AUS HEARTS
Consumer Information

Helping people in western New South Wales and keep their hearts healthy for longer.

What is AUS HEARTS?

AUS HEARTS is a project to improve how health clinics find and treat **high blood pressure** is found and treated.

High blood pressure is very common. Many people do not know they have it, and some health care services do not always give the best treatment. When people and health care services do not treat high blood pressure, it can lead to:

Heart attacks 

Strokes 

Kidney problems 

Early death 

AUS HEARTS aims to help health services **find high blood pressure** quicker **and treat it better.** It will **help people to stay well** in their own communities.

Why are consumer important in AUS HEARTS?

Health Consumers help guide the project by:

- sharing their stories of high blood pressure care
- talking about what works and what does not
- helping make written texts clear and easy to follow

The AUS HEARTS team values are:

People centred research	Working as a team	Strong consumer input	Respect
Trust between research team and consumer	Clear communication	Many voices	Continuous improvement and support

Who are we looking to hear from

We are looking for people who access blood pressure care including people who

- have high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, kidney disease or dementia, or care for someone who does
- want to help improve health care in your community

Why is AUS HEARTS needed in Western New South Wales?

People living in rural and remote areas often:

- have **higher rates of high blood pressure**
- **are less able to get to doctors and health services**
- need to travel very far for care

Western New South Wales has some of the **highest rates of high blood pressure in Australia**. Almost 1 in 2 adults have it

By improving how blood pressure is taken care of after in everyday healthcare, AUS HEARTS can help prevent life changing illness and save lives.

What does AUS HEARTS do?

AUS HEARTS is based on a proven approach made by the **World Health Organization (WHO).** Over 40 countries around the world have improved their high blood pressure treatment by using it

The project wants to:

- check blood pressure the **right way**
- make sure treatment starts **early**, when needed
- help health staff work as a **team**
- make follow-up care regular **and easy**
- use simple systems to **track and check care**

In Australia, health services are shaping this approach to fit rural communities, local services, and people.

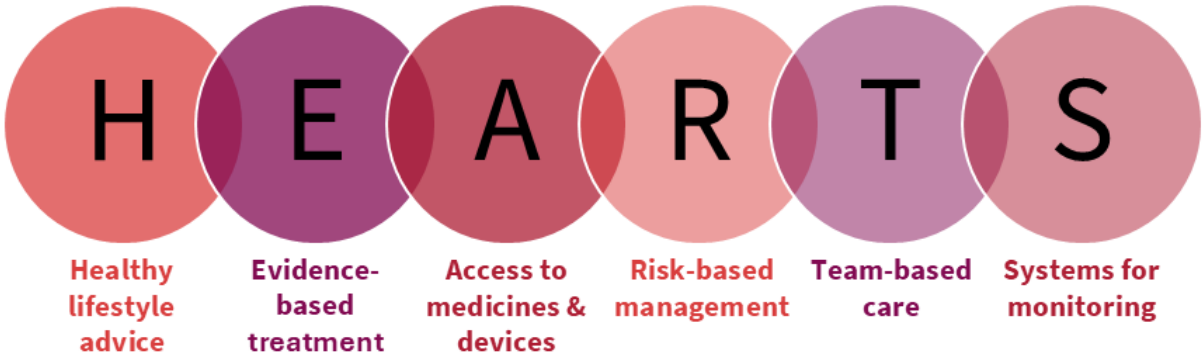


Figure 2: Modules of the World Health Organization's AUS HEARTS Technical Package.

Who is AUS HEARTS for?

AUS HEARTS will help:

- adults who have high blood pressure
- people who do not know they have high blood pressure
- older people with ongoing health needs
- people living in small towns or remote areas

Taking care of blood pressure will help people stay healthy **before problems start**.

How does AUS HEARTS work with local communities?

AUS HEARTS is **community focused** and **place-based**. This means:

- Hearing from local people
- Working with local health services
- Shaping the project to fit each community

Community voices are needed at **every stage of the project. It could involve**

- Reading the Blood Pressure Community Network newsletter
- Coming to the Blood Pressure Community Network meetings
- Coming to Townhalls to share your stories and listen to others
- Join the AUS HEARTS local steering group (initially adhoc)
- Join the research team as a Consumer investigator (EOI process)

What will happen during the project?

AUS HEARTS runs over **five years** and has two main phases.

Phase 1: Listen and plan (2025-2026)

During this phase we will:

- talk with health consumers and health professionals
- learn about local services and challenges
- ask what would make care better
- design a clear and simple way to take care of blood pressure that suits rural areas

Nothing will change in services yet. This phase is about **planning as a team**.

Phase 2: Putting the plan into action (2027-2030)

During this phase we will:

- talk with communities about how AUS Hearts could support their community
- **About 40 local health services** will use AUS HEARTS
- health teams will start using the new approach
- track blood pressure care will be tracked (without identifying people)
- services will meet regularly to improve care over time

The aim is long-term improvement, not short-term fixes.

What does this mean for patients?

If your health clinic is taking part in AUS HEARTS, you may notice:

- blood pressure is checked more
- staff talk more clearly about results
- follow-up appointments are better organised
- care feels more connected and consistent

AUS HEARTS does **not** replace your GP (general practitioner) or usual care. It helps make care **simpler, clearer, and safer.**

Privacy and respect

Your privacy matters.

- AUS HEARTS does **not** collect identifying patient information
- All data (numbers, information, stories) are handled securely
- People can choose whether or not to take part in any activities

Who is running AUS HEARTS?

The **University of Sydney** leads AUS HEARTS and works closely with:

- local health services
- community organisations
- rural health professionals
- consumers (you) and community members

The AUS HEARTS team has worked in rural health, heart disease prevention projects, and working with communities before.

Want to learn more or be involved?

If you would like to find our more or get updates on the project, you can talk to:



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Project Partners

Plus the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

NSW Health is represented by the Far West Local Health District and the Western NSW Local Health District