

14 September 2025

Commissioners
Productivity Commission
Australia

Re: Submission to the Productivity Commission Inquiry 'Delivering quality care more efficiently'

Experience:

1. Exercise and Sports Science Australia (ESSA) is the governing body for over 10,000 Exercise Physiologists, Exercise Scientists, Sports Scientists and High-Performance Managers.
2. Exercise Physiologists and Exercise Scientists provide services in the public and private health care sectors.
3. Exercise Physiology has been a recognised allied health service available through Medicare since 2006.
4. Exercise Physiologists and Exercise Scientists provide services in chronic disease management, cancer treatment recovery, ageing support, preventive health care, veteran care, injured worker rehabilitation, hospital based prehabilitation for surgical patients, obesity and overweight treatments, and mental health illness treatment and prevention,

Response to the Interim Report:

1. ESSA supports Draft recommendation 1.1 ESSA has been advocating for this policy and regulatory direction for some time. The fragmentation of regulation is a burden on service provision, efficiency and cost effectiveness. The consequence of weak regulatory alignment is ultimately born by consumers in aged care, disability services and the broader care economy.
2. ESSA supports Draft recommendation 2.1 ESSA members and their businesses operate across multiple care services with varying governance structures, inconsistencies in policies, operational plans, procedures, quality and safety standards. Very often their clients or patients require access to diverse care services proximate to their home. Duplication of information and record requirements compound barriers to access.
Collaborative commissioning and funding should be the catalyst to operational efficiencies and improved experiences for consumers and their carers
3. ESSA supports Draft recommendation 3.1 ESSA engaged Dr David Cullen to expand on the clinical and economic efficacy, public good and role of Exercise Physiology and Exercise Science in diverting Australians from the high-cost primary health care system. See attached. ESSA has consistently advocated for a greater focus on preventive health strategies and investment. While government budget planning fails to account for indirect benefits and savings, measures like preventive health demonstrably yield net social and economic benefits.

Conclusion:

The care economy has seen significant government investment since Covid. Reforms in the sector and additional funding has benefited society while manifesting as lower than preferred productivity. In part because the new expenditure and programs met latent demand.

ESSA proposes government needs to measure and recognise the public good of exercise physiology services in preventive health, diversion and delay from high-cost primary health care and meeting the needs of modern society with changing health care needs.

On behalf of Exercise and Sports Science Australia, I appreciate the consideration of our submission and welcome any future opportunity to engage with the Commission on these important issues including appearing before hearings.

Yours sincerely,



Danielle Smith
Chief Executive Officer

