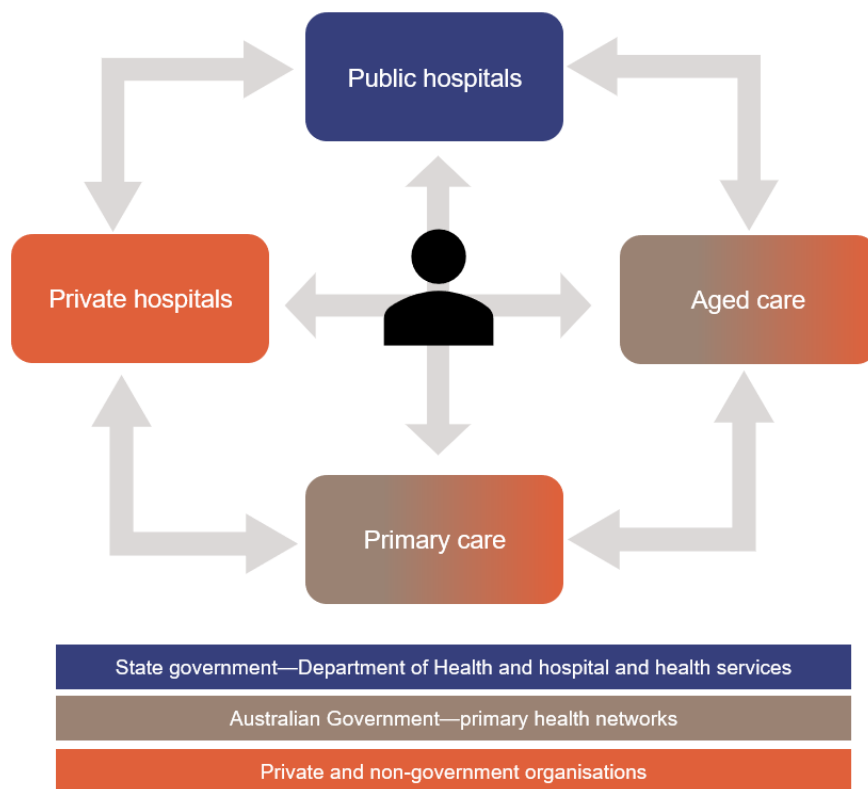


## C. Overview of Queensland’s health system

The delivery of health services in Queensland is provided through a range of healthcare professionals and organisations in the public and private sectors. Both the Australian Government and Queensland Government play key roles in the health system.

Figure C1 shows a simplified relationship between the different providers of health services. Our audit focused on the roles of the Queensland Department of Health and hospital and health services (HHSs)—collectively referred to in this report as Queensland Health.

**Figure C1**  
Queensland’s health system



Source: Queensland Audit Office.

The Department of Health is responsible for the overall management of the public health system in Queensland, including monitoring the performance of hospital and health services.

Each hospital and health service, as a statutory body, is governed by a board. Most of the public health services in Queensland are provided through the hospital and health services.

Key principles governing public sector health services are that Queensland Health:

- works with providers of private sector health services to achieve coordinated, integrated health service delivery across both sectors
- engages with clinicians, consumers, community members, and local primary healthcare organisations in planning, developing, and delivering public sector health services.

## Funding

The Australian and Queensland governments provide most of the funding for Queensland Health, equating to approximately 90 per cent of revenue in 2019–20. Private health insurers and individuals also contribute funds for healthcare.

Between 2009–10 and 2019–20, the Queensland Government’s health budget allocation increased from 24.4 per cent to 32.1 per cent of the general government sector. The amount of funding per head of population increased from \$2,202 to \$3,622 (a 64.5 per cent increase).

## Queensland Health plans

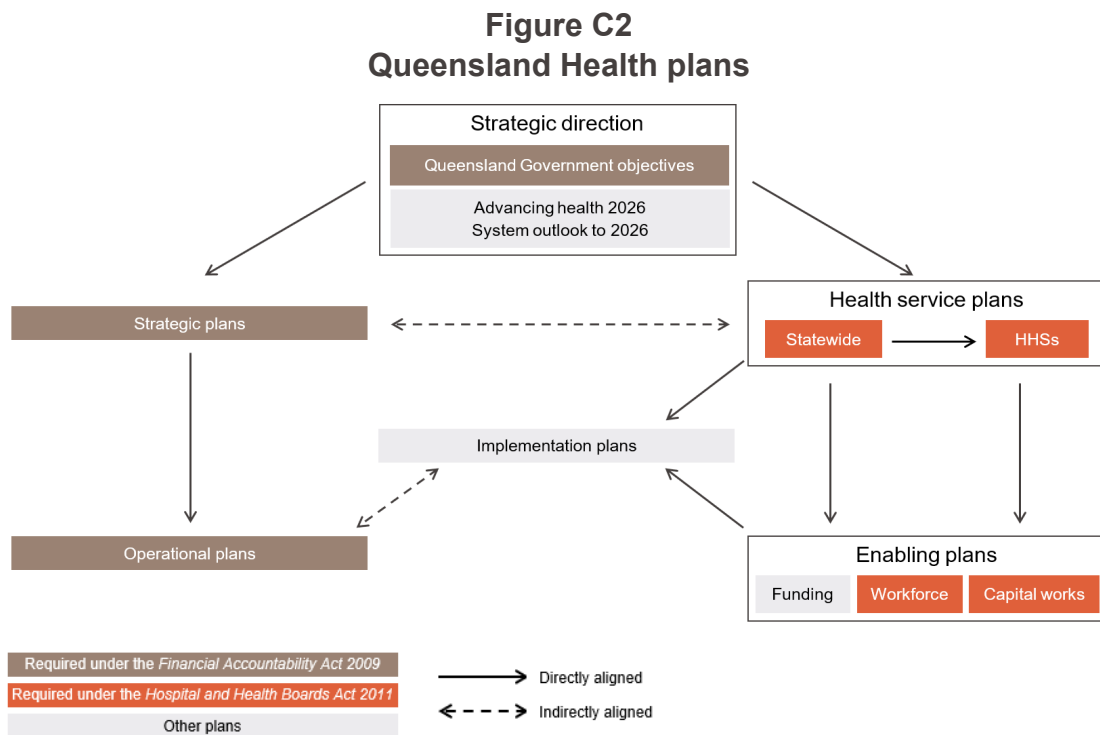
Queensland Health has planning obligations under various legislative and policy instruments. The *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011* (the Act) requires:

- the department to develop statewide plans for health services, workforce, and capital works
- hospital and health services to prepare service plans that align with statewide plans.

The vision of the *My health, Queensland’s future: Advancing health 2026* strategy is that Queenslanders will be among the healthiest people in the world. This strategy is designed to guide the Queensland Government’s long-term investment in health. Sustainability is one of its five underlying principles.

In October 2019, the Department of Health published the *Queensland Health System Outlook to 2026 for a sustainable health service*. It provides a framework for a coordinated, system-wide response to growing demand for healthcare and for making decisions about health service planning and purchasing.

Figure C2 shows a simplified outline of the plans we considered as part of this audit.



Note: Section 45(c) of the Act requires the Department of Health to develop statewide workforce plans and capital works plans. There is no equivalent requirement for hospital and health services to prepare local workforce plans and capital works plans. *Advancing health 2026—My health, Queensland’s future: Advancing health 2026*; *System outlook to 2026—Queensland Health System Outlook to 2026 for a sustainable health service*.

Source: Queensland Audit Office.

## Legislative requirements

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The *Financial Accountability Act 2009* requires the Premier to table a statement of the government's broad objectives for the community, with regular reporting on outcomes.

The Queensland Government's *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities* plan lists six government objectives for the community, including 'Keep Queenslanders healthy' and 'Give all our children a great start'.

The *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011* contains guiding principles and long-term objectives. It links to national health system principles—one of which is to have a sustainable health system.

## The Queensland Health governance review

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In March 2019, the Department of Health engaged an external expert panel to provide advice to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services regarding Queensland Health's governance framework (the governance review).

The terms of reference included whether

... the powers, roles and responsibilities within the health system are appropriately distributed to support achievement of the objectives of the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*, and ensure that Hospital and Health Boards are empowered to, and accountable for, implementing Queensland Government policies and priorities.

The panel's report, publicly released on 27 November 2019, included 28 recommendations, many of which were relevant to planning. The department will implement the recommendations over the next 12 to 18 months.

Our report does not replicate the work of the panel, but we have included recommendations or observations made by the panel where relevant to our scope.

On 20 August 2020, the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011* was amended to:

- require hospital and health services (HHSs) and hospital and health service boards to have regard to the effective and efficient use of resources for the public sector health system as a whole, and the best interests of patients and other users of public sector health services throughout Queensland
- recognise that hospital and health services and the Queensland Ambulance Service have mutual obligations to collaborate.

