Secretary
Department of Health



Preface

This report has been prepared in accordance with the [Victorian Electronic Patient Health Information Sharing System Privacy Management Framework](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/caresync-exchange) <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/caresync-exchange>>.

Background

Developed in response to recommendations from [Targeting Zero \(2016\)](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/targeting-zero-the-review-of-hospital-safety-and-quality-assurance-in-victoria) <www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/targeting-zero-the-review-of-hospital-safety-and-quality-assurance-in-victoria>, the [Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System \(2021\)](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health-wellbeing-reform/recommendations) <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health-wellbeing-reform/recommendations>>, and enabled by the inclusion of Part 6C to the Health Services Act 1988 (Vic) (effective February 2024), CareSync Exchange improves health information sharing practices to support better, faster and safer care for patients.

About CareSync Exchange

CareSync Exchange is Victoria's secure health information sharing system. It allows authorised clinicians in Victorian public health services to access relevant patient information from other participating health services when caring for patients.

With CareSync Exchange, patients can expect to receive better, faster and safer care as it enables clinicians to spend less time searching for information and more time focused on providing patient care.

Information currently available through CareSync Exchange includes:

- Patient contact details and emergency contacts
- Diagnosis
- Dates of hospital visits (inpatient, outpatient, or emergency)
- Clinical documents such as hospital discharge summaries
- Pathology test results and reports.

Having access to this information helps clinicians make more informed decisions regarding their patients' care, regardless of which Victorian public health service they have previously attended. For patients, this helps reduce unnecessary delays, minimise repeat tests and reduce the need to repeatedly share their medical history when receiving care from different services.

Highlights of this report



Key implementation achievements:

- expanding CareSync Exchange to 19 Victorian public health services
- integrating CareSync Exchange into health service electronic medical records, so clinicians can view information without leaving their usual system
- extending access beyond emergency departments into other clinical areas at several services
- introducing CareSync Exchange at regional health services
- supporting clinicians through training, phased implementation and on-the-ground support
- engaging clinicians to shape the design and improvement of CareSync Exchange through the Clinical Design Advisory Group and direct engagement at health services

2025-26 at a glance

Clinical usage



19

health services using
CareSync Exchange



9,036

clinical users



65,944

patients whose care
has been supported by
CareSync Exchange

Volume of information available

4,295,025

patient records



1,581,735

discharge summaries



3,040,547

pathology reports



32,377,807

individual pathology
results



Source: CareSync Exchange reporting system, 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026

These statistics provide a baseline of the number of CareSync Exchange users and the volume of information available at the end of the 2025–26 reporting period. Future reporting will show how use of CareSync Exchange changes over time and help assess the benefits for patients and clinicians.

Benefits for patients

CareSync Exchange is designed to give authorised clinicians a more complete view of patient information. This can be particularly useful when a person receives care from more than one public health service or cannot provide their full medical history.

For patients, the intended benefits include:

- safer care, because clinicians have a more complete view of their health information
 - less need to repeat their health information
 - better continuity of care between participating services
 - fewer unnecessary repeat tests, where previous results are available
 - more timely care, supported by relevant information.
-

Supporting consumer rights

Participation in CareSync Exchange is automatic for patients receiving care through participating Victorian public health services. This is authorised under the Health Services Act 1988. Because patients cannot opt out, strong privacy, security, access, monitoring and auditing controls are in place. Access is limited to authorised users for approved care-related purposes.

If a patient believes their information is inaccurate or incomplete, they should contact the health service that created the original record and ask about its usual health-record correction process. Patients who have concerns about access to their information, or who want to make a complaint, can contact the health information, privacy or consumer feedback team at the relevant health service. Patients can also request a CareSync Exchange User Activity Report showing when their record was accessed, the type of information viewed and the role of the person who accessed it. If an access shown in the report raises concerns, the patient can ask the health service to review the access and explain the outcome.

Further information about consumer rights, how CareSync Exchange differs from My Health Record, and how to request support is available on the [CareSync Exchange](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/caresync-exchange) webpage <www.health.vic.gov.au/caresync-exchange> on Health.vic.gov.au.

Protecting patient information

Only authorised users can access CareSync Exchange for approved purposes. The system uses privacy, security and access controls to protect patient information.

During the 2025-26 reporting period, standard auditing and monitoring processes picked up one data incident involving incorrect privacy protections applied to 18 patient records. The records were accessed only by authorised healthcare workers providing care to patients, and no inappropriate access or misuse of information was identified. The issue was resolved promptly, with additional safeguards introduced, to further strengthen privacy protections.

Participating health services are responsible for managing their staff's access to CareSync Exchange and for responding to patient enquiries about who has accessed their records. The Department of Health oversees the operation of CareSync Exchange and coordinates system-level incident management. A dedicated Data Breach Response Plan sets out roles, responsibilities and processes for managing privacy and security incidents. Patients affected by an incident are notified and supported in line with privacy obligations and the circumstances of the incident.

Working with consumers and communities

Consumers helped develop the Privacy Management Framework, consumer resources and this annual report, and advised on ways to raise awareness of CareSync Exchange.

As CareSync Exchange expands, the Department of Health will continue to involve consumers in reviewing public information, considering the privacy and communication implications of new categories of clinical information, and identifying improvements to future annual reports. Consumer engagement will also help the Department of Health understand emerging issues and community concerns.

The case for a statewide system

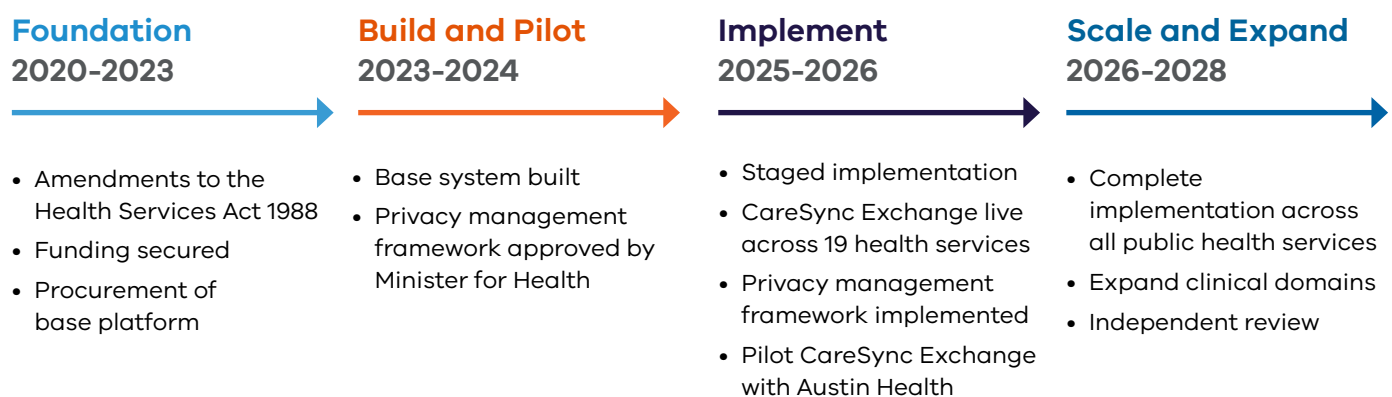
The need for statewide health information sharing in Victoria did not start as a technology initiative – it emerged from patient safety and experience findings.

The *Targeting Zero* report, the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, and State pathology reforms showed that fragmented patient health information caused avoidable harm, repeated patient storytelling, duplicate testing, and gaps in coordinated care.

In response, the Victorian Government committed to establishing a secure statewide health information sharing system.

In 2023, amendments were made to the *Health Services Act 1988* to allow for sharing of patient information across Victorian public health services, paving the way for the development of CareSync Exchange. As the system was built, the Department of Health developed the Privacy Management Framework, setting out the privacy, governance and accountability arrangements that support the secure use of patient information.

The CareSync Exchange Journey



Implementation progress

Austin Health was the first health service to contribute data to and use CareSync Exchange in June 2025.

By the end of June 2026, CareSync Exchange was in use across 19 public health services, with all services contributing patient information.

Recognising the different levels of digital capability across Victoria's public health services, a phased implementation approach was adopted. This has allowed CareSync Exchange to be introduced safely while supporting health services with varying technical environments and levels of digital maturity.

The rollout initially focused on emergency departments within metropolitan health services, where large numbers of Victorians receive care and clinicians often need rapid access to information to support time-critical decision-making. As the system has matured, it has progressively expanded to additional hospital wards and health services across Victoria.

A significant milestone was the expansion of CareSync Exchange into regional Victoria, with health services across the Gippsland region becoming the first regional participants in 2026. This extended the benefits of secure health information sharing beyond metropolitan Melbourne and demonstrated the system's ability to support care across a diverse range of health service settings and geographic locations.

As with any large-scale digital implementation, some technical issues were identified during implementation. Where issues arose, implementation was paused to enable thorough investigation and resolution, with insights gained used to drive ongoing enhancements to both the system and the rollout methodology.

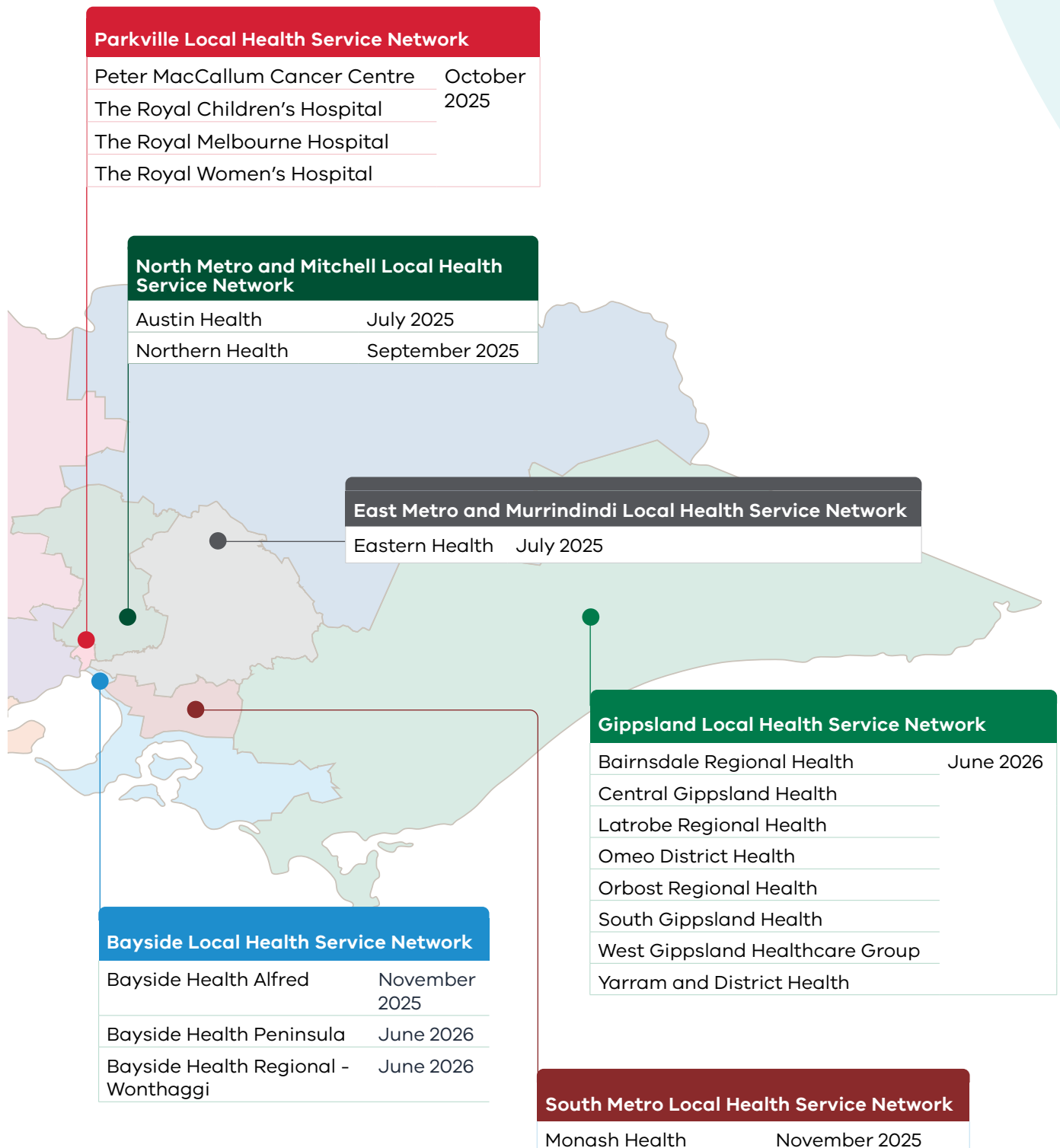
Education and support have been important components of implementation. Through their health service's education system, clinicians complete a learning module to ensure they understand their responsibilities for using



CareSync Exchange and handling patient information appropriately. Supporting resources, including user guides, demonstration videos, fact sheets and posters, are also available through the [Clinicians Health Channel website](https://www.clinicians.vic.gov.au/caresync-exchange) <<https://www.clinicians.vic.gov.au/caresync-exchange>>.

During implementation, Department of Health representatives provide dedicated on-the-ground support to health services, known as Hypercare, for approximately two weeks. Through direct engagement with clinicians, managers and technical teams-implementation issues, user feedback and operational challenges can be identified and addressed in real time. The insights gained through Hypercare have driven continuous improvements to both the information available through CareSync Exchange and its practical use across health services.

CareSync Exchange implementation by health service and date



Clinician feedback

Overall clinician feedback on CareSync Exchange has been highly positive, with clinicians reporting improvements in access to information and patient care.

Key themes of feedback include:

- clinician-reported improvements in patient care
- reduced administration
- avoidance of unnecessary repeat imaging and testing
- avoidance of medication duplication
- reduced duplication of services
- improved communication between services.

Feedback gathered through rollout activities, Hypercare support and ongoing engagement has also identified opportunities to strengthen implementation. Areas for improvement include earlier engagement with health services during implementation planning and expanding the range of clinical information available through the system.

Work is underway to address these opportunities, with ongoing collaboration between the Department of Health, health services and clinicians to ensure CareSync Exchange continues to evolve in response to user needs.



Clinical use stories

Avoiding unnecessary repeat imaging at The Royal Children's Hospital

Using CareSync Exchange, a clinician was able to confirm a prior x-ray had been performed at another hospital without needing the child's parent to recall the details or contact the previous health service. This avoided an unnecessary repeat image and reduced additional radiation exposure to the child, resulting in improved care.

Supporting critical care decisions at Bayside Health

A patient was transferred from another hospital to Peninsula University Hospital's intensive care unit (ICU). The ICU doctor checked CareSync Exchange and found a pathology result which supported a significant shift to the type of care provided.

Improving medication safety at Wonthaggi Hospital

A pharmacist at Wonthaggi Hospital was reviewing medications for a patient known to have osteoporosis. The pharmacist was considering whether an osteoporosis injection was needed. Using CareSync Exchange, they accessed records from a recent admission at another hospital and confirmed the injection had already been administered, avoiding a duplicate dose and improving medication safety.

Evidence available for this first annual report has been drawn mainly from system activity and clinician experience. It does not yet provide a complete picture of patient outcomes or experiences. Future evaluations will seek to measure matters such as avoided repeat tests, timeliness and continuity of care, patient experience and consumer understanding of CareSync Exchange, while maintaining appropriate privacy protections.

"It's a game changer to supporting better care for our patients"

Radiologist

"This is great! I normally would need to call and then obtain email addresses for other hospitals. It could take 2-3 hours or up to half a day to chase this type of information!"

Cardiac Registrar

"CareSync Exchange showed that relevant blood tests had been completed at another health service, saving the patient from repeat testing."

ED Doctor

Consumer engagement



From the start, consumer voices have directly helped to shape privacy, security and communication approaches for CareSync Exchange.

Consumer engagement began in 2023 before CareSync Exchange was introduced into health services. This work sought to understand consumer views on health information sharing, including the benefits consumers expected to see, as well as their concerns about privacy, transparency and the handling of personal information.

A total of 50 consumers from diverse backgrounds including people with lived experience of complex mental health challenges, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and neurodivergent community members participated in focus groups and targeted workshops. Insights from this engagement informed the development of the Privacy Management Framework, ensuring privacy

protections reflect consumer priorities and expectations.

Building on this early engagement, dedicated workshops were held in 2025 with consumers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people living with disability, carers, and regional Victorians to support proposed implementation activity. These workshops focused on how CareSync Exchange could be communicated clearly and accurately to the community.

Participants identified several topics they considered important, including privacy, data security, how information is managed, the relationship between CareSync Exchange and My Health Record, and consumer rights. Consumer feedback helped shape the messages, language and communication approaches used to explain CareSync Exchange to patients and the broader community.

The main source of public information about CareSync Exchange is the [CareSync Exchange](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/caresync-exchange) page on [health.vic.gov.au](https://www.health.vic.gov.au) <www.health.vic.gov.au/caresync-exchange>. Additional patient resources are available through the Patient Resources page on the Clinicians Health Channel <www.clinicians.vic.gov.au/patient-resources>.

How consumers and patients can provide feedback or raise concerns

Consumer and patient feedback on CareSync Exchange is primarily received through participating health services using existing feedback and engagement channels, such as email or online feedback forms. This approach means patients can raise questions, concerns or suggestions through the same pathways they would use for other aspects of their care.

Feedback received from consumers and patients will help the Department of Health and health services to improve CareSync Exchange so that it continues to meet community needs and expectations.

During the reporting period, two consumer enquiries were provided to the Department of Health by two health services requesting if patient information was able to be removed from CareSync Exchange. Advice was provided about how CareSync Exchange works and that the sharing of patient health information through the system is authorised under Part 6C of the Health Services Act 1988.

Confidentiality and privacy of patient information

Protecting patient information is central to the use of CareSync Exchange.

The system has been designed with privacy, security and governance safeguards to support the secure and appropriate sharing of health information between Victorian public health services.

The Privacy Management Framework sets out the privacy obligations for users of the system, public health services and the Department of Health and was developed as part of consumer workshops held prior to implementation of CareSync Exchange. The Privacy Management Framework is supported by privacy governance, safeguards and assurance activities that help ensure patient information is managed appropriately as the system expands. These include clear rules governing access to information, privacy training for users, monitoring and auditing system use, consumer engagement and transparency measures, incident management processes, and ongoing review and improvement.

Access to CareSync Exchange is limited to authorised clinicians and approved users who require information to support patient care. Users access only the information they need for legitimate care-related purposes and in line with their privacy and professional obligations.

All users are required to complete a privacy learning module through their health service. This learning module outlines how patient information can be accessed and used, the responsibilities of users, and the safeguards that apply to CareSync Exchange.

System activity is recorded and monitored to provide assurance that CareSync Exchange is being used appropriately. Participating health services undertake proactive audits and review higher-risk access activity to identify unusual or inappropriate access and support investigation where required. Future annual reports will seek to include information about the audits, alerts, reviews and investigations undertaken.



The Department of Health recognises that inappropriate disclosure of health information may create risks in circumstances such as family violence, elder abuse, discrimination, cybercrime or misuse of information. Where information is assessed as particularly sensitive, additional protections may apply under the Privacy Management Framework and supporting processes. Patients can contact their health service's privacy or consumer feedback team if they have concerns about how their information is protected.

To support transparency, patients can request a User Activity Report from their health service. These reports show when a patient's record was accessed through CareSync Exchange, the types of information viewed and the role of the person who accessed it. Patients should contact the health information, privacy or consumer feedback team at the relevant health service to request a report or raise concerns about access. During the reporting period, no User Activity Report requests were received by health services using CareSync Exchange.

The Department of Health's Cyber Security Unit provides guidance and oversight to support the ongoing security of CareSync Exchange. The system is supported by a range of cyber security controls, including encryption, network protections and continuous monitoring, and is designed to meet the requirements of the [Victorian Protective Data Security Standards](https://www.ovic.vic.gov.au/information-security/standards/) <www.ovic.vic.gov.au/information-security/standards/>. Information held within [CareSync Exchange](https://www.vic.gov.au/protecting-and-securing-victorian-government-information-and-assets/information-security) is classified as 'Protected' <www.vic.gov.au/protecting-and-securing-victorian-government-information-and-assets/information-security> and is managed in accordance with the security controls required for highly sensitive Victorian Government information. There were no cyber security incidents during the reporting period.

The Department of Health oversees the CareSync Exchange incident management process. A dedicated Data Breach Response Plan sets out roles, responsibilities and processes for managing privacy and security incidents.

Any privacy or security incident involving CareSync Exchange is treated seriously. Incidents are assessed, contained, investigated and managed through established response processes, with appropriate notifications made where required. Insights gained from incidents are used to strengthen controls, improve guidance and support the ongoing enhancement of privacy and security protections.

During the reporting period, a data incident occurred which affected how privacy protections were applied to 18 patient records. The issue was detected through routine monitoring and investigated with participating health services. The review found that the affected records were accessed only by authorised healthcare workers providing care to patients, and no inappropriate access or misuse of information was identified. The issue was resolved promptly, additional safeguards were introduced, and lessons learned were used to further strengthen privacy protections and incident management processes.

What's next?

CareSync Exchange will continue to be rolled out across Victoria's public health system, with all Victorian public health services expected to be connected by mid-2028.

Recognising the varying levels of digital capability across the public health system, work is underway to provide secure web-based access to CareSync Exchange for health services that do not yet have a compatible electronic medical record system. This will help ensure clinicians can access relevant patient information regardless of the digital systems available at their health service.

The range of information available through CareSync Exchange will also continue to expand over time. Planned additions include medication information, allergy information, specialist correspondence, imaging reports and immunisation information, providing clinicians with a more comprehensive view of a patient's health information.

In accordance with the requirements of the Health Services Act 1988, an independent review of CareSync Exchange is being conducted, with findings expected in early 2027. The review is examining matters including privacy and security, participation arrangements, administrative impacts and the overall operation of the system. Findings from the review will help inform the future development of CareSync Exchange.



As CareSync Exchange expands across Victoria's public health system, the focus will increasingly shift from implementation to sustainable service operations. The Department of Health and participating health services will continue to strengthen governance arrangements, clarify roles and responsibilities and establish long-term operating models that support the safe, secure and effective delivery of CareSync Exchange at scale. Privacy, security, user education, monitoring, auditing, consumer communications and assurance activities will continue to evolve alongside the service.

By expanding participation, increasing the information available and strengthening long-term governance arrangements, CareSync Exchange will help more clinicians access the information they need to provide better, faster and safer care for Victorians.

Glossary

Word/phrase	Definition
Clinician	A clinician is a healthcare professional who is trained and qualified to provide clinical services to patients. A clinician works at a Victorian public health service and includes medical doctors, nurses, midwives, allied health professionals, and paramedics. Private health services, general practice and pharmacies are not included in this definition in the context of those authorised to use CareSync Exchange. The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care provides further guidance on who is a clinician on its website.
Consumer	Health consumers are individuals who use (or may use) a Victorian public health service, or people who provide support to a person using a Victorian public health service, such as patients, carers, family members or other support people.
Data incident	Any unauthorised access or disclosure of personal information, or loss of personal information from the system.
EMR	An Electronic Medical Record (EMR) is a digital version of a patient's medical history collected by a health service when the patient receives medical care or treatment. It contains data such as diagnoses, medications, and test results.
Victorian public health service/s (health service/s)	An organisation that delivers publicly funded health and wellbeing services to Victorians, including hospitals, Local Health Service Networks, preventative health services, community health services, specialist services, mental health services, residential aged care services and other publicly funded providers across Victoria..
Incident management	A process used to detect, analyse, and resolve unplanned service interruptions to a system. Stages of the process may include restoring normal operations, minimising impact, and preventing recurrences.
My Health Record	<p>Australia's national digital health record system, which enables individuals and their authorised healthcare providers to securely access and share key health information.</p> <p>CareSync Exchange complements My Health Record, offering a more localised and complete view of Victorian public health services.</p>
Patient	A health consumer who is receiving medical help or treatment at a Victorian public health service.
Privacy Management Framework (PMF)	The PMF provides guidance to ensure the privacy of information within CareSync Exchange is maintained. The PMF addresses privacy obligations, details the conditions required to access information about sensitive health conditions, and details additional protections for vulnerable groups in circumstances like family violence. Clinicians, health services and the Department of Health are legally required to comply with the Framework.

Appendix 1 – Health Information Sharing Management Committee (HISMC)

HISMC is the main governance group for CareSync Exchange. The group provides specialist independent advice and oversight relating to safety, risk, and quality assurance of the system. The following list reflects the membership as at 30 June 2026.

Committee position	Name	Professional position
Chair	Michael Gorton AM	Consultant, Russell Kennedy Lawyers and Board Chair, Monash Health
Members	Agnetha Clarke	Professional Officer, Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation (Vic Branch)
	Daniel Carter	Chief Aboriginal Health Adviser, Monash Health
	Emma Hossack	Chief Executive Officer, Medical Software Information Association
	Professor George Braitberg AM OStJ	Director, Emergency Medicine Research, Austin Health
	Professor Harvey Newnham	Non-Executive Director, Western Health and Chair of Health Education Australia Limited, including the Australasian Institute of Clinical Governance
	Dr Jillian Tomlinson	Chair of the Medical Specialist in Private Practice Subdivision, Australian Medical Association (AMA), Victoria
	Leigh Clarke	Chief Executive Officer, Victorian Healthcare Association
	Libby Muir	Professional Officer Australian Medical Association (AMA), Victoria
	Adjunct Professor Mary Foley	School of Health Sciences, Western Sydney University and Board Director, Chris O'Brien Lifehouse, New South Wales
	Monica Ferrie	Chief Executive Officer, Genetic Support Network of Victoria and Independent Director, InGeNa Limited
	Shane Solomon	Board Director, Barwon Health and Councillor & Board Director, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
	Sophy Athan	Consumer Advocate
	Stephen Tiley	Director, Internal Audit and Risk Assurance, Australian Red Cross Lifeblood

