

Parliament invites leading experts to contribute to Long COVID & Repeat Infections Inquiry

Monday 13 February 2023

How can you receive quality healthcare for an illness if there isn't a clear definition of what that illness is?

This is one of many issues the country's leading experts will address during a roundtable discussion at Parliament House in Canberra on 17 February 2023, to inform the [Inquiry into Long COVID and Repeated COVID Infections](#).

Following a [joint submission](#) to the Inquiry by the Australian Academy of Science (AAS) and the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences (AAHMS), they will bring together experts in areas such as infectious diseases, epidemiology, immunology, mental health and public health to provide evidence to the House Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport.

The experts will address topics including: a standard definition of long COVID that considers differences between adults and young people; the most significant knowledge gaps in the impacts of long COVID; which actions to prioritise in addressing those gaps; and how the government, research and health sectors can work to deliver those interventions.

Media and the public can follow the discussion via [live stream](#).

The event will be chaired by Professor Tania Sorrell AM FAHMS, an internationally renowned infectious diseases physician and AAHMS Fellow.

"Long COVID is increasingly recognised as a complex and life-changing illness that could affect many thousands of Australians," Professor Sorrell said.

"To significantly improve health and wellbeing, we must better understand long COVID itself, as well as its impacts on individuals, their families and carers, and society."

AAHMS President Professor Steve Wesselingh PresAHMS added that with evidence on long COVID and repeated infections still evolving, the workshop would help direct attention to key gaps.

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“Further research in this area, within the Australian context, is crucial to aid decision-making.

“The roundtable is an important opportunity to provide government with expert advice from our research community, which will help improve the national understanding of long COVID and enhance coordinated research efforts and care pathways in the future,” Professor Wesselingh said.

AAS President Professor Chennupati Jagadish AC PresAA FREng FTSE said the Learned Academies welcomed the opportunity.

“We are grateful for the opportunity to convene this roundtable, providing parliamentary committee members with direct access to those at the forefront of COVID research and treatment,” Professor Jagadish said.

“This roundtable speaks to the unique roles of the Learned Academies and their remit to provide independent, authoritative, and influential scientific advice to government. We hope this becomes a blueprint for future inquiries.”

Background

- [Inquiry terms of reference](#)
- [AAHMS](#) and the [AAS](#) are independent organisations of individuals elected for their outstanding contributions to scientific research and innovation. They provide independent voices for the science and health and medical research sectors, expert advice for decision-makers, and engage with governments, industry, patients and the public.

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