

**national allergy council**



**Annual Report 2023/24**

[nationalallergycouncil.org.au](https://nationalallergycouncil.org.au)

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# About the National Allergy Council

The National Allergy Council is a partnership between the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) and Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia (A&AA), working in consultation with key stakeholder organisations.

The National Allergy Council is responsible for implementing the National Allergy Strategy, a document which provides guidance on what work needs to be undertaken to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians living with allergic disease including reducing the burden on individuals, carers, healthcare services and the community.

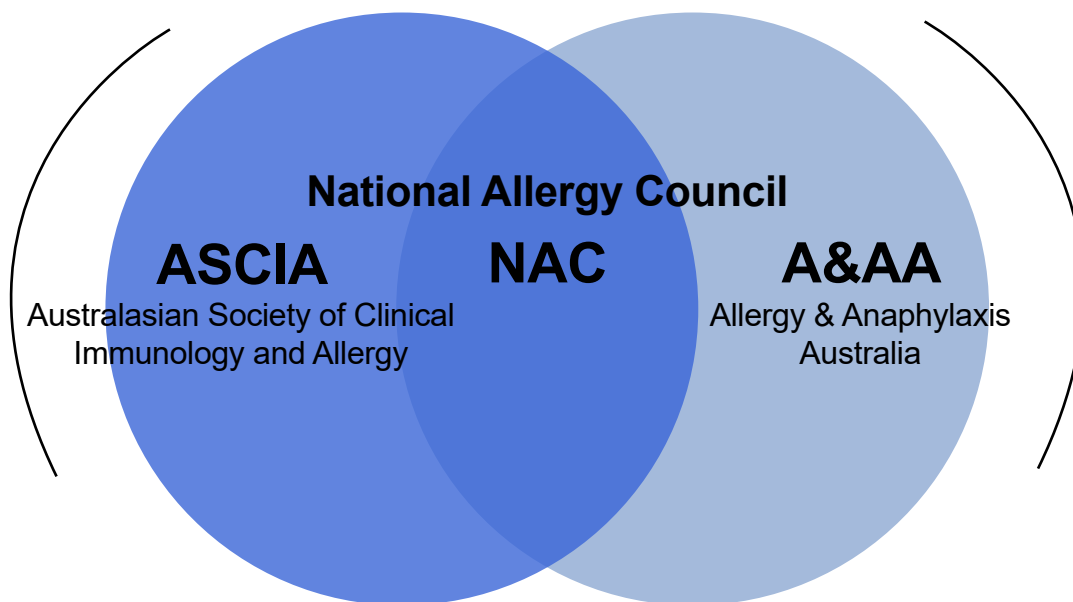
This National Allergy Strategy aims to improve the health and quality of life of Australians with allergic disease, and minimise the burden of allergic disease on individuals, their carers, healthcare services and the community.



# Our people and structure

## Our Board

As the National Allergy Council is a partnership between ASCIA and A&AA, the National Allergy Council Board of Directors comprises two directors nominated by ASCIA (Clinical Professor Michaela Lucas and Dr Melanie Wong) and two directors nominated by A&AA (Ms Maria Said AM and Ms Madeleine Young).



## Our Advisory Committee

The National Allergy Council Advisory Committee is comprised of ASCIA and A&AA Project Co-leads and a representative from the National Allergy Centre of Excellence (NACE). The National Allergy Council Advisory Committee Co-chairs are Clinical Professor Michaela Lucas (representing ASCIA) and Maria Said (representing A&AA). Our other Advisory Committee members are: Dr William Smith, Dr Vicki McWilliam, Ms Sally Voukelatos, Dr Melanie Wong, Dr Preeti Joshi, Ms Kylie Hollinshead, Ms Briony Tyquin, Dr Wendy Freeman, Dr Brynn Wainstein, Dr Katie Frith, Ms Vikki Jayewardene, Ms Tiffany Ma and Dr Kirsten Perrett (representing the National Allergy Centre of Excellence-NACE).

## Our Staff

Dr Sandra Vale (CEO), Krista Wood (Operations & Finance Officer), Heather Roberts (Principal Project Officer), Dr Merryn Netting (Senior Project Officer), Ingrid Roche (Senior Project Officer), Erin Gilmore (Project Officer), Jillian Head (Project Officer), Samantha Stiles (Project Officer), Angela Linhart (Social Media & Communications Officer).

More information about the National Allergy Council [directors](#), [advisory committee members](#) and [staff](#) is available from the National Allergy Council website.

# Our projects and impacts



## The National Allergy Council Food Service project

- Managing food allergens is everyone's responsibility.
- Supports the food service sector to cater for individuals with food allergies, understanding that both the consumer and food service staff have responsibilities.
- Provides free online food allergen management training for general food service, cooks and chefs, hospitals, schools, camps, children's education and care, residential care.
- Supports our Allergy 250K camp program by working with the camp caterers to improve food allergen management.



Several All about Allergens online courses reviewed and updated

**55%**

**increase in enrolment** across all 10 courses, with a total of 205,575 enrolments (1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024)

**80%**

**completion rate** for AAA for Children's Education and Care. **75% completion rate** across all 10 courses



In collaboration with the NSW Food Authority, **developed a food allergen management training package for registered training organisations to use to train Food Safety Supervisors**. This has been made available nationally through state and territory Food Units.



**Full website review and update** of the Food Allergy Aware website. Consolidated the Food Allergy Education website into the Food Allergy Aware website.

**15,421**

**average active users per month** for the All about Allergens Resource Hub, with an **engagement rate of >76%**



**Presented at several food service related conferences and events**, including the Food Service Australia conference, the International Congress for Environmental Health, an Australian Culinary Foundation webinar and a Dietitians Australia webinar.



### The National Allergy Council Allergy Aware project

- *The Best practice guidelines for anaphylaxis prevention and management in schools and children's education and care (CEC) services* provide consistent, evidence-based, best-practice guidance for staff in schools and CEC services, and parents.
- To help schools and CEC services to meet the recommendations of the Best Practice Guidelines, several supporting resources have been created.
- Our Allergy Aware Resource Hub houses these resources and others from ASCIA and Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia.



**Updated the Best practice guidelines** for anaphylaxis prevention and management in schools and children's education and care services.

**2,000**  
**printed copies of the Best practice**  
**guidelines distributed** to Children's  
Education and Care services.



**Developed new easy-read resources** for parents of children attending schools and/or children's education and care services.

**1,000**  
**printed copies of the Best practice**  
**guidelines distributed** to schools.



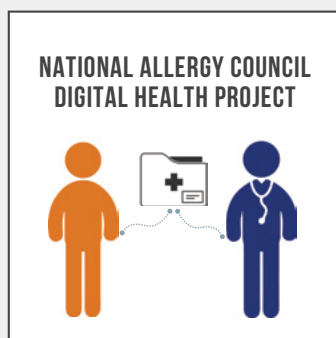
**Full website review and update**  
of the Allergy Aware website.



In collaboration with Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), **promoted the Best practice guidelines resources** including the All about Allergens training to children's education and care services across Australia.

**86.9%**  
**increase in website visits** over the  
past two years.





### The National Allergy Council Digital Health project

The National Allergy Council is working with the Australian Digital Health Agency to improve the quality of allergy information recorded in electronic health records including My Health Record.



### The National Allergy Council Drug Allergy project

This project aims to standardise drug allergy terminology and develop guidelines and protocols to improve drug allergy management.



Engaged with the Australian Digital Health Agency and other relevant organisations to **improve allergy documentation in electronic health records**.



**Developed standardised drug allergy terminology** through a Delphi panel with support from ASCIA.



**Commenced developing best practice guidelines** for the accurate recording, access and transfer of allergy information in electronic health records.



**Coordinated a meeting to develop ASCIA guidelines for assessing penicillin allergy** with support from ASCIA and the NACE.



## The National Allergy Council Food Allergy Prevention project

The project addresses two key components for food allergy prevention:

- Introducing the common allergy causing foods in the first year of life.
- Optimising eczema management to prevent sensitisation to foods through the skin.

The Nip allergies in the Bub website contains practical information for parents about how to introduce the common food allergens and how to optimise eczema management.



### Full website review and update

of the Nip allergies in the Bub website to make the information more accessible to parents and health professionals.

99,950

Nip allergies in the Bub  
bookmarks distributed.



**Created new videos** about how to  
manage eczema in babies.

11,699

website visits per month on average.

39.2%

**increase in website visits** over the  
past two years.



A joint meeting with ASCIA, the National Allergy Centre of Excellence (NACE) and Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia was held to progress a **review and update of the ASCIA guidelines for infant feeding and allergy prevention.**





## The National Allergy Council Shared Care for Allergy project

The project aims to improve access to quality care for people with an allergy, especially for those living in rural and remote areas of Australia.

Shared care puts the person with an allergy at the centre of care. They are supported by healthcare professionals, patient support organisations and the community to receive the right care, at the right time, from the right healthcare professional(s), in the right place.

15

**meetings completed as part of a series of national consultations,**

engaging with 177 healthcare professionals and people living with allergies in metro and rural Australia.



**Developed the Shared Care for Allergy Implementation Roadmap,**

through the consultations and meetings with our Working Group, which outlines the work that will be progressed by NAC, ASCIA and A&AA.

**Key initiatives** in the roadmap include:

- Assisting consumers to find an allergy-trained health professional more easily.
- Piloting a national allergy advice platform that supports rural and remote general practitioners (GPs) to appropriately manage patients with allergy.
- Developing a practical allergy training course and support network for GPs and paediatricians who work outside the metropolitan area.



**Conducted a national consultation relating to the transitioning of patients**

from children's allergy services to adult allergy services. This has led to a new Standard of Care for transitioning patients from children's allergy services to adult allergy services.

1,087

**allergy resources** available from NAC, ASCIA and A&AA websites documented through a **gap analysis**.



### The National Allergy Council Allergy 250K project

- Supports the 250,000 young Australians living with severe allergies.
- The Allergy 250K website provides information and resources to assist young people living with severe allergies.
- The annual Allergy 250K Teen Camp brings together school-aged teens living with severe allergy.
- The annual Allergy 250K Young Adult Camp brings together young adults living with severe allergy and provides an opportunity to train Allergy 250K peer mentors.
- Our Allergy 250K peer mentors participate in both the teen and young adult camps.

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## 2nd

**Allergy 250K Young Adult camp** held in Melbourne, recruited and trained **3 new Allergy 250K peer mentors**.

## 54,900

**Allergy 250K bookmarks distributed** to 106 secondary schools across Australia with support from Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia.

## 36

**school-aged teens** with severe allergies attended the Allergy 250K Teen camp in Sydney, our largest teen camp to date. **9 peer mentors** also attended.



**54 Facebook posts** and **66 Instagram posts** through Allergy 250K social media.

## 12

**monthly video chats** held with young adults with severe allergies.

# Co-chair's Report

Thank you for attending the 2024 National Allergy Council Annual General Meeting.

The primary role of the National Allergy Council is to progress the implementation of the National Allergy Strategy. Funding to implement the National Allergy Strategy has been provided by the Australian Government Department of Health since 1 July 2016. Whilst this work commenced prior to the formal establishment of the National Allergy Council, this work continues to be progressed and with further, more significant funding and support from the Australian Government since 1 July 2022.

The National Allergy Council funding grant from the Australian Government Department of Health also provides funding support for ASCIA and Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia to progress the National Allergy Strategy. Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia's operational funding is also provided by the government via funding to the National Allergy Council. This enables the three organisations to work collaboratively to progress work in a meaningful way that ensures we are implementing appropriate strategies and optimising the impact of the work we do.

The National Allergy Council continues to collaborate with the National Allergy Centre of Excellence, an organisation established to centralise allergic disease research in Australia and translation of evidence into practice. This collaboration supports the provision of an evidence base to underpin National Allergy Council projects.

Our current board members are Clinical Professor Michaela Lucas, Ms Maria Said AM, Dr Melanie Wong and Ms Madeline Young. Our Board is comprised of passionate and dedicated people who willingly give their time and expertise to the National Allergy Council. We are also fortunate to have a dedicated team of staff under the leadership of our CEO.

Our board has two representatives nominated by ASCIA and two representatives nominated by Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia. We continue to demonstrate that the strength of the National Allergy Council is the partnership between clinicians and consumers, working together to achieve a common goal.

We are stronger together and together we are progressing important work that will help to improve the health and wellbeing of people with allergic disease.

**Clinical Professor Michaela Lucas and Ms Maria Said AM**  
**National Allergy Council Co-chairs and Directors**

# Chief Executive Officer's Report

The National Allergy Council has continued to progress the implementation of the National Allergy Strategy through consultations and collaborations.

We work closely alongside ASCIA and Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia, each organisation supporting each other to achieve our deliverables and optimise our outcomes. We also collaborate with the National Allergy Centre of Excellence to translate research findings into effective programs.

The National Allergy Council has six main projects:

- Allergy 250K – a project supporting teens and young adults living with severe allergies.
- Nip allergies in the Bub – a food allergy prevention project supporting parents and health professionals.
- Allergy Aware – a project supporting Schools and Children's Education and Care Services
- Food Allergy Aware – a food service project supporting everyone working in food service.
- Shared Care for Allergy – a project that aims to improve access to quality allergy care.
- Drug Allergy and Digital Health – projects that aim to improve documentation of a person's allergies in electronic health records and improve confirmation of a person's drug allergies.

A key strength of the National Allergy Council is the partnership between ASCIA and Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia and each of our projects has an ASCIA and an Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia Project Co-lead. This means that every project is guided by a healthcare professional and a consumer with the National Allergy Council staff, to ensure we undertake appropriate consultation and implement programs that are likely to be effective. Furthermore, we ensure there are mechanisms in place to evaluate these programs.

The National Allergy Council staff continue to work extremely well as a team. We have been able to progress our project work, we have met some challenging timeframes and achieved all our deliverables, having exceeded some. A highlight of the year has been the completing our large scale consultation process and being able to progress to implementation for the Shared Care for Allergy project. We have also made significant advances with our schools and CEC project progressing implementation of the Best practice guidelines for anaphylaxis prevention and management and also our food service project, engaging with a wide range of people and organisations in the food service sector.

We are extremely grateful to the many healthcare professionals and consumers who volunteer their time to support our work. Whether it is reviewing a document, being a member of a working group or attending an Allergy 250K camp, we simply could not achieve the successful outcomes we do, without those contributions, large or small. I would particularly like to acknowledge and thank the National Allergy Council Directors and the members of the National Allergy Council Advisory Committee who provide knowledge, time, expertise and support for everything that we do.

The partnerships, collaborations, staff and volunteers we have allow us to progress high quality work in what are often, short timeframes. I would like to specifically thank the National Allergy Council staff for their ongoing passion and dedication – thank you for embracing the challenges, working through them and achieving great outcomes.

We look forward to the exciting year ahead progressing the implementation phase for all our projects.

**Dr Sandra Vale**  
**National Allergy Council Chief Executive Officer**



# Finance Report

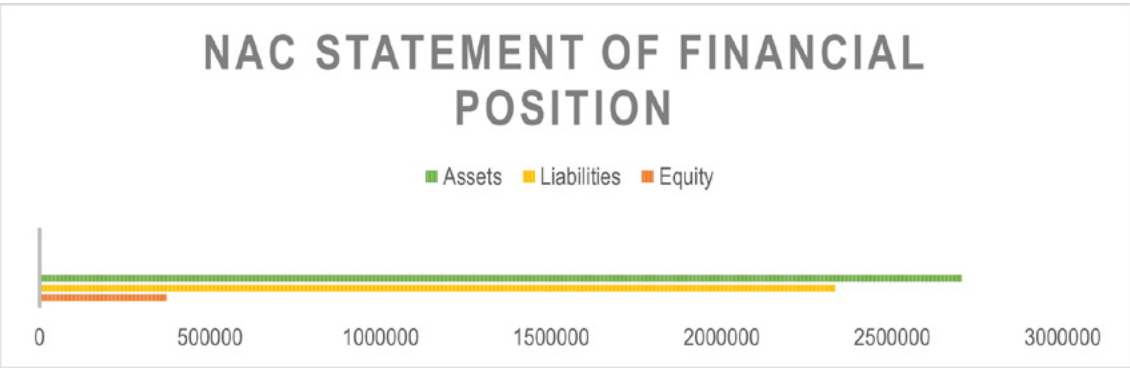
This report is based on the audited National Allergy Council Ltd financial report which covers the period ended 30 June 2024.

The National Allergy Council received funds this financial year from the Department of Health under Year 2 of its 4 year contract, in addition to this they also received funds from the Australian Digital Health Agency under an agreed Ad Hoc contract between the two parties.

The National Allergy Council has seen a profit of \$112,872 for this financial year. The National Allergy Council saw a considerable delay in the funding for Year 1 and whilst there has been a great deal of catch up and progress in Year 2 there is still a rollover of activity and of funds into Year 3 of their contract with a net profit and formal approval of rollover of funds to support this.



For the period ended 30 June 2024 the National Allergy Council holds a cash at bank position of \$2,704,719 along with equity of \$372,287, heading into FY25 in a positive position to continue the valuable work achieved in FY24.



The financial outlook for the National Allergy Council in 2024-2025 is strong due to many measures that have been put in place and continue to strengthen:

- Strategic planning including pre budgeted work outcomes
- A four year contract with the Australian Government Department of Health
- Internal management of finances

**Krista Wood**  
National Allergy Council Operations & Finance Officer

# Contact Information

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## Websites

[nationalallergycouncil.org.au](http://nationalallergycouncil.org.au)

[preventallergies.org.au](http://preventallergies.org.au)

[allergy250k.org.au](http://allergy250k.org.au)

[foodallergytraining.org.au](http://foodallergytraining.org.au)

[foodallergyaware.org.au](http://foodallergyaware.org.au)

[allergyaware.org.au](http://allergyaware.org.au)

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## Newsletter

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## Social media

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Allergy 250K

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