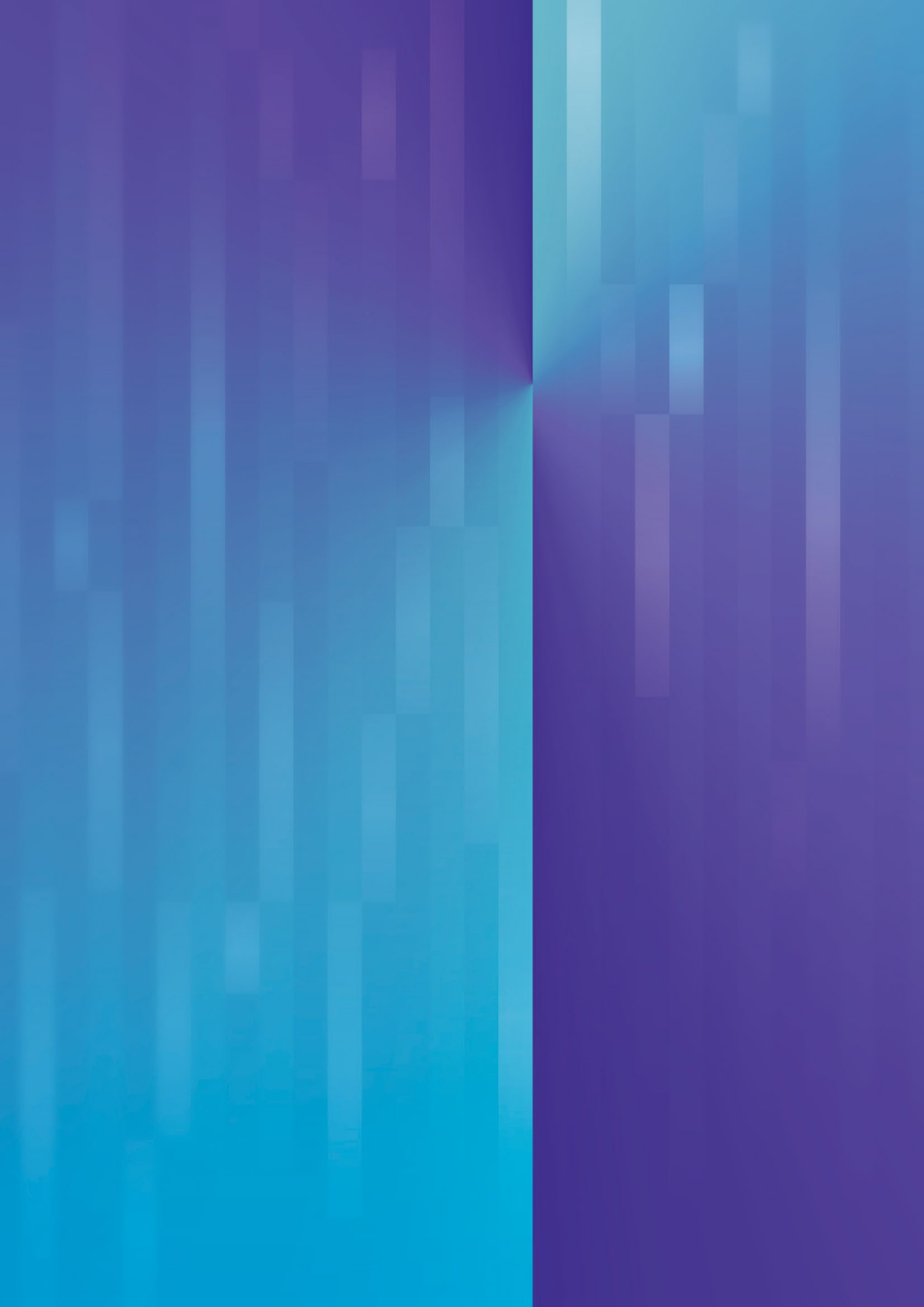


Strategic Priorities 2025–2030

September 2025



Acknowledgements

The NSW Child Death Review Team (**CDRT**) acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, who are the traditional custodians of the land on which the CDRT meet and work. We also respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land and waters across NSW and their contributing cultural, spiritual customs and practices, and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout NSW as a whole.

The CDRT pays respect to all First Nations Elders past and present, and to the children of today who are the Elders of the future.

The CDRT also acknowledges the work of staff in the NSW Ombudsman's office who perform the day-to-day operations and activities of the CDRT, and provide Secretariat support to the Team.

1 Introduction

The NSW Child Death Review Team (**CDRT**) is a statutory body established to better understand the circumstances of the deaths of children in NSW, and to use that knowledge to help prevent and reduce the risk of deaths in the future. Since 1996, the CDRT has been responsible for registering, classifying, analysing and reporting to the NSW Parliament on data and trends relating to all deaths of children in NSW.

The CDRT is constituted under Part 5A of the *Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993* (**the Act**). Under Part 5A of the Act, the CDRT's functions are to:

- maintain a register of child deaths occurring in NSW¹
- classify those deaths according to cause, demographic criteria and other relevant factors, and to identify trends and patterns relating to those deaths

- undertake, alone or with others, research that aims to help prevent or reduce the likelihood of child deaths²
- identify areas requiring further research by the Team or other agencies or persons, and
- make recommendations to prevent or reduce the likelihood of child deaths.

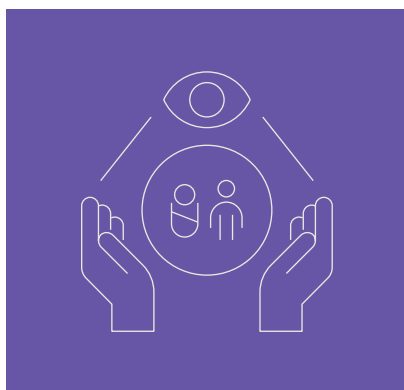
The NSW Ombudsman convenes the CDRT, and its staff support and assist the CDRT in discharging its functions. Under Part 6 of the Act, the Ombudsman also has a separate function to review the deaths of children in circumstances of abuse and neglect, in suspicious circumstances, or where the child was in care or detention (known as 'reviewable' child deaths).³

¹ See [Section 4](#) below for more information about the Register of Child Deaths.

² See the CDRT Research Framework, which guides how the NSW Ombudsman administers the CDRT's research functions to achieve the CDRT's purpose of preventing or reducing the deaths of children in NSW.

³ Further information about the Ombudsman's reviewable deaths function is available on the [NSW Ombudsman website](#) and in the [NSW Ombudsman's Annual Reports](#).

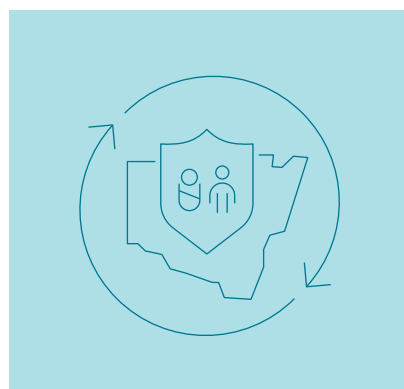
2 Vision



Our vision is

A society that values and protects the lives of all children, and in which preventable child deaths are eliminated.

3 Purpose



Our purpose is

To eliminate preventable child deaths in New South Wales by working collaboratively to drive systemic change based on evidence.

4 NSW Register of Child Deaths

The NSW Ombudsman maintains a Register of Child Deaths (**the Register**) on behalf of the CDRT that includes information relating to the deaths of all children and young people aged under 18 in NSW.

The NSW Ombudsman is routinely notified of the deaths of all children aged 0–17 years in NSW by the NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages (**BDM**). Relevant information for registering, classifying, analysing, and reporting on deaths is then sourced from records provided by government and non-government agencies and service providers that came into contact with the child or young person, including NSW Health, Department of Education, Department of Communities and Justice, NSW Police, the Coroner, and family support/early intervention/out of home care/disability support services.

All records relating to the death of a child or young person are reviewed by NSW Ombudsman staff and used to populate a wide range of fields in the Register.

In some cases, a detailed narrative of the events leading up to the death, and the circumstances of the death itself, are also recorded. The death of each child or young person is coded with cause of death using ICD-10-AM (the Australian version of the coding system overseen by the World Health Organization). The data held in the Register is used to identify trends and patterns, to inform public reporting and to support research.

5 Reporting to NSW Parliament

The CDRT reports directly to the NSW Parliament, with oversight by the Parliamentary Committee on the Ombudsman, the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission and the Crime Commission. There are three provisions in the Act under which the CDRT is required to report to Parliament:

- The **annual report** (section 34F), which details the activities of the CDRT and progress of its recommendations.
- The **biennial child death review report** (section 34G), which consists of data collected and analysed in relation to child deaths.

- **Other reports** (section 34H), which provide information on the results of research undertaken in the exercise of the CDRT's research functions. The CDRT may report to Parliament at any time and is expected to report on its research at least once every three years.

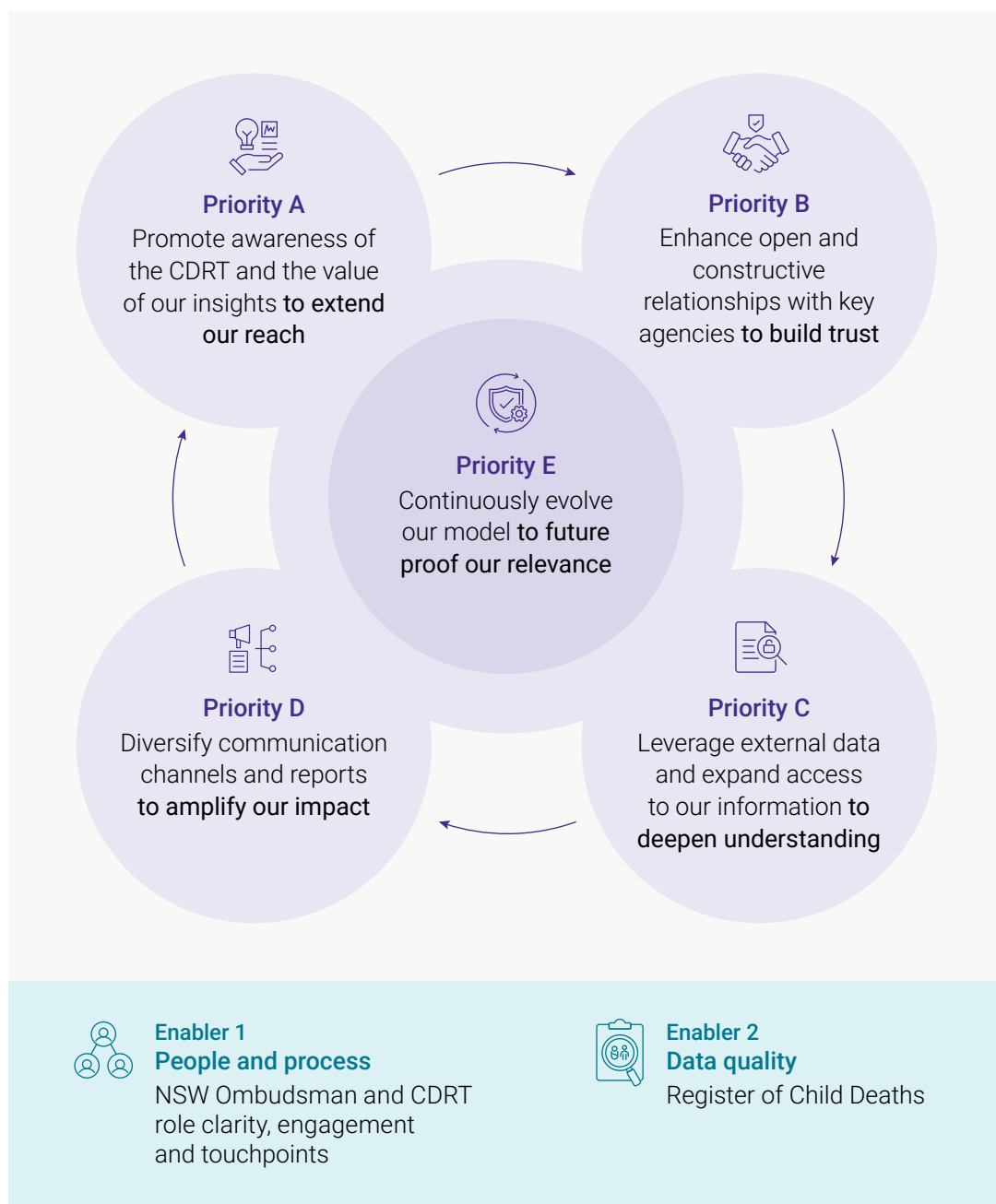
All reports are available on the [CDRT website](#).

6

CDRT Strategic Priorities 2025–2030

The CDRT's Strategic Priorities 2025–2030 identify its main priorities for this five-year period and the initiatives to achieve them. Progress against the initiatives are tracked and monitored at quarterly CDRT meetings and reported publicly in the CDRT Annual Reports.

Key priorities



Key enablers

Priorities



Priority A

Promote awareness of the CDRT and the value of our insights



Our aim/desired outcome

To broaden key stakeholder awareness of our functions and promote the value of our information and insights.



How we will get there

- Conduct mapping exercise to identify key stakeholders to maximise our engagement
- Develop, update and promote new CDRT website to better share our data and insights
- Seek opportunities to present on CDRT data and insights to deepen understanding



Priority B

Enhance open and constructive relationships with key agencies to build trust



Our aim/desired outcome

To increase collaborative information sharing with, and proactive reach-outs from, key agencies.



How we will get there

- Survey key stakeholders after each report to measure trust & impact
- Proactively engage with key agencies to support prevention opportunities
- Host the Australia and New Zealand Child Death Review and Prevention Group (**ANZCDR&PG**) Conference to support national learning about child death prevention



Priority C

Leverage external data and expand access to our information to deepen understanding



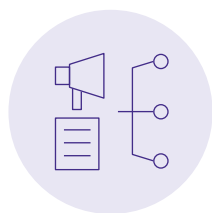
Our aim/desired outcome

To develop new ways for stakeholders to access our information holdings, and to increase our use of external data holdings to inform our own work.



How we will get there

- Conduct mapping exercise to identify relevant external data to contextualise CDRT data
- Promote and support external access to CDRT data to amplify our impact in prevention research



Priority D

Diversify communication channels and reports to amplify our impact



Our aim/desired outcome

To ensure our report formats are accessible and impactful and that we target our insights for maximum impact.



How we will get there

- Review our public report formats to enhance accessibility and impact
- Contribute data and insights to public inquiries and reviews to inform change



Priority E

Continuously evolve our model to future proof our relevance



Our aim/desired outcome

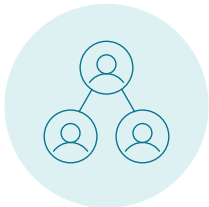
To continuously review how we do our work to ensure our relevance.



How we will get there

- Identify and promote positive prevention practices and frameworks – to amplify good practice and foster empowerment
- Embed Indigenous research best practice to support meaningful and culturally-appropriate engagement and research outcomes
- Conduct legislative review of CDRT's operating legislation to identify reforms to optimise the CDRT's functions

Enablers



Enabler 1

People and process



Our aim/desired outcome

To support role clarity, open engagement and effective touchpoints between the NSW Ombudsman and CDRT.



How we will get there

- Develop CDRT operating principles to clarify the role and relationship of CDRT and the NSW Ombudsman
- Conduct a CDRT membership review to ensure relevant cross-section expertise
- Develop and implement a comprehensive onboarding process to support role clarity and collaboration with the NSW Ombudsman
- Provide CDRT members with access to the Register of Child Deaths dashboard and develop other processes to identify and share emerging issues
- Develop and utilise a shared CDRT-Ombudsman communication channel to facilitate open communication
- Ensure CDRT meetings are structured and run to support open and meaningful discussion



Enabler 2

Data quality



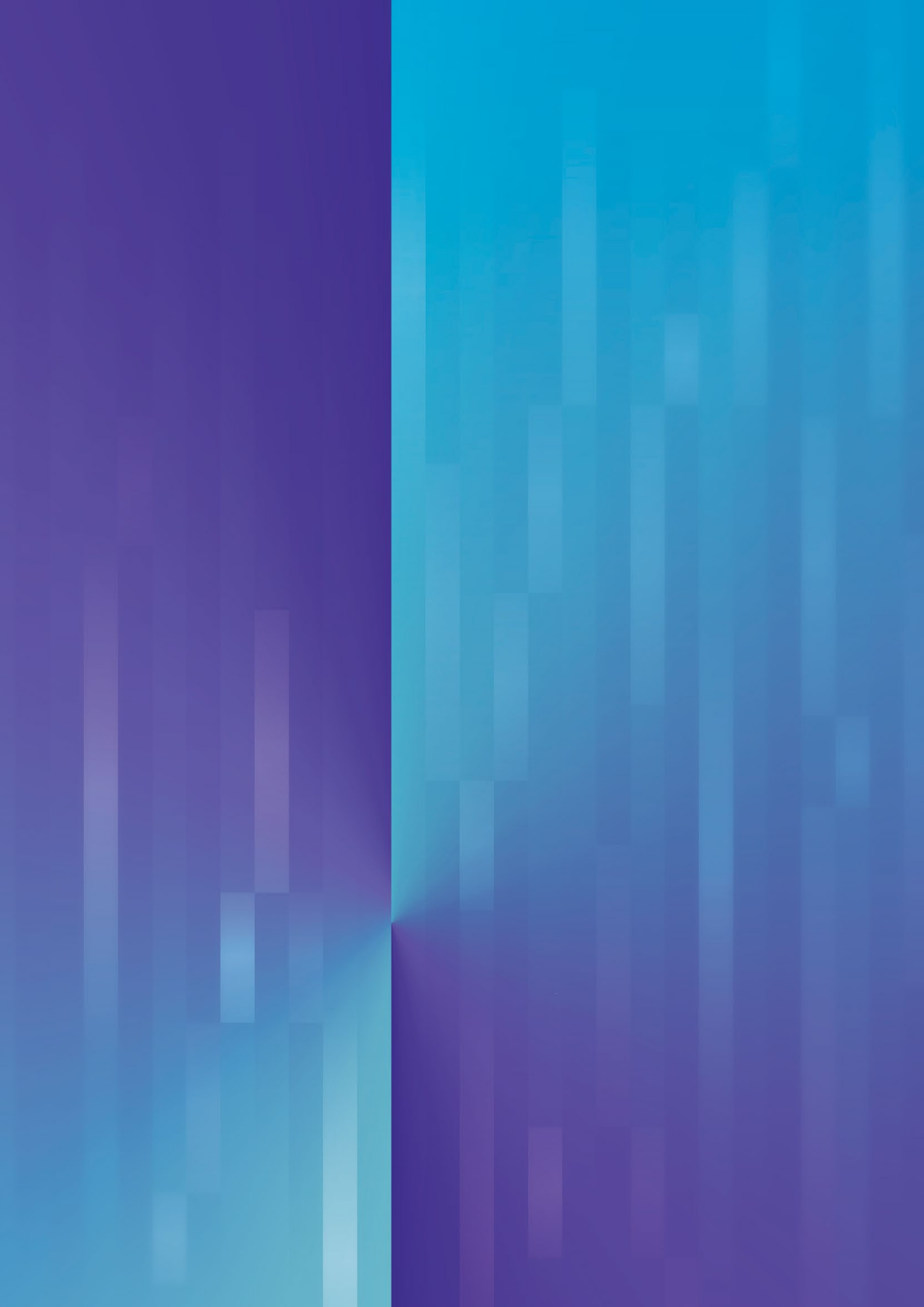
Our aim/desired outcome

To continually improve data quality and collection in the Register of Child Deaths.



How we will get there

- Implement the new Case Management System to add value and efficiencies in our work
- Review CDRT record collection processes to ensure our data collection and reporting practices align with legislative and best practice principles
- Develop an agreed minimum data standard to better support review work, reporting and research



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