

Meeting with First Ministers

17 June 2022

Parliament House, Canberra

Record of meeting

1. Acknowledgment of Country, welcome and introduction to the day

The Prime Minister:

- Provided an acknowledgement of country and welcomed Premiers and Chief Ministers to the meeting.

2. Commonwealth priorities

The Prime Minister:

- Provided an update on the Commonwealth's key commonwealth-state priorities including health, microeconomic reform, climate change and energy, skills and migration, and the importance of the Indigenous voice to Parliament and the enshrinement in the constitution.

3. Update from the Council for the Australian Federation (CAF)

The New South Wales Premier:

- Provided an update, on behalf of CAF on key priorities for jurisdictions including the health and hospital systems; the future of the federal relations architecture; disaster recovery arrangements, skills and microeconomic reform.
- Requested that states and territories be consulted on the implementation of the Commonwealth Government's commitment to establish 50 urgent care clinics.

Following the discussion of Commonwealth and state and territory priorities, First Ministers:

- Agreed to work together to progress priorities, including through relevant Ministers.
- Noted the pressures in the health and hospital system exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Commonwealth Government will extend the National Partnership on COVID-19 Response for a further three months to 31 December 2022, at a cost of approximately \$760 million with amendments to cease both the Private Hospital Financial Viability Guarantee and funding for Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) from the end of September 2022.
- Agreed to task First Secretaries Group (FSG) with identifying practical improvements to the health system and specifically the connections between GPs and hospitals and report back to the National Cabinet with a progress update at the next meeting. This includes working together to identify practical ways to get aged care residents and NDIS participants out of hospital and into a more appropriate setting.

- Noted the Commonwealth Government's commitments to increased investment in primary care and to also work with states and territories, drawing on local knowledge, to determine the final locations for Medicare Urgent Care Clinics.
- Affirmed their shared commitment to urgently addressing skills shortages. As part of the Commonwealth's commitment, it will urgently work to address a backlog in processing visa applications in areas of skills shortages, reduce visa processing times and prioritise training and migration.
- Expressed their support for the Commonwealth's commitment to progress a referendum to constitutionally enshrine a Voice to Parliament in the Constitution as a matter of priority.
- Noted that where appropriate, the Commonwealth Treasurer and Finance Minister will ensure the states and territories are consulted on the implementation of Commonwealth election commitments that may impact jurisdictions to ensure there are no unintended consequences.

4. a. Commonwealth economic and fiscal update

First Ministers:

- Noted the economic and fiscal update from the Secretary of the Commonwealth Department of the Treasury, Dr Steven Kennedy.

4. b. Commonwealth national security update

First Ministers:

- Noted the national security update provided by Mr Andrew Shearer, Director-General of the Office of National Intelligence, Mr Mike Burgess, Director-General (Security) of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation and Mr Dale Furse, Chief Operating Officer of the Australian Signals Directorate.

5. Future arrangements for leaders' level meetings and the broader architecture

First Ministers:

- Discussed how First Ministers could best work together going forward.
- Noted the importance of genuine partnerships including the ability for states to contribute to the National Cabinet agenda and the timeliness of papers to support decision making.
- Agreed to task FSG with providing advice on the role of Ministerial Councils in progressing national priorities, with a focus on productivity improvements.
- Agreed the Council on Federal Financial Relations (CFFR) will consider pressures on Commonwealth and State and Territory budgets, including anticipated fiscal pressures with a focus on areas of joint funding responsibility, and report back to National Cabinet at its next meeting.
- Agreed:
 - To continue to call the forum National Cabinet.
 - A preference to meet at least 4 times a year or as necessary.

- To invite a representative of Local Government to future meetings of National Cabinet and CFFR once a year to ensure all levels of government are represented.
- Agreed to meet again ahead of the Commonwealth Budget in October 2022.

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