

## **ATMS Signs up to the Australian Consensus Framework**

Australian's trust in government, business, and not-for-profit bodies, as measured by the Edelman Trust Barometer, has been in steady decline in recent years. A score below 50 per cent is defined as a trust deficit. All three sectors - of government, business and not for profit, are currently in this trust-deficit zone. Unethical behaviour is one of the causes of this trust deficit.

In an innovative and pioneering initiative, participants in the Australian healthcare sector embarked on developing an Australian Consensus Framework (ACF) for ethical collaboration. This initiative is sector-led, voluntary and inclusive, and is supported by Federal, State and Territory jurisdictions. Having commenced in December 2017 with a group of five bodies, representing medical professional groups, industry associations, hospitals and health services, the ACF has now grown to more than 60 bodies spanning the entire healthcare system.

Early in 2018 ATMS, along with a number of other professional complementary healthcare associations, were invited to collaborate with the ACF.

The ACF stems from the foundation work that has progressed from the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) business ethics for Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) initiative, which commenced in November 2010. This initiative began with the development of a common set of APEC principles for codes of ethics within the medical device and biopharmaceutical sectors.

In response to APEC's strategy to encourage member economies to develop consensus frameworks for ethical collaboration, the ACF has adopted a purposeful and particularly inclusive approach to raising the standards of ethical collaboration, through the development of what will be the world's largest consensus framework to-date.

ATMS, along with the Federal Health Department and most State and Territory Health Departments, as well as organisations representing medical practitioners, dentists, surgeons, hospitals, universities, private health insurers, medicines manufacturers, most medical speciality associations and the peak consumer association, have now signed this ACF Consensus Statement.

The ACF Consensus Statement describes the values and ethical principles that should form the basis of collaboration and interaction among organisations in the healthcare sector.

This landmark collaboration will contribute to an enhanced dialogue between ATMS and the healthcare sector, enhanced professional outcomes, and enhanced client outcomes.