



SEED Futures Submission to the Productivity Commission

***Delivering quality care more efficiently* Interim Report**

Introduction

SEED Futures welcomes and celebrates the Productivity Commission's interim report. Over the past few weeks, while hosting consultations and attending community events related to primary prevention and care, there was a palpable sense of relief and excitement about the interim report amongst those who have worked in the thankless area of primary prevention for many years, advocating for its importance and for the necessary front-end investments to be made. We join with those who may not make a formal submission to express our support for the conclusions reached so far, to provide feedback to shape the final report, and more focused information in response to the information requests.

The key message of our submission is this: a National Framework to support government investment in prevention is vital. We suggest this Framework is co-designed with groups who have worked on Frameworks for specific cohorts or areas for primary prevention. The Framework should be developed from the ground up, informed by the specifics of what is needed for priority cohorts and areas for primary prevention. SEED Futures stands ready to assist. The National Primary Prevention Framework (attached) we have co-authored with the Sydney Policy Lab at the University of Sydney provides a blueprint for the development of a cross-sectoral National Framework to support government investment in prevention more broadly. Further, we recommend that the Productivity Commission recommends to Government a National Framework alongside the development of a Pre-Social Services Sector.

Australia now stands at a decisive juncture: we can continue down the costly cycle of crisis response, or we can pivot towards a Pre-Social Services Sector anchored in primary prevention, a sector designed not to pick up the pieces, but to stop them from shattering in the first place.

The National Opportunity

The Productivity Commission's interim report, *Delivering Care More Efficiently*, presents a pivotal opportunity. Together with our own paper (attached), the upcoming *National Primary Prevention Framework* (NPPF) co-authored by SEED Futures and Sydney Policy Lab, Australia is offered a course for reorienting government, philanthropy, and community partnerships toward a prevention-first model.

A National Prevention Investment Framework can improve lives by:

- Targeting entrenched disadvantage through early intervention
- Reducing costly acute responses (health, child protection, justice)



- Strengthening families during the critical first 1,000 days
- Driving productivity and wellbeing gains across generations

This framework provides an evidence-based reform agenda that Australia is now poised to adopt.

Expanding the Scope: Application Beyond Child Protection and first 1000 days

The adaptable structure of the NPPF—with its five foundational conditions (vision, trust, hope, Indigenous leadership, and incremental reform) and five enabling factors (local co-design, lived experience shaping policy, whole-person interdepartmental collaboration, transparent funding, and integrated storytelling as an evaluation tool)—provides a robust scaffolding for multi-sectoral primary prevention that can be applied to:

- **Childcare and Early Childhood Education:** Embedding prevention principles in early learning environments to support developmental milestones, parental engagement, and family wellbeing, reducing later risk factors.
- **Juvenile Justice:** Applying adaptive, evidence-based reforms and co-designed place-based interventions to divert young people from the justice system, address root causes of offending, and support positive life trajectories.
- **After-School Hours Care and Youth Services:** Creating safe, inclusive, and engaging environments that promote social connection, skill-building, and resilience, targeting risk factors linked to mental health, substance use, and disengagement.
- **Primary Health Care and Preventive Health Services:** Integrating prevention frameworks with holistic health models, supporting early identification of social determinants of health, and enhancing cross-sector collaboration for comprehensive wellbeing.

This expanded utilization enhances government and philanthropic partners' capacity to coordinate investments, avoid duplication, and maximize social and economic returns across overlapping policy areas that collectively contribute to stronger families and thriving communities. Such integration affirms that true prevention and social productivity stem from collaborative, whole-of-sector investment beyond isolated program silos.

Outcomes

Establishing a holistic national primary preventative framework produces the greatest long-term benefits by nurturing the heart, values, and intrinsic worth of citizens, ultimately advancing productivity. Without such a framework—and relying solely on a fund—society may never fully meet the needs of those most at risk of disadvantage. Embedding conditions and enablers within a structured framework is a national imperative, ensuring that efforts are coordinated, effective, and genuinely responsive to those in greatest need.



Conclusion and Call to Action

Australia has the resources, research, and reform momentum to act. What is required now is resolve. Without decisive investment in prevention, entrenched disadvantage will continue to grow, deepening social fractures and driving up long-term economic costs.

To the Treasurer and Commonwealth leadership:

- Place our treasure where our heart belongs—in people.
- Prioritise the establishment of a Pre-Social Services Sector within the authorising environment, anchored in prevention.
- Create and fund the Primary Prevention Investment Framework to stabilise, scale, and sustain proven reforms.

True productivity transcends roads, ships, and mines—it begins with children, families, and communities. The smallest pivot toward prevention can unlock the largest gains for our nation's future. Australia is ready. The blueprint exists. Now is the time to build.