

23 May 2016

Jonathan Coppel
Presiding Commissioner
Level 12
530 Collins St
Melbourne Vic 3000

Dear Commissioner Coppel,

On behalf of the Murdoch Childrens Research Institute, I welcome the opportunity to make this submission on the development of a national education evidence base. As Director of the Murdoch Childrens, an institute that has been built on the foundations of high quality research and data, I commend your efforts to date on this significant area of reform.

Access to data, and linkage between data sets, is vitally important to the work that we do in improving outcomes for children. To drive systems and practice change, we need consistent, accurate and timely data on all aspects of children's development, including their health, wellbeing, learning, family and community contexts. Data on children's outcomes need to be measured and understood from birth to adulthood, in order to know when and how to intervene to optimise positive development.

MCRI would welcome the opportunity to speak with Members of the Productivity Commission Inquiry into the National Education Evidence Base. We would value the opportunity to assist Members understanding of the specific contexts in which we use data, the current barriers to data access and linkage, and particularly, how we are working to capitalise on the potential of data linkage through programs such as Generation Victoria (Gen V). Gen V has set out to solve four key issues:

- Turn around the unprecedented rates of adult diseases.
- Reduce the burden of modern epidemics for children, such as school failure, depression, obesity, autism, asthma, and antisocial behaviours.
- Change the landscape of how large scale research happens, because traditional research methods are too cumbersome, short-term and costly to scale up to the level needed.
- Reap the full benefit of state investment into health and education services.

Once again, I commend you on your efforts to date and look forward to further opportunities to discuss this crucial area of reform with you.

Yours faithfully,

Professor Kathryn North AM, MD, FRACP

Director