

## BACKGROUND

The Hearing Health Sector Alliance was established in August 2019 to provide a unified voice from key representatives of the sector in Australia.

### Who belongs to the Alliance?

It comprises national representatives across the hearing health sector, including consumer groups, health professionals, industry associations, as well as research organisations.

Its founding members are:

- Better Hearing Australia
- Deafness Forum of Australia
- Audiology Australia
- Australian College of Audiology
- Hearing Care Industry Association
- Hearing Business Alliance
- Ear Science Institute Australia
- National Acoustic Laboratories

The Alliance is expected to continue to grow with new member organisations.

### Why now?

In March 2019, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed the first Hearing Health Roadmap to improve the lives of the millions of Australians affected by hearing loss.

With the Federal and State governments now charged with responsibility for implementing more than 100 recommendations, it is crucial the hearing health sector is part of the decision-making and ensures adequate resources are allocated.

The Alliance is well-placed to hold governments to account to ensure all Australians who are deaf or hard of hearing can live well in the community and access vital education, services and technology.

### What is the imperative?

One in six Australians currently has a hearing loss at an economic and social cost to the community of \$33 billion a year. Prevalence is expected to more than double to 7.8 million people – or nearly one in every five people - affected by hearing loss by 2060.

Almost half (49%) of childhood hearing loss is preventable, and so is over a third of adult hearing loss.

Aboriginal children are 4 times more likely to receive ear surgery and are 3 times more likely to suffer permanent hearing loss compared to non-Indigenous children.

Emerging research is showing hearing loss is also associated with other health conditions such as dementia.