

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Context of the report

This project, *Measuring and reporting mortality in hospital patients*, is one of several conducted as part of the National Indicators Project commissioned by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission). The purpose of the National Indicators Project is to systematically identify and develop information that can be used to monitor Australia's performance in safety and quality in health care, for intra jurisdictional, inter-jurisdictional and international benchmarking and reporting purposes.

*Measuring and reporting mortality in hospital patients* aims to develop National indicator(s) of in-hospital mortality. The specified outcome for the project is:

- The development of indicators of in-hospital mortality taking into consideration different types of measurement and/or presentation (e.g. disaggregation) that may be required at the national level, at jurisdictional level and at facility or unit level.

In reaching this outcome, this project provides a detailed review of available literature: evaluating current developments in the measurement and presentation of in-hospital mortality indicators, as well as recommending in-hospital mortality indicators that can be produced using current administrative data sets.

One of the strengths of mortality measures is that the fact of death is unequivocal and generally accurately reported. The task is to identify how measures of hospital mortality can be further developed to generate an indicator, or indicators, of hospital safety and quality more generally.

*Measuring and reporting mortality in hospital patients* has two separate, but interdependent, components: a literature review focusing on methodologies for analysing and reporting in-hospital mortality, including methods and models for risk adjustment; and a modelling project aimed at establishing what national indicators of hospital mortality can be developed now, and in the future.

The modelling project provides a variety of worked examples of methods for analysing and presenting mortality rates using national data sets.

## 1.2 Structure of the report

The report contains six chapters of which this introduction is the first. Chapter 2 details the review of the literature and Chapter 3 introduces the modelling project itself. Chapter 4 provides a description of the method employed, while Chapter 5 presents the results of the modelling. The report concludes with a discussion of the findings in Chapter 6. The report also contains Appendixes, including one on data issues.