

# Queensland Health Open Data Strategy

2023 - 2026



**Queensland**  
Government

## Queensland Health Open Data Strategy - 2023 - 2026

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An electronic version of this document is available at  
<https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/open-data-strategy-health>

# Open Data Strategy 2023–2026

“Open data and content can be freely used, modified, and shared by anyone for any purpose” [The open definition](#)

The Queensland Health Open Data Strategy refers to the department’s plan to deliver the Queensland Government’s Open Data Initiative

## Our vision

To contribute to the knowledge economy by stimulating innovation, research and improvement in the delivery of health services to Queenslanders through open data.

## Our commitment

Queensland Health shares the Queensland Government’s commitment to open data as outlined in the Queensland Government Open Data Policy Statement<sup>1</sup>

The Policy Statement commits to the six principles from the International Open Data Charter. These principles are:

- Open by default
- Timely and comprehensive
- Accessible and usable
- Comparable and interoperable
- For improved governance and citizen engagement
- For inclusive development and innovation.

In continually improving the way we publish open data, Queensland Health will follow these principles.

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<sup>1</sup> Queensland Government, Open Data Policy Statement, available at <https://www.qld.gov.au/data/qld-data-policy-statement.pdf>

## Benefits of open data

We recognise our obligation to publish data about the department's spending, operations and performance to foster transparent, accountable, efficient, responsive and effective government.

We also recognise how open data can be used to benefit Queensland to:

- support the design, delivery and assessment of better services for citizens and businesses
- improve the evidence-base for policy and programs
- provide major opportunities for innovation and underpin growth of the digital economy.

## Our goals

**Better services for Queenslanders** through innovation, research and development of new data-enabled services and products by researchers, business and industry using Government data.

**Increased community participation in government decision making** through improved access to Government data and greater levels of interaction between policy-makers and the wider community.

**A stronger knowledge economy** by unlocking the social and economic value of Government data through sound data infrastructure.

**Evolving data sophistication** and functionality through ongoing engagement with data users and perpetual review.

“Open data and sharing of information for the benefit of the patient and delivery of services is fundamental”  
Information Management Strategy- Queensland Health

## Principles

**Government data will be available for open use:** Open access to Government data drives innovation and entrepreneurial activities. Where appropriate, data will be made available under the least restrictive licence allowing for its use and re-use in accordance with the [Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture Information Access and Use Policy](#)

**Government data will be available free:** Government data, collected using public monies, belongs to the community. Published data will be made available free, except if the charge is statutory or if cost recovery has a clear net benefit for the Queensland community.

**Government data will be in accessible formats:** Publishing data in different formats offers maximum flexibility of user experience and access. Where practicable, we will publish data in machine readable formats that can be downloaded, indexed, and searched by commonly used web applications.

**Government data will be released within set standards and accountabilities:** As an agency, we hold a substantial amount of personal information that is not suitable for release. We make data available in de-identified or in confidential forms and reduce the risks associated with the public release of data with a robust publication process to identify and protect personal and confidential information in accordance with relevant legislative and other statutory and administrative frameworks.

## Our responsibilities

We also have a number of day-to-day responsibilities. To improve open data maturity, Queensland Health will:

- adopt whole-of-government publishing [standards](#)
- support Queensland Health business areas to improve the quality of data released
- achieve a [Data Usability Rating](#) for our datasets.

To support the Queensland Government's commitment to open data, Queensland Health will:

- participate in government open data forums – Senior Officers' Working Group and Open Data Practitioners Community
- contribute to and adopt Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture policies and other documentation
- engage with industry and the open data community

To meet our open data responsibilities, Queensland Health will:

- increase the number of resources published
- update/refresh our open data as specified or required
- monitor our open data email inbox and respond to requests for information, including data requests lodged on Open Data portal
- review and re-publish our Open Data Strategy periodically
- support and train new open data publishers
- provide ongoing support and advice to Hospital and Health Services and Statutory Bodies
- raise awareness of the benefits of publishing open data

## Our plan

We will facilitate better services for Queenslanders by:

### **Stimulating innovation**

- creating opportunities by making data available, free for use and re-use in easily accessible and open formats by anyone who wishes to use it
- prioritising datasets for release in consultation with industry, enterprises, researchers and the wider community
- examining opportunities for partnerships with other organisations

### **Increasing government efficiency and performance**

- creating a culture that supports the sharing of Government data
- facilitating greater scrutiny of the effectiveness of Government policy
- driving more efficient public services through more transparent performance monitoring
- endeavouring to release demographic data where possible
- reducing red tape and streamlining processes for data sharing

We will increase community participation in government decision making by:

### **Increasing awareness**

- communicating the potential economic and social benefits created through the release of data promoting participation in the knowledge economy by making data available on [www.data.qld.gov.au](http://www.data.qld.gov.au)

### **Building trust**

- demonstrating transparency by making data open by default
- releasing data within set standards and in accordance with legislative and privacy provisions
- working collaboratively with other agencies to leverage opportunities for data release and communicating the needs of our stakeholders
- sharing case studies of how Government data have been used to benefit the community
- being responsive to feedback and suggestions for new datasets

## **Our data**

Queensland Health collects a range of data including, but not limited to, clinical conditions, healthcare provision and activity data, hospital and service performance, public health and population health initiatives, program administration, human resources, financial performance, capital delivery and workplace incidents<sup>2</sup>

The strategy outlines the departmental approach to evaluating existing data collections for release, with exceptions to appropriately protect data that are restricted for reasons of privacy, public safety, security, commercial confidentiality or compliance with the law, such as an individual's health record.

The department has been actively publishing performance data for many years, thereby contributing to improved transparency and accountability and fulfilling the release of public sector information as required under the *Right to Information Act 2009 (RTI Act)*.

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<sup>2</sup> Appendix 1: Types of data published by the department

The [Queensland Government Digital Projects Dashboard](#) leverages open data published by all Queensland Government departments. The dashboard provides the public with an overview of the products and services the Queensland Government is developing to service the needs of Queenslanders. Users can view projects being worked on across the sector as the government evolves into a truly digital and responsive organisation.

As an agency delivering services to both the public and the rest of government, we publish open data about our significant digital projects. This directly supports the dashboard and helps improve transparency of how Queensland Health will use digital technology to improve the lives of Queenslanders.

An updated list of all our datasets can be found at:  
<https://data.qld.gov.au/organization/queensland-health>

## Personal privacy and patient confidentiality

The department holds substantial data about members of the public and employees. Accordingly, the department needs to be a responsible custodian of personal information.

Patient confidentiality in the department is strictly regulated. All employees are bound by the duty of confidentiality set out in the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 (HHB Act)*. The duty applies to 'confidential information', which is a defined term in the HHB Act and means any information that could identify someone who has received or is receiving a public sector health service. Confidential information must not be disclosed unless an exception to the duty of confidentiality in the HHB Act applies. However, the duty of confidentiality does not apply to de-identified 'confidential information' or statistical datasets which are not identifiable.

There are additional legislative requirements that impose a duty of confidentiality regarding information provided to registries such as the Pap Smear Register through the *Public Health Act 2005*. Where information has been collected under authority of these provisions, it will be subject to any legal requirements relating to disclosure, as set out in the *Public Health Act 2005*. These will be considered by custodians for respective data collections.

The *Information Privacy Act 2009 (IP Act)* also regulates the collection and handling of personal information. Personal information is defined in the IP Act and is essentially any information, in any form, which is associated with and/or identifies an individual (full definition can be found in the glossary) The IP Act operates subject to the above confidentiality provisions (that is, the above confidentiality provisions prevail in respect of the confidentiality of patient information).

Accordingly, the IP Act is generally the legislation that applies to the collection, handling and disclosure of employee information. As for 'confidential information' above, the IP Act does not apply to de-identified personal information or statistical datasets which are not identifiable. Therefore, it is important that datasets are properly de-identified prior to disclosure to ensure that staff are not at risk of breaching their duty of confidentiality or the IP Act provisions.



The Queensland Government Open Data Initiative promotes mechanisms to de-identify datasets so that they no longer constitute 'confidential information' (for the purposes of the HHB Act) or 'personal information' (for the purposes of the IP Act). For data to be considered de-identified, a person's identity must not be 'reasonably ascertainable'. The protection of a person's identity can be addressed in part by:

- lowering the level of risk (e.g. by not releasing certain datasets)
- releasing the data in a manner where it would not constitute a privacy breach (e.g. by aggregating data)
- taking steps to limit the extent to which an individual could potentially be identified from the data (e.g. by selective removal of key pieces of information)

These and other assessment measures will be included in the process of considering datasets for release under the Open Data Strategy.

Further information on publishing datasets is available on the Office of the Information Commissioner Queensland website at: [www.oic.qld.gov.au](http://www.oic.qld.gov.au)

#### **Data not suitable for release**

Some data is not in the public interest to release, and may be restricted for reasons of privacy, public safety, security, commercial confidentiality or compliance with the law. We will manage this confidential information appropriately and lawfully, in accordance with the *Right to Information Act 2009*, the *Information Privacy Act 2009*, and other legislation.

## Our release strategy

Our release strategy contains four main components:

**Identification:** We will proactively identify information assets by surveying departmental publications and business systems for underlying data sources, gathering information from business units about stand-alone data collections and engaging with stakeholders about their needs and interests. This includes reviewing data currently published on departmental websites and the information asset register, together with feedback received via the data [portal](#) and engagement with end-users directly.

**Assessment:** Data custodians will assess the suitability of data for release in accordance with relevant legislation, administrative instruments, policies and guidelines. Not all data are suitable for release.

**Publication:** We will publish data in line with set standards and prioritised having regard to public interest; feedback from stakeholders; potential social or economic value; and ability to restore accountability in government, with the approval of the data owner.

**Management:** We will maintain datasets as 'fit-for-purpose' identify opportunities to improve data quality, seek feedback from data users and review our processes to ensure maximum efficiency.

We are also committed to working with other agencies in the publication of corporate data relating to issues such as staffing, infrastructure and finance so that it can be compared across Government.

The Department cannot guarantee the perpetuity of the data it releases, nor can it guarantee availability of data at all times without interruption. Any known issues relating to the longevity of data will be articulated in the metadata accompanying its release.

## Governance and accountability

The Director-General, Queensland Health is responsible for the success of the department's Open Data initiative by creating and sustaining an open data culture within the department.

To ensure we are meeting our commitment, we will report progress to the Open Data Senior Officers Working Group (Whole of government open data committee), which meets every 2 months and participate in data governance and Information Sharing Community of Practice as appropriate.

## Legislative and administrative framework

Implementation of the department's Open Data Strategy will be managed in accordance with information management and publication provisions contained in relevant State and Federal legislation and administrative instruments.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Appendix 2: Legislative and administrative instruments

The Open Data Strategy adheres to the policies, principles, procedures and artefacts underpinning the Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture 2.0 and is further guided by department-specific procedures relating to the handling and release of information about our clients, services and outputs.

It also aligns with Queensland Health's [Digital Health Strategic Vision for Queensland 2026](#) and the department's commitment to:

**Pursuing innovation** – Continuous system improvement and learning

Digital goals:

- Improve scope and quality of open data to provide greater insights and innovation opportunities.
- Healthcare open data is a key tool in supporting innovation and improved healthcare outcomes.

**Promoting wellbeing** - Healthier and safer communities via smarter policy, regulation and response: *“Open data and big data are core to sustainable, well planned and well executed community wellness initiatives”*

## The future

Our commitment to Open Data will focus on data release driven by user need, monitored through public interaction and formalised in feedback processes designed to highlight areas for improvement.

We will promote open data as a business as usual activity by:

- incorporating open data activities into individual business unit plans
- using existing contact officer networks as coordinators for open data

In order to drive ongoing reform and deliver Open Data, we will embed the principles of open data in our relationships with non-Government partners by:

- seeking to set specific transparency and information-sharing requirements in service and funding agreements with non-government agencies
- examining opportunities to make adherence to this level of transparency a condition of receiving departmental funding

We will also place emphasis on opportunities to improve data quality in the future by:

- building capability through professional development and guidance
- continuing to support transparent decision-making processes to ensure as much data are being released as possible

- encouraging data users to provide feedback about usefulness, gaps and general satisfaction
- reviewing data-related processes and addressing issues relating to timeliness, reliability, relevance and accuracy

## Appendix 1: Types of data published

The following table provides a snapshot of the different types of datasets published to the Open Data portal.

*Note: Not all data collected by the department is suitable for release due to privacy or confidentiality limitations. Datasets that may reasonably lead to the identification of an individual are not suitable for publication.*

Types of data	Examples (snapshot only)
Hospital Performance and Healthcare Statistics	<p><b>Hospital performance:</b> Elective surgery waitlist information; Emergency department waiting times; Paediatric emergency department; Rural emergency department (activity and performance); Selected hospital activity indicators; Public dental waiting lists; Public Hospital location and contact details; Retrieval Services Queensland activity</p> <p><b>Survey and statistics:</b></p> <p>Perinatal statistics; Notifiable Diseases; Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme; Mothers and Babies – by hospital of birth; Cancer Incidence and Mortality by LGA of Residence; Health Protection Licences issued; Antimicrobial susceptibility; Injury presentations from Queensland Injury Surveillance Unit; Antibiotic Use; Healthy Hearing Children’s Screening Report; Database of Research Activity; Mental Health Activity Data Collection; Statewide Mental health consumer outcomes and case complexity; Preventative health telephone survey series – adult health indicators; Consumer perception of care – Queensland Health Mental Health Services; Healthcare associated infection, hand hygiene compliance and occupational exposure data; Cancer screening participation rates; Report results for Legionella on prescribed healthcare facilities water samples; Non Admitted Patient Occasions of Service; Admitted patient episodes of care; Alcohol and other drug treatment services; Cancer screening participation rates</p>

<p>Financial and Annual Report data</p>	<p><b>Financial and Expenditure:</b> Late Payments; ICT Dashboard; Queensland Government Investment Portal; Queensland Health Grant funding recipients; Average patient cost outcomes by facility; Board and subcommittee/ government bodies remuneration; Mental Health Establishments Collection</p> <p><b>Annual Report:</b> A number of annual reporting requirements are to be addressed through publication of information as Open Data, in lieu of inclusion in the annual report.</p> <p><u>Consultancy Spending:</u> Consultancies expenditure report for Department of Health</p> <p><u>Overseas Travel:</u> Overseas travel report for Department of Health</p> <p><u>Queensland Language Services Policy:</u> Queensland Language Services Policy (QLSP) performance measures report on interpreter services for Department of Health.</p> <p><i>Queensland Health also publishes the Annual Report data for the Hospital and Health Services, Hospital foundations and other Statutory bodies.</i></p>
<p>Queensland Ambulance Service</p>	<p>Incidents by local Ambulance Service Network; Triple Zero and other call summary data; Queensland Ambulance Service Stations and other locations; Local Ambulance Network Boundaries; Code 1 Response times; Queensland Ambulance Patient Satisfaction</p>

## Appendix 2: Legislative and administrative instruments

Documents	Open Data relationship	Citation
<a href="#">Queensland Government Open Data Policy Statement</a>	Queensland Government's commitment to open data.	<a href="https://www.qld.gov.au/data/qld-data-policy-statement.pdf">https://www.qld.gov.au/data/qld-data-policy-statement.pdf</a>
<a href="#">Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture Information Access and Use Policy</a>	Queensland Government's commitment to provide government information to the public to the maximum extent possible free of charge with consistent licencing.	<a href="https://www.qgcio.qld.gov.au/documents/information-access-and-use-policy-is33">https://www.qgcio.qld.gov.au/documents/information-access-and-use-policy-is33</a>
<a href="#">Queensland Procurement Policy 2018</a>	Queensland Government's commitment to provide transparent accountability with basic details published of awarded contracts at or over \$10,000.	<a href="http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/QLDProcurementPolicy.pdf">http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/QLDProcurementPolicy.pdf</a>
<a href="#">Right to Information Act 2009</a>	Queensland Government's commitment to provide access to government information unless it is in the public interest not to.	<a href="https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/inforce/current/act-2009-013">https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/inforce/current/act-2009-013</a>
<a href="#">Information Privacy Act 2009</a>	Queensland Government's commitment to the privacy of individuals and the controls for the protection of personal information.	<a href="https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/inforce/current/act-2009-014">https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/inforce/current/act-2009-014</a>
Annual reporting requirements for Queensland Government agencies	Various open data requirements to support annual reporting activities.	<a href="https://www.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0029/259148/annual-report-requirements.pdf">https://www.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0029/259148/annual-report-requirements.pdf</a>
Digital1st: Advancing our digital future	The Queensland Government digital strategy for 2017-2021 outlines the focus on making Open Data useful and usable for the community and industry.	<a href="https://digital1st.initiatives.qld.gov.au/documents/digital-strategy.pdf">https://digital1st.initiatives.qld.gov.au/documents/digital-strategy.pdf</a>