



Council for the Australian  
Federation

## MEETING COMMUNIQUE

14 July 2022

The Council for the Australian Federation (CAF) met on 16 June 2022 prior to the National Cabinet on 17 June 2022 and had a productive discussion about opportunities to work across all levels of government to drive meaningful reform and outcomes that support all Australians.

### **Collaborative engagement with the Commonwealth**

CAF agreed to seek a commitment from the Commonwealth Government that it will engage closely with states and territories regarding the implementation of its election commitments, particularly those that align with CAF priorities and are of national significance.

### **Health system reform**

CAF agreed to seek agreement from the Commonwealth that it will work collaboratively with states and territories to address urgent and acute pressures on the health care system, including an extension of the National Partnership on COVID-19 Response. CAF also agreed to progress broader health care reform work, with a focus on improving interfaces between primary care, aged care, disability and hospital sectors, addressing workforce issues, and improving continuity of care.

Per the Prime Minister's statement, on 17 June at National Cabinet the Commonwealth agreed to extend the National Partnership on COVID-19 Response for a further three months, to 31 December 2022. The Commonwealth also agreed that it will work with states and territories, drawing on local knowledge, to determine final locations for Medicare Urgent Care Clinics. The National Cabinet agreed that First Ministers will work together to identify practical improvements to the health system, in particular the interface between GPs and hospitals.

### **Skills shortages and skilled migration**

CAF noted that states and territories are experiencing increased skills shortages due to COVID-19 international border restrictions and reduced migration and agreed to raise these issues with the Commonwealth at National Cabinet for action.

National Cabinet affirmed its shared focus on urgently addressing skills shortages, and the Commonwealth committed to urgently working to address a backlog in processing visa applications in areas of skills shortages, reducing visa processing times, and prioritising training and migration.

### **Australia's Federal Decision-Making Architecture**

CAF agreed on key actions and recommendations to improve the federal decision making architecture, building on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic. CAF also agreed to put these recommendations to the Commonwealth for consideration and implementation in partnership with states and territories.