

**Strategic Review of Health and Medical Research in
Australia [McKeon Review]**

**Submission from the
Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL)**

This response was prepared on behalf of CAUL (Council of Australian University Librarians) by the CAUL Open Scholarship Initiative Advisory Committee (COSIAC).

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Submission

The Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) is pleased to submit a response to the Strategic Review of Health and Medical Research in Australia [McKeon Review]. CAUL's interest in the review is in the question:

How can we optimise translation of health and medical research into better health and wellbeing?
(Terms of Reference 4,8,9,10,11)

In CAUL's view the key to optimising this translation is to make the outcomes of the research available quickly and with as few restrictions as possible. This applies to both the publication of the research results and the supporting research data.

The public benefits of such an approach are already well documented and include:

- Increased visibility of the research together with increased usage and impact
- Improved community awareness of research and its relevance to improved care
- Better informed citizens making more informed use of health services
- Facilitation of interdisciplinary research and greater cross-sectoral collaboration
- Increased speed of research progress
- Opportunities for cost savings through the re-use of data
- Opportunities for new business development in the digital economy e.g. bioinformatics

For further information see sources such as [Swan](#) (2007), [Houghton and Sheehan](#) (2006) and [Fry et al](#) (2008).

CAUL already works with the Australian Government to maximise the amount of health and medical research information that is made available in the public domain through providing [open access](#) to publicly funded research findings and data. For example, CAUL has most recently worked with the National Health and Medical Research Council (NH&MRC) on the 2012 revision to its [policy](#) on the dissemination of research findings to achieve this outcome for NH&MRC funded research. This new NH&MRC policy should be fully supported and further developed to include data as well as publications in line with developments in the UK, the USA and Canada.

This approach to dissemination of research findings is consistent with the [OECD Principles and Guidelines for Access to Research Data](#) (2007) and the Australian Government's [Declaration of Open Government](#) (2010).

Over the past three years because of the Federal Government's investment in the [Australian National Data Service](#) (ANDS), Australia has made huge progress towards making the data generated by research more widely available; so much so that Australia is now recognised as a world leader in this area. Libraries, IT services and e-research centres in Australian universities have all contributed to these developments, which have now made details of almost 40,000 research collections available in the public domain via [Research Data Australia](#). CAUL urges the Government to continue to support this work in the interests of translating research into better health and wellbeing.