



**The HON MARK BUTLER MP**  
**MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AGED CARE**

**Building a stronger Medicare**

After nine long years of cuts and neglect, the Albanese Government is making Medicare stronger for all Australians, delivering critical funding for the urgent needs of today, and reforms for the healthcare of tomorrow.

Our historic investments in Medicare will triple the bulk billing incentive, in the largest increase to the incentive in the 40-year history of Medicare.

We're delivering cheaper medicines for 6 million Australians, halving the costs of medicines and halving the number of visits to the doctor and the pharmacy.

We're making it easier for Australians to get the care they need, by growing the health workforce and supporting all our trusted health workers to do what they're trained to do.

Overall Australian Government spending on health, aged care and sport in 2023-24 is \$137.6 billion.

The Australian Government has committed \$101.0 billion in health, \$36.0 billion in aged care and \$563.1 million in sport, bringing the total four year commitment to \$580 billion.

This includes investments to build a stronger Medicare (\$5.7b), health prevention and protection (\$1.1b), tackling smoking and vaping (\$737.0m), mental health and suicide prevention (\$586.9m), and First Nations health (\$818.5m).

This Budget strikes the right balance between spending and savings, between much-needed reform and fiscal responsibility.

**More bulk billing, cheaper medicines and more affordable care**

- **\$3.5 billion in bulk billing incentives.** We are tripling these incentives to address the sharp decline in bulk billing over the past few years. This is the largest increase to the bulk billing incentive in the 40-year history of Medicare. It will have immediate benefits for more than 11 million Australians, with flow on benefits for all Australians. Incentives will cover many common GP consultations, including telehealth and videoconference - making care more affordable, particularly for children, pensioners and other Commonwealth concession card holders.

- **Making common medicines cheaper.** Australians will be able to buy two months' worth of medicine for the price of a single (one month) prescription for more than 300 common PBS medicines. This will halve patients' visits to the GP and pharmacist– saving patients an estimated \$1.6 billion and freeing up millions of GP appointments.

Medicines to treat COVID-19 and cystic fibrosis are being expanded or added to the PBS, saving patients thousands of dollars a year.

- **Extending public dental services.** 360,000 adults on lower incomes will have continued access to public dental services, while work continues on long-overdue long-term reform worth \$219.4 million.

### **Making it easier to get the care you need**

- **\$358.5 million for Medicare Urgent Care Clinics, with more clinics in more places.** This will free up overstretched GPs, take pressure off hospitals and improve access to affordable care. 8 new Medicare Urgent Care Clinics will be fully resourced and operating this year, open for longer hours and with no out-of-pocket cost for patients. This takes the total number of clinics around the country to 58.
- **\$143.9 million for after hours primary care.** We are improving access to after-hours care, through the Primary Health Networks After Hours Program and Healthdirect. These programs improve access to services for people affected by homelessness and for culturally and linguistically diverse Australians.
- **MyMedicare.** This is a new voluntary scheme to create a stronger relationship between patients and their primary care teams. Patients can enrol with a general practice registered with MyMedicare, to get better continuity of care and easier access to telehealth consultations. MyMedicare will provide practices with more comprehensive information about their regular patients, while giving patients and their care team access to additional funding packages, tailored to their health needs. MyMedicare will also support longer GP telehealth consultations with reduced administration for practices (\$5.9m); provide new funding packages for general practices to provide comprehensive care to patients who are frequent hospital users (\$98.9m); and for Australians in residential aged care (\$112.0m).
- **\$98.2 million for new Medicare rebates.** Patients who require consultations of longer than 60 minutes will receive a larger Medicare rebate – giving doctors support to provide high quality care to people with chronic or complex needs, including mental health issues.
- **\$47.8 million for wound care.** Patients with diabetes and chronic wounds, in particular, will benefit from this additional funding to improve access to more affordable, high-quality wound care.

- **\$445.1 million to expand general practice.** We are significantly increasing incentives for general practices to employ a range of health professionals to provide team-based primary care. Smaller practices will also be able to complement their teams with the services of allied health professionals that have been commissioned by Primary Health Networks (\$79.4m).
- **\$951.2 million for digital health.** The Australian Digital Health Agency will upgrade and modernise My Health Record, making it easier for patients and providers to use and support the secure, safe and efficient sharing of information. This will improve health outcomes for patients and reduce duplication in the system.
- **\$29.8 million as an initial investment to reduce fraud.** Importantly, this Budget includes immediate actions to reduce Medicare fraud – including a taskforce within the Department of Health and Aged Care to oversee longer-term improvements to Medicare integrity.

### **A growing workforce with more support for health workers to do what they're trained to do**

Our investment will grow a skilled, diverse, motivated, well-distributed and sustainable primary health care workforce – making it easier for all Australians to get affordable care when and where they need it.

- **\$81.8 million for changes to scholarship arrangements.** Focusing on nursing, midwifery, First Nations health workers and international medical graduates, these scholarships will boost the workforce in regional and rural areas and areas of workforce shortage including aged care
- **\$4.5 million for expansion of Single Employer Model trials.** This works for GP registrars in regional, rural and remote locations, so they can deliver services in various community-based medical practices without losing employment benefits as they move between employers.
- **\$10.7 million for primary care placements.** We will increase the number of nurses in primary care, by funding an extra 6,000 clinical placements over 4 years. Funding will also support 500 nurses to return to the workforce, and we'll expand the availability of courses for nurses to transition to primary care practice.
- **\$46.8 million to fund Medicare rebates for care provided by nurse practitioners.** This rebate will increase by 30%. Nurse practitioners and participating midwives will also be enabled to prescribe PBS medicines and services under Medicare. This will make care more accessible and affordable for Australians, particularly in rural and regional areas.
- **\$1.2 billion for community pharmacies.** Pharmacists will be able to administer National Immunisation Program vaccines at no cost to patients. (\$114.1m). 50,000 Australians who need treatment for opioid dependency will have funded support to access the treatment they need at their local

pharmacy a cost they can afford (\$377.3m). Increased funding will allow patients continued access to medication management and review programs and incentives for eligible community pharmacies operating in regional, rural and remote locations will be doubled. (\$734.4m)

- **\$586.9 million for improved mental health.** This budget extends critical services, addresses urgent gaps and workforce shortages – laying the groundwork for future reform. Including:
  - 500 additional postgraduate psychology places.
  - 500 one-year internships for provisional psychologists.
  - 2,000 supervisor training sessions.
  - Upskilling the broader health workforce to better recognise and respond to mental health issues.
  - Expanded supports for workplaces, children and young people, people with eating disorders, those bereaved by a suicide loss and individuals and communities impacted by natural disasters.
  - Expanded services for more than 18,000 people with severe mental illness who are not in the NDIS and need psychosocial support.
  - Boosting mental health support for First Nations people in the lead up to, during and following the Voice referendum.
  - Further protection for vulnerable members of the community, including refugees and migrants who have experienced torture and trauma, and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

### **Vaping, tobacco control and stronger preventative health**

The 2023-24 Budget funds strong actions to reduce smoking and vaping rates, particularly among young Australians.

- **\$247.4 million to tackle smoking and vaping.** A new anti-smoking and anti-vaping campaign will be rolled out, along with more information and support to help people quit. The successful Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) program will be extended and expanded to vaping. The Government is also proposing stronger regulation and enforcement of e-cigarettes, including new controls on their importation, contents and packaging.
- **\$502.2 million for stronger preventative health.** A new national lung cancer screening program targeting those most at risk is predicted to prevent more than 4,000 deaths in Australia. The Budget also builds the capacity and capability of the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services to better support cancer care needs and improve First Nations health outcomes.
- **\$68.3 million for better drug and alcohol prevention and treatment.** We are extending programs, including those providing screening and counselling, funding essential diagnostic services for Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, and providing further support for renal services, including dialysis in First Nations communities.

This Budget also provides funding to:

- Establish an interim Australian Centre for Disease Control in the Department of Health and Aged Care (\$91.1m) and replenish the National Medical Stockpile.
- Improve health outcomes for women, girls and gender diverse people (\$40.6m), including continued support for breastfeeding and the breastmilk bank.
- Continue the National Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infection Strategies (\$19.7m).
- Provide more Clinical Quality Registries (\$40.0m), ensuring patients receive the best quality medical procedures and treatments, including those for dementia, cystic fibrosis, and pelvic floor disorders.

**ENDS**

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## **The Hon Mark Butler MP**

Minister for Health and Aged Care

## **The Hon Anika Wells MP**

Minister for Aged Care

Minister for Sport

### **DELIVERING THE LARGEST EVER PAY RISE TO AGED CARE WORKERS**

The 2023-24 Budget delivers on the Albanese Government's commitment to restore dignity to aged care and ensuring older Australians are treated with the respect they deserve with an overall spend in aged care of \$36 billion in 2023-24.

The Government recognises the complex and previously undervalued work of the aged care workforce which is why we are investing \$11.3 billion to fund the Fair Work Commission's interim decision for a 15% pay increase.

This is the largest ever pay increase for aged care workers. It signifies real progress towards genuinely valuing their dedication and skill and will help aged care providers attract and retain staff.

We will invest in our workers with advancements to the National Worker Registration Scheme, engaging with the aged care, health and training sectors (\$59.5m).

We will invest \$72.3 million in a new regulatory model and prudential framework, to be reflected in a new Aged Care Act. This Budget investment will improve quality and safety, and restore trust and confidence through changes in how providers are regulated. The new model will be complemented by actions to:

- strengthen food and nutrition reporting, direct expert dietary advice to providers and embed improved dining experiences for aged care residents (\$12.9m)
- begin Monthly Care Statements with information on care provided and occurrences of significant change or events for residents (\$1.3m)
- enhance Star Ratings for better data quality and analysis (\$126.7m)

- expand the existing Quality Indicator program to in-home care services (\$11.9m).

Older Australians increasingly want to receive aged care and live independently in their own homes for longer. This Budget provides 9,500 additional Home Care Packages, to be released in 2023-24, and establishes new aged care assessment arrangements from July 2024.

A new Aged Care Taskforce will be established to review aged care funding arrangements and develop options to make the system fair and equitable for all Australians.

The Taskforce will also inform the final design of the Support at Home program which will be postponed to commence on 1 July 2025, in response to feedback and to allow time to further refine the design. A July 2025 start date, will also ensure aged care service providers are well prepared for the change, avoiding disruptions to continuity of care for older people. Existing grant arrangements for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme will be extended for a further 12 months to 30 June 2025.

For older people requiring residential care, we will develop systems to help choose their provider, giving them greater choice and control in decision making.

Aged care residents will have better access to high quality, continuous primary care through reforms to strengthen Medicare, with new incentives for GPs to provide care to residents through MyMedicare (\$112m).

We will continue to support the viability of aged care providers in rural and remote areas and address a shocking inequity that saw providers of culturally safe care for First Nations elders funded less, per resident, than other mainstream providers, through a funding uplift to the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program (\$52.1m).

The Budget also provides support to build the capacity of Aboriginal Controlled Organisations so that First Nations elders will continue to receive the care they need on Country (\$7.6m).

#### **Quotes attributable to Minister Butler:**

“This Budget continues our strong agenda on aged care, increasing our workforce, and improving care, transparency and accountability in the sector.

“Aged care workers have been undervalued and underpaid for too long – we are supporting a wage increase for them because it’s the right thing to do.

#### **Quotes attributable to Minister Wells:**

“We are ambitious for aged care and determined to ensure the older people who helped build this country receive safe, high quality, support.

“This Budget meets these challenges head-on, with targeted and responsible investments that put the health, wellbeing and dignity of older Australians receiving aged care front and centre.

“I invite Australians to be ambitious with the Albanese Government and commit to the future of aged care as we build a system that is equitable, sustainable, and trusted to deliver quality services for older people.”

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# BUDGET OVERVIEW

## Making it easier to get the healthcare you need

Primary Health Networks (PHNs) will be funded to extend the PHN After Hours programs for another 2 years and to improve access to primary care for multicultural communities and for people experiencing homelessness (\$143.9m).

Patients, including aged care residents, will be able to get consistent care from a team of Medicare-funded healthcare providers (\$19.7m).

MyMedicare will make it easier for GPs to provide telehealth consultations (\$5.9m). Providers will receive incentive payments to deliver wraparound, tailored care to keep patients with complex, chronic disease out of hospitals (\$98.9m).

The Budget includes additional funding to support the Medicare Urgent Care Clinics (UCCs) program, including 8 new Medicare UCCs (\$358.5m).

There will be a new Medicare rebate for consultations of 60 minutes or longer, which will give doctors the support they need to provide high-quality care to people with chronic conditions and complex needs (\$98.2m).

There will be also be better access to more affordable wound care for eligible patients with a chronic wound and diabetes (\$47.8m).

The Government is investing in new and amended MBS items including heart health checks to protect Australians against heart disease (\$118.2m).

A \$951.2 million digital health package will improve digital systems to build a more efficient, connected and collaborative healthcare system. The Australian Digital Health Agency will be an ongoing entity and will upgrade and modernise My Health Record to make it easier for patients and providers to use and support the secure, safe and efficient sharing of information.

The Intergovernmental Agreement on National Digital Health will be renewed for 4 years to progress the secure, safe and efficient sharing of information across the health system.

We will fund more Clinical Quality Registries (\$40m) to ensure patients are receiving the best quality medical procedures and treatments, including those for dementia, cystic fibrosis, and pelvic floor disorders.

The Australian Government is continuing and expanding mental health and suicide prevention supports (\$586.9m) for:

- people with severe mental illness not in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
- children and young people
- people with eating disorders
- people bereaved by suicide
- people and communities impacted by disasters
- culturally and linguistically diverse communities, including refugees and migrants who have experienced torture and trauma
- First Nations people in the lead up to, during and following the referendum to enshrine an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice in the Constitution

Funding for digital mental health services will also be extended.

## Bigger incentives to bulk bill, cheaper medicines and more affordable care

The 2023–24 Budget provides a historic \$6.1 billion investment in strengthening Medicare, to revamp primary healthcare. It also includes an additional \$2.2 billion for new and amended Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) listings and \$259.5 million for other critical health infrastructure.

It includes a \$3.5 billion investment to triple bulk billing incentives, in the largest increase to the incentive in the 40-year history of Medicare. This will directly benefit 11.6 million Australians, with flow on benefits for all Australians. Incentives will cover face-to-face and telehealth GP consultations.

From 1 November, a GP who bulk bills an eligible patient for a standard consultation in a metropolitan area will receive a bulk billing incentive benefit of \$20.65 instead of \$6.85. In remote areas, the bulk billing incentive for a standard consultation will increase from \$13.15 to \$39.65.

This will address the sharp decline in bulk billing rates and doctor availability over recent years, and make healthcare more affordable for about 5.1 million children under 16, and 7.9 million pensioners and concession card holders.

More than 300 common medicines will be cheaper for 6 million Australians who will be able to buy 2 months' worth of medicine with a single prescription. This will halve patients' visits to the GP and pharmacy. It will save patients up to \$180 per year for each eligible medicine they take. Commonwealth concession card holders will save up to \$43.80 a year per medicine.

Medicines, including to treat COVID-19 and cystic fibrosis, are being expanded or added to the PBS, saving patients thousands of dollars a year (\$2.2b).

## Tackling smoking and vaping and improving cancer outcomes

The Government is taking strong action to reduce smoking, stamp out vaping and improve cancer outcomes through:

- proposed stronger regulation and enforcement of all e-cigarettes, including new controls on importation, contents and packaging
- a new public health information campaign to discourage Australians from taking up smoking and vaping, and encourage people to quit (\$68.3m)
- expanding specialised programs and health services to support Australians to quit smoking and vaping (\$29.5m)
- a new national lung cancer screening program that is predicted to prevent over 4,000 deaths from lung cancer through early diagnosis and treatment (\$263.8m)
- extending and widening the Tackling Indigenous Smoking program to include efforts against vaping (\$141.2m)
- addressing inequity in cancer outcomes for First Nations people by building the capacity and capability of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services to support cancer care on the ground and ensure mainstream services are culturally safe and accessible (\$238.5m).
- increasing tobacco tax by 5%, making cigarettes more expensive and less attractive, and taxing all tobacco at the same rate

### Total new investments



### This investment includes:

- **\$6.1 billion**  
Strengthening Medicare
- **\$818.5 million**  
First Nations health
- **\$1.1 billion**  
Health prevention and protection
- **\$737 million**  
Smoking and vaping cessation
- **\$586.9 million**  
Mental health

## Growing health workforce

To improve the accessibility and affordability of general practice in rural areas, a new pre-fellowship program for non-vocational doctors will be established to support international medical graduates to work in primary care and remain in rural communities (\$30.5m).

Changes to scholarship arrangements – with a focus on nursing, midwifery and First Nations health workers – will boost the workforce in primary care, aged care, regional and rural areas and other areas of workforce shortage (\$50.2m).

The number of nurses in primary care and aged care will grow, with an extra 6,000 clinical placements (\$4.2m), 1,850 post graduate scholarships to train more nurse practitioners and endorsed midwives (\$50.2m), and incentives to get 500 nurses back into the workforce (\$1m).

GP registrars in regional, rural and remote locations will be able to deliver services in community-based medical practices without losing employment benefits as they move between employers, through an extension of the Single Employer Model trials (\$4.5m).

The Budget will significantly increase workforce incentives for primary care practices to employ various health professionals, to provide team-based, patient-centred, high-quality primary care (\$445.1m).

A one year extension of the Practice Incentives Program Quality Improvement and a review of workforce incentive programs will be undertaken, to ensure incentive payments appropriately support primary care practices to deliver the care Australians expect (\$60.2m).

PHNs will be funded to commission multidisciplinary care from allied health, nurses and midwives (\$79.4m) to support smaller or solo primary care practices, to increase patient access and improve the management of chronic conditions.

Medicare patient rebates for care provided by nurse practitioners will be increased by 30%. The Government will also enable our highly-trained nurse practitioners and participating midwives to prescribe PBS medicines and provide services under Medicare without the need for a legislated collaborative arrangement and will increase MBS rebates for standard nurse practitioner attendance items (\$46.8m). Over time, MyMedicare will be extended to Nurse Practitioners and other primary care providers.

Patients will have continued access to medication management and dose administration aids programs, with funding for community pharmacy programs increased (\$654.9m). The total budget for the Regional Pharmacy Maintenance Allowance will be doubled (\$79.5m).

Pharmacists will be able to administer National Immunisation Program vaccines at no cost to patients (\$114.1m), and the more than 50,000 Australians who need treatment for opioid dependency will have funded support from their local pharmacy to access the treatment medications they need at a cost they can afford (\$377.3m).

Delays in the psychology training pipeline will be addressed while longer-term reform is progressed. This includes 500 extra postgraduate psychology places, 500 one-year internships for provisional psychologists, and 2,000 supervisor training sessions (\$91.3m).

A \$17.8 million investment will help upskill the broader health workforce to better recognise and respond to mental health issues.

## Restoring dignity to aged care

Aged care workers will receive their largest ever pay rise, with the Government investing \$11.3 billion to fund the Fair Work Commission's interim decision for a record 15% pay increase.

The wage rise will deliver cost-of living relief for over 250,000 aged care workers. It is the largest ever pay increase in the history of the Fair Work Act.

The Government will also progress the National Worker Registration Scheme (\$59.5m).

A new regulatory framework and prudential model (\$72.3m) will enable changes in how providers are regulated. The new model will be complemented by actions to:

- improve aged care residents' dining experiences and food and nutrition reporting (\$12.9m)
- require residential aged care services to provide residents with Monthly Care Statements on care provided and occurrences of significant change
- enable continuous improvement and enhance Star Ratings for older Australians and work to expand the Quality Indicator program to in-home care services (\$139.9m).

An additional 9,500 home care packages will be made available in 2023-24 (\$166.8m), to meet the growing preference for older people to continue to live independently in their own home.

A newly established single assessment system will use existing assessment organisations to simplify and improve access to aged care services. Older people will no longer be bounced between different organisations to assess need.

A new Aged Care Taskforce will be established to review aged care funding arrangements and develop options to make the system fair and equitable for all Australians (\$0.7m).

The Taskforce will also inform the final design of the Support at Home program which will be postponed to commence on 1 July 2025, in response to feedback and to allow time to further refine the design. Existing grant arrangements for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme will be extended for a further 12 months to 30 June 2025.

The Disability Support for Older Australians program will be extended with \$487 million. Older people with disability will benefit from delivery of consistent, timely, and high quality disability services so they can live in their homes and communities.

Aged care recipients will have greater choice and control in decision making through the development of systems that will help them to choose their provider (\$41.3m).

There will be increased access to primary care for aged care residents, with new incentives for GPs (\$112m).

Rural and remote areas, in particular, will receive support to ensure the viability of local aged care providers (\$98.7m).

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program will receive increased funding (\$77.3m) to ensure First Nations elders access high quality, culturally safe care. The Government will build the capacity of Aboriginal Controlled Organisations to ensure on Country services (\$8.2m). An interim First Nations Aged Care Commissioner will be appointed (\$1.6m).

## Stronger preventive health

This Budget takes the first key step towards establishing a world-class Australian Centre for Disease Control to better prepare Australia for future pandemics and health threats (\$91.1m). The National Medical Stockpile will be replenished and begin transitioning into the ACDC. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) will receive long term funding for activities aimed at protecting public health (\$61m).

The shingles vaccine Shingrix will be added to the National Immunisation program (\$446.7m). The Budget also continues the important public information campaign for routine childhood immunisation (\$3.4m).

An additional 30,000 eligible adult public patients will be able to receive dental treatment (\$219.4m).

First Nations people will benefit from funding to increase uptake of annual health checks, expand both the Deadly Choices program and the Practice Incentives Program Indigenous Health Incentive (\$17.1m) and the 'Strong Born' awareness campaign for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) (\$1.4m). There are measures to increase renal services (\$28.2m).

\$40.6 million will support equity in the healthcare system and improve the health of Australian women and girls. There will be continued funding for donor breast milk bank services (\$6m), and the Australian Breastfeeding Association's National Breastfeeding Helpline (\$4.8m).

The Budget extends FASD prevention, diagnosis and support activities (\$5m), and important alcohol and drug prevention and treatment programs (\$33.6m).

It provides \$0.9m to develop a 10-year national action plan for the health and wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ people, and establish an LGBTQIA+ Health Advisory Group.

There is funding to enhance efforts to end HIV transmission in Australia by 2030, including access to treatment for people who are ineligible for Medicare (\$10m), and increased access to testing, treatment and information (\$3.2m). The Blood Borne Virus (BBV) and Sexually Transmissible Infection (STI) National Response will be continued (\$6.6m).

A new National Sport Plan will be developed and the *Australian Sports Commission Act 1989* will be reviewed to ensure a strategic approach to major sporting events. In addition, the Government will implement the Major Sporting Events Legacy Framework to ensure major international sporting events deliver social, economic, and sporting benefits for all Australians (\$1.1m).

The Budget will support the Confederation of Sport's bid to host the World Masters Games 2029 (WMG) in Perth (\$5m).

Funding is being provided to advance the rights of women and girls, and broader human rights objectives, and for a talent and development program that will increase the number of female coaches, officials and administrators from grassroots through to elite level (\$2.1m).

Financial assistance will be given to thousands of junior competitors, coaches and officials to attend sporting competitions through the Local Sporting Champions and Local Para Champions programs (\$8.3m).

**\$11.3 billion**  
for aged care  
workforce  
pay rise



## Improving the lives of all Australians

**The Government is putting patients at the centre of healthcare.**

**The Government is building a stronger Medicare for all Australians, and we're listening to patients who have too often been locked out of decision-making.**

The Budget delivers on that promise, with \$10.5 million to strengthen the capacity of the Consumers Health Forum (CHF), Australia's leading advocate on consumer healthcare issues. This funding will support CHF to build on their strong track record of supporting consumer engagement and ensure they have a national reach.

A \$2.5 million investment will provide seed funding to the Federation of Ethnic Communities Council of Australia (FECCA), to establish the Australian Multicultural Health Collaborative. Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) Australians are underrepresented in current consumer engagement peak bodies and activities. Funding FECCA will build their capacity to advocate and contribute the voices of culturally and linguistically diverse Australians into healthcare.

These investments support the recommendations of the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce, which called for consumers, particularly those from disadvantaged groups, to be empowered to have a voice in the design of services so that they meet the needs of all Australians.





## First Nations people

First Nations people, wherever they live, will benefit from significant investments in health, aged care and mental health support and services to help close the gap in health and wellbeing outcomes.

They will have better access to services, and measures will be delivered in genuine partnership with the First Nations health and aged care sector.

First Nations cancer patients will be able to access culturally safe, respectful and responsive cancer care, through both Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and mainstream cancer care services (\$238.5 million). Up to 260 new positions will be created to deliver cancer treatment and other supports such as health promotion activities, support for patients to navigate cancer care following diagnosis, and access to treatment and care on Country.

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program will be further funded to ensure First Nations elders access high quality, culturally safe care (\$77.3 million).

Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations will grow their capability and capacity (\$8.2 million) to ensure on Country services. An interim First Nations Aged Care Commissioner will ensure First Nations people have a voice in shaping the role and functions of the permanent Commissioner, to ensure maximum impact on the aged care system (\$1.6 million).

Many health conditions will be detected, diagnosed and treated earlier thanks to programs to get more First Nations people to have free annual health checks, and a national expansion of the Deadly Choices program and the Practice Incentives Program-Indigenous Health Incentive (\$17.1 million).

First Nations people will be better supported to give up smoking and vaping, or avoid taking it up in the first place. The successful Tackling Indigenous Smoking program will be expanded to target vaping, while continuing efforts to reduce tobacco smoking (\$141.2 million). This will help achieve Australia's targets to reduce smoking rates among First Nations people from 37%, to 27% or less by 2030.

Current or former smokers will benefit from early diagnosis and treatment of lung cancer, thanks to the new National Lung Cancer Screening Program (\$263.8 million).

Eligible Australians, including First Nations people, aged between 50 and 70 years and with a history of cigarette smoking, can have scans every 2 years, including through mobile screening services for some regional areas.

First Nations communities, and the health workers who support them, will have access to culturally-appropriate knowledge and skills to prevent alcohol-exposed pregnancies, yarn sensitively about alcohol use during pregnancy, and identify and support children who may have Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (\$1.4 million).

First Nations people will have more mental health support in the lead up to, during and following the referendum to enshrine an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice in the Constitution (\$10.5 million). Through culturally safe and trauma informed services, support will be provided during this period of heightened risk to the mental health and wellbeing of First Nations peoples.

### Case study

**Michelle is a 55-year-old First Nations woman who smoked for many years. She quit after her granddaughter was born 9 years ago and her health has improved significantly since.**

**Michelle knows many people in her community who have died of lung cancer and doesn't want her children and grandchildren left without her.**

**Michelle can now get a free lung scan every 2 years to ensure that if she does develop lung cancer it can be picked up and treated early. She may also be able to access mobile screening services which will be made available for some First Nations communities, and those living in smaller rural towns.**



## Rural and regional communities

Rural and regional communities will benefit from new investments and programs designed to address the specific health challenges they face.

Seeing a general practitioner (GP) will be more affordable for many individuals and families in regional Australia with \$3.5 billion to triple bulk billing incentives for GPs. This will mean more children under 16, pensioners and other Commonwealth concession card holders can visit their GP or receive a telehealth consultation with no out-of-pocket costs.

It will be of particular benefit to people who live in regional, rural and remote communities, where access to primary care services is limited, and those with chronic and complex health conditions.

GPs who bulk bill an eligible patient for a standard consultation in a remote area will have their bulk billing incentive increase from \$13.15 to \$39.65.

GP registrars in regional, rural and remote locations will be able to deliver services in community-based medical practices without losing employment benefits as they move between employers, through an extension of the Single Employer Model trials (\$4.5 million).

Residents in rural and regional areas, and remote First Nations communities, will receive extra support for primary care visits from the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). The RFDS will continue to provide critical emergency evacuations when and where they are needed (\$29.1 million).

Patients in rural and regional areas, registered with their healthcare provider through MyMedicare, will be able to receive longer Medicare-rebated phone consultations. This includes consultations longer than 20 minutes for GPs and longer than 25 minutes for Other Medical Practitioners (OMP) (\$5.9 million).

A new pre-fellowship program for non-vocational doctors will be established, which will support international medical graduates, who are new to Australia, to work in primary care and remain in smaller regional communities. The OMP program, which provides access to higher Medicare rebates for doctors without fellowship, including in regional areas, will be continued (\$34.6 million).

Rural and regional Australians will benefit from removing the red tape that prevents our highly skilled nurse practitioners and participating midwives from providing the care they are qualified to provide. These changes will enable them to provide these services without the need for a legislated collaborative arrangement with a doctor.

There will be more opportunity for regional medical students with funding for James Cook University to train more healthcare practitioners through the Rural Health Multidisciplinary Training Program (\$4.2 million). Health students who are from, or do their training in a regional area are more likely to stay and work in a regional area, boosting local healthcare services.

The total budget for the Rural Pharmacy Maintenance Allowance will be doubled to support pharmacies in regional and remote areas (\$79.5 million).

### Case study

**Sarah is a 68-year-old woman who lives on a property in regional Queensland.**

**Sarah has always looked after her health, and used to drive into town to see her GP regularly. Sarah's regular doctor retired and the GP who took over the practice said she couldn't afford to bulk bill patients. Sarah hasn't been to the GP in almost a year, but has been suffering abdominal pain and is considering going to the hospital, which is more than an hour away.**

**She calls her friend who tells her that the new GP has recently started bulk billing, thanks to higher bulk billing incentives announced in the 2023–24 Budget. As a Commonwealth concession card holder, Sarah is eligible for free consultations.**

**Sarah avoids an unnecessary trip to the hospital and visits the GP instead. Sarah is diagnosed with Crohn's disease and is prescribed medicine to treat her symptoms. She also recommences regular GP visits to manage and monitor her condition.**



## Nurses, nurse practitioners and midwives

Our trusted nurses, nurse practitioners and midwives will get the recognition they deserve and be empowered to use their skills to deliver more services to patients.

There will be more work opportunities and nurses, nurse practitioners and midwives will be encouraged to make full use of their knowledge and training, and to work to their full scope of practice.

Registered nurses, enrolled nurses and assistants in nursing who work in aged care facilities will receive a pay rise up to \$10,000 a year.

More scholarships, changed scholarship arrangements and training will grow the pipeline of midwives, nurses and nurse practitioners into the primary care workforce. This includes:

- 1,850 post graduate scholarships to train more nurse practitioners and endorsed midwives (\$50.2 million)
- supporting nurses to undertake advanced wound management training, as part of a broader wound training package and wound product package for healthcare professionals (\$47.8 million).

There will also be more nurses in primary care thanks to an extra 6,000 clinical placements (\$4.2 million) and support for 500 nurses who want to return to the workforce, including through supervised practice opportunities (\$1 million)

The Government will remove the red tape that prevents our highly skilled nurse practitioners and participating midwives from providing the care they are qualified to provide. These changes will enable them to provide these services without the need for a legislated collaborative arrangement with a doctor.

Patient Medicare rebates for care provided by nurse practitioners will be increased by 30% (\$46.8 million).

Nurses, nurse practitioners and midwives will take a lead role in multidisciplinary care with Primary Health Networks better empowered to commission their services for local communities (\$79.4 million). General practices will be supported to employ more midwives, nurses and nurse practitioners as part of their multidisciplinary team with increases to payments under the Workforce Incentive Program.

### Case study

**Nita is 44 and worked for more than a decade as a registered nurse at a major city hospital, in advanced practice nursing roles, but has decided to move to a regional town to try a different kind of nursing and a more relaxed pace of life.**

**She has always been interested in becoming a nurse practitioner, but the timing was never right. She hears that one of the town's last GPs has just retired, leaving a critical shortage.**

**Nita decides to take advantage of the government support for postgraduate study and completes a Master's degree, to become a nurse practitioner. She now provides vital primary care services in her community under Medicare, including prescribing medicines requesting diagnostic testing and making referrals.**

**Changes also mean she no longer needs a legislated collaborative arrangement with a doctor to deliver these services under Medicare.**





## Women

Women being treated for conditions like osteoporosis or breast cancer will save up to \$180 per year for each medicine they take, thanks to changes to medicine dispensing limits. They will be able to buy 2 months' worth of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medicines on a single prescription, rather than the current one month supply. It will mean fewer visits to the pharmacist and fewer prescription co-payments, resulting in lower out-of-pocket costs.

Women with chronic conditions, complex needs, and mental health issues will also benefit from rebates for longer consultations of 60 minutes or more, to give doctors the support they need to provide high-quality care to those who need more time (\$98.2 million).

Women, who make up more than 85% of Australia's aged care workforce, will benefit the most from the delivery of the largest ever wage increase for the sector (\$11.3 billion). Registered and enrolled nurses, assistants in nursing, personal care workers, head chefs and cooks, lifestyle workers and home care workers will all benefit.

As a result of the boost to aged care wages a registered nurse on a level 2.3 award wage will be paid an additional \$196.08 a week (more than \$10,000 a year).

The barriers, gender bias and discrimination that women and girls face in the health system will be addressed, with investments in the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare National Maternity Data development project (\$26.4 million).

New mothers and babies will also benefit from continued funding for 24-hour support for the Australian Breastfeeding Association's National Breastfeeding Helpline (\$4.8 million) and, for women with premature babies, funding will be provided to expand access to the donor human milk bank (\$6 million).

Women will benefit from subsidised costs of storage for future use of eggs, sperm or embryos for cancer patients of reproductive age, and people at high risk of passing on genetic diseases or conditions.

Women will have more opportunity to become coaches, officials and sports administrators from grassroots sport through to the elite level, thanks to an investment in initiatives to ensure Australia's 'green and gold decade' leaves a lasting legacy (\$2.1 million). Headlined by the largest women's sporting event in the world, the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023, the next decade provides an opportunity to showcase Australian women and girls, our values, innovation and diversity.

### Case study

**Kelly is a registered nurse who works fulltime at a local aged care facility. She is a single mother of two girls, one of which takes montelukast for her asthma.**

**Kelly loves her job, but has been struggling to make ends meet as cost of living pressures rise. Thanks to the Government's funding of the Fair Work Commission's 15% pay rise for aged care workers, Kelly will receive a \$10,000 a year pay rise.**

**She can now also buy 2 months' worth of her daughter's medicine on one prescription, meaning fewer trips to the GP and pharmacist, and a \$180 per year saving through fewer co-payments.**



## Culturally and linguistically diverse communities

Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities will have a voice in the design and implementation of the Government's Strengthening Medicare reform agenda through the establishment of the Australian Multicultural Health Collaborative through Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia. CALD patients and communities will be able to advocate for systemic changes and new services that make a material difference to them and their families.

Refugees and asylum seekers who have survived trauma and torture before moving to Australia will get the mental health support they need. The internationally renowned Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (PASTT) will be extended and expanded (\$134.8 million). PASTT delivers effective trauma-informed care through culturally appropriate approaches and needs-based support.

CALD communities will receive practical mental health tools and supports, and culturally safe services through an extension to the Embrace Suicide Prevention Pilot delivered by Mental Health Australia (\$0.8 million).

Research to develop a 10-year update report on the state of multicultural mental health in Australia will also be funded to support longer-term strategies to support CALD communities (\$0.4 million).

CALD communities will have better access to COVID-19 vaccination and information. Trusted community leaders, bicultural educators, service providers and health experts will continue to work with Government and engage with CALD communities to build trust, and enhance social cohesion and confidence in government COVID-19 vaccination strategies and policies (\$4.7 million).

Those with chronic conditions, complex needs, and mental health issues will also benefit from rebates for longer consultations of 60 minutes or more, to give doctors the support they need to provide high-quality care (\$98.2 million).

### Case study

**Diric is 35 and arrived in Australia in 2003 after fleeing conflict in his home country. His father was killed in the fighting when he was a teenager.**

He has made a life for himself in Australia, working at a local accounting firm and raising a family. Despite being happy in Australia, he continues to suffer anxiety and has trouble sleeping.

Diric's GP refers him to PASTT, who organise for Diric to see a counsellor who works with a number of patients who have been through similar trauma. Diric is able to talk through his experience and is given practical supports to help him in his recovery.





## LGBTIQA+ Australians

LGBTIQA+ Australians will be at the centre of discussions to inform the 10 Year National Action Plan for LGBTIQA+ Health and Wellbeing which will address the health disparities faced by too many and break down barriers to accessing to healthcare (\$0.9 million). An LGBTIQA+ Health Advisory Group will be established to amplify their voices.

Trans people who require certain hormone treatments will be able to access these at a more affordable price, thanks to being able to buy 2 months' worth of medicines, rather than the current one month supply. It will mean fewer visits to the pharmacy and GP and fewer PBS co-payments, resulting in lower out-of-pocket costs.

Efforts to end human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) transmission in Australia by 2030 are being stepped up, with LGBTIQA+ people just some of the beneficiaries.

There will be better access to HIV testing, treatment and information, including support for the HIV workforce (\$13.2 million). This includes:

- expanded access to HIV treatment for people who are ineligible for Medicare
- an extension of the HIV testing vending machine pilot
- funding for the Emen8 website, a critical information hub for sharing HIV information for members of the LGBTIQA+ community

- funding for the HIV Online Learning Australia program to provide up-to-date education and training for the HIV workforce
- additional support for the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) and National Association of People with HIV in Australia (NAPWHA) to drive the national response.

The Blood Borne Virus (BBV) and Sexually Transmissible Infection (STI) National Response will also be continued to increase prevention, early detection, treatment and care for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, syphilis and other STIs (\$6.6 million).

### Case study

**Pascal learns his partner has been diagnosed with HIV. Pascal goes on the Emen8 website and finds a nearby clinic where he can also be tested.**

**He tests negative, but is worried for his partner who is in Australia on a student visa and isn't eligible for Medicare benefits.**

**Pascal finds further support through the LGBTIQA+ community on Emen8 and learns that thanks to Government funding his partner can still receive treatment without a Medicare card.**



## Children and young people

More than 5.1 million Australian children will benefit from the Government's investment to triple the bulk billing incentives (\$3.5 billion). No child should have to miss out on or delay a trip to the doctor, or end up in an emergency room because their family can't afford to pay.

From 1 November, a GP who bulk bills a child under 16 for a standard consultation in a metropolitan area will receive a bulk billing incentive benefit of \$20.65 instead of \$6.85, and even more in very remote areas. Incentives will cover general face-to-face and telehealth GP consultations.

Children with asthma will benefit from more affordable treatments, thanks to being able to buy 2 month's worth of medicines, rather than the current one month supply.

Kids aged 6 to 11 with cystic fibrosis now have access to the life-changing drug, Trikafta®, through the PBS (\$380.6 million). Trikafta significantly improves quality of life for young patients and could allow them to lead long, healthy lives. On the PBS, the cost for this medication is a maximum of \$30, or just \$7.30 with a concession card. Without subsidy, the treatment could cost more than \$250,000 per year.

Children and young Australians will benefit from funding to assist early detection of juvenile arthritis (\$80,000) and improving care for children with dementia (\$75,000).

More Medicare Urgent Care Clinics will make it easier for children to receive treatment for less urgent medical issues, like minor sports injuries, without needing to go to a hospital.

Young Australians will be better protected from vaping and tobacco smoking through a \$737 million package of funding.

Vaping among young Australians is increasing, with latest estimates showing that 1 in 6 teenagers aged 14 to 17 has vaped, and 1 in 4 people aged 18 to 24 has vaped.

Nicotine is highly addictive and poses serious health risks, particularly for young people. There is strong and consistent evidence that young people who vape are 3 times as likely to take up smoking, compared to those who don't.

The Government is proposing stronger regulation and enforcement of all e-cigarettes, including new controls on their importation, contents and packaging, and will work to keep kids safe from the growing black market in illegal vapes.

The mental health of young Australians has been tested in recent years with fires, floods and the disruption of COVID-19. Children and young adults will benefit from extended funding for targeted mental health services (\$6.9 million).

Additional support will be available to children to build and maintain positive body image (\$6.2 million).

Young people with eating disorders, their carers and families will get the critical support and services they need (\$2.8 million). Eating disorders have one of the highest mortality rates of any mental illness, and they are on the rise, with an increasing demand for support services.

### Case study

**Mina is 12-years-old and has always been very active and healthy. During COVID-19 lock downs she started spending more and more time online, and would sometimes be on social media for hours at a time.**

**She has become more self-conscious about her body and has developed an eating disorder. Her parents are concerned as she has begun losing weight rapidly.**

**Thanks to increased funding, Mina's parents are able to get her help from the Butterfly Foundation's Wandí Nerida recovery centre. She is given an ongoing care plan to manage her condition and slowly begins returning to a healthy weight.**



## Older Australians

Almost 8 million pensioners and Commonwealth concession card holders will benefit from the Government's \$3.5 billion investment to triple bulk billing incentives. This will support GPs to continue to bulk bill those Australians who feel cost-of-living pressures most acutely, including those on the aged pension and self-funded retirees.

It will be of particular benefit to pensioners and Commonwealth concession card holders who generally use more GP services and have higher levels of chronic and complex health conditions.

As well as more affordable healthcare, older Australians will benefit from cheaper medicines, on the PBS for conditions like heart disease, high cholesterol and diabetes. GPs and nurse practitioners will be able to prescribe 2 months' worth of some PBS medicines, rather than the current one month supply. It will mean fewer visits to the pharmacy and fewer PBS co-payments, resulting in lower out-of-pocket costs. Concession card holders will save up to \$43.80 a year for each medicine they take.

Under MyMedicare older patients with complex, chronic disease who go to hospital 10 or more times each year will be supported by comprehensive, team-based and tailored care they need, without needing to go to a hospital (\$98.9 million). Those with a chronic wound and diabetes will have access to more affordable wound care (\$47.8 million).

Australians living in an aged care home will receive more regular visits, health assessments and care planning through additional incentive payments to GPs and primary care clinics under MyMedicare (\$112 million). Residents can choose their preferred provider or choose to be matched to a suitable one by their local Primary Health Network.

Older Australians, their carers and families will benefit from a stronger regulatory model (\$59.4 million), greater transparency through Star Ratings and the Quality Indicator program (\$139.9 million) and better nutrition in aged care (\$12.9 million). A dedicated Food, Nutrition and Dining Advisory Support Unit will improve the quality of food in aged care, including through a food complaints hotline staffed by dietitians.

A new single assessment system will simplify and improve access to in-home and residential aged care services (\$15.7 million).

Older Australians who want to live independently at home will be supported to do so with an additional 9,500 Home Care Packages (HCPs) added (\$166.8 million). HCPs deliver a mix of personal care, clinical services and help with household tasks to meet their assessed aged care needs. By June 2024, there will be around 285,100 HCPs available to older people in Australia.

The budget will also support the Confederation of Australian Sport's bid to host the World Masters Games 2029 (WMG) in Perth (\$5 million). The WMG is one of the largest international, multi-sport events in the world with more than 35,000 athletes competing in more than 50 sports, including para-sports.

### Case study

**Jun is 82-years-old and is in good health, aside from needing medication to manage her cholesterol.**

Jun's cholesterol medication is now cheaper thanks to being able to get 2 months' worth on a single prescription. Jun needs fewer trips to the GP to get prescriptions and fewer visits to the pharmacy to fill them. As a concession card holder, this saves Jun up to \$43.80 a year for her medication.

Her family has noticed that she is having trouble keeping up with daily housework. Jun is adamant she doesn't want to leave the home that she shared with her husband for 40 years before he passed away.

Jun is assessed using the new single assessment system and is allocated one of 9,500 new Home Care Packages. Someone now comes to her home once a week to clean the house and once a month, a lady comes to mow the lawn and help Jun in the garden.







## Building a stronger Medicare

### Summary of package

**The 2023–24 Budget provides an historic \$6.1 billion investment in Medicare, to lay the foundations for significant reforms. It delivers critical funding to meet the urgent healthcare needs of today, while starting reforms to build a stronger Medicare for future generations.**

This Budget responds to the recommendations of the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce and takes the key steps needed to address the many pressing challenges in our healthcare system.

For many Australians, seeing a general practitioner (GP) has become harder and more expensive, especially in regional, rural and remote areas.

This Budget delivers landmark investments, including \$6.1 billion in strengthening Medicare measures to revamp primary healthcare.

The investments in the Budget will cement Medicare as the foundation of the nation's health system, increase affordability for patients, give more certainty and confidence to doctors, and take pressure off hospitals.

It will address declining bulk billing rates and doctor availability and start to rebuild primary care as the core of an effective, modern healthcare system for all Australians.

A \$3.5 billion investment to triple bulk billing incentives, will support free GP consultations for 11.6 million children under 16, pensioners and other Commonwealth concession card holders.

More than 300 medicines will be cheaper for 6 million Australians who will be able to buy 2 months' worth of medicine with a single prescription. This will mean fewer visits to the GP and pharmacy, saving patients an estimated \$1.6 billion.

The Budget also includes an indexation boost to Medicare rebates of more than \$1.5 billion – delivering the biggest increase in 30 years.

This Government will ensure all Australians have better access to healthcare when and where they need it.

## \$6.1 billion

to strengthen Medicare

**\$3.5b**

**tripling bulk billing  
incentives**

**\$1.6b**

**saved by patients  
on cheaper medicines**

**plus**

**\$1.5b**

**indexation boost to  
Medicare rebates**

This includes higher incentives to expand multidisciplinary team care in general practice, more Medicare Urgent Care Clinics and better access to after-hours primary care.

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## **MyMedicare will enable blended funding models to better serve the needs of patients and allow health teams to provide more tailored care.**

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Investments to grow a skilled and well-distributed primary care workforce will include expanding the roles of nurses, nurse practitioners, midwives, allied health and pharmacists, and creating more education and scholarship opportunities.

An investment of \$951.2 million (over 4 years) will upgrade and modernise digital health systems to make it easier for patients and healthcare providers to securely and safely share health information to improve the care provided and reduce duplication.

**In very remote areas, the bulk billing incentive for a standard consultation will increase from \$13.15 to \$39.65**

## **Who benefits**

**The Government is investing \$3.5 billion to triple bulk billing incentives to address the sharp decline in bulk billing rates over recent years, and make healthcare more affordable for 11.6 million children under 16, pensioners and other Commonwealth concession card holders.**

Declining bulk billing, increased out-of-pocket costs and broader cost-of-living pressures, means many patients don't see or delay seeing a GP, or go to emergency departments for treatment which adds pressure on hospitals.

Tripling the bulk billing incentives will support GPs to continue to bulk bill Australians who feel cost of living pressures most acutely.

It will be of particular benefit to people who live in regional, rural and remote communities, where access to primary care services is limited, and to concession card holders who generally use more GP services and have higher levels of chronic and complex health conditions and socioeconomic disadvantage.

Incentives will cover general face-to-face and telehealth GP consultations, including home visits for people who are homebound, and consultations in residential aged care facilities.

From 1 November, a GP who bulk bills an eligible patient for a standard consultation in a metropolitan area will receive an increased incentive of \$20.65 instead of \$6.85.

In very remote areas, the bulk billing incentive for a standard consultation will increase to \$39.65, instead of \$13.15.

This measure supports the recommendation of the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce to increase more affordable care, ensuring Australians on low incomes can access care at no or low cost.

## Case study

Sam is a 66-year-old man who lives alone in a regional town and has a background of mild chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and cardiovascular disease.

Since Sam's GP ceased bulk billing 2 years ago, Sam has stopped going to regular appointments, as the up front \$80 cost of a consultation was more than he could afford. Instead, when Sam feels particularly unwell, he relies on the local hospital's emergency department for care.

This means Sam has to wait long periods in the waiting room, and he receives reactive, rather than proactive care, which has caused his condition to get worse over time.

With higher bulk billing incentives, Sam's GP has reintroduced bulk billing for eligible patients. As Sam has a Commonwealth concession card, his standard GP consultations are now free.

Sam starts making regular appointments with his GP, who can ensure he is on the right medicine and that his condition is stable, so that Sam no longer needs to attend the emergency department.





## Cheaper medicines

As well as more affordable healthcare, Australians will benefit from cheaper medicines.

GPs and nurse practitioners will be able to prescribe 2 months' worth of some PBS medicines, rather than the current one month supply.

For 6 million Australians living with chronic stable diseases, this will mean fewer visits to the pharmacist and fewer prescription co-payments, resulting in lower out-of-pocket costs for more than 300 common medicines on the PBS for conditions like heart disease, high cholesterol and hypertension.

This will save eligible patients up to \$180 per year for each medicine they take. Concession card holders will save up to \$43.80 a year per medicine.

Every dollar saved by the Government from this reform will be reinvested back into community pharmacy to provide clinical services that Australians need, including National Immunisation Program vaccinations and opioid dependency treatment, and to ensure the ongoing strength of the sector.

Medicines to treat COVID-19, cystic fibrosis and many other conditions will be added to the PBS in new and amended listings, reducing the cost of these medicines to patients (\$2.2 billion).

## Making it easier to get the care you need

The Budget will ease pressure on hospitals and make it easier for Australians to get consistent primary care without needing to go to a hospital, even after hours, with lower out-of-pocket costs.

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**It includes new funding to support 8 additional Medicare Urgent Care Clinics. This will deliver a total of 58 clinics – all to open their doors around the country this year (\$358.5 million).**

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These clinics will be open longer hours to provide free, non-life threatening emergency care to patients, taking pressure off emergency departments.



Primary Health Networks (PHN) will be supported to focus on access to primary care for vulnerable communities, with a \$93.4 million investment to extend the PHN After Hours programs for another 2 years, ensuring that people can access general practice services when they need them. They will also be funded to commission services to improve access to primary care for multicultural communities and for people experiencing homelessness (\$50.5 million over 2 years).

Patients will be able to get consistent care from a team of healthcare providers through a new voluntary patient registration payment model – MyMedicare (\$19.7 million over 4 years).

MyMedicare will build a stronger relationship between patients and their primary care teams. It is voluntary and open to anyone, with patients able to register with their preferred practice, GP and care team. It will support access to longer telehealth consultations (\$5.9 million over 4 years).

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**Providers will receive incentive payments to deliver wraparound, tailored care to keep patients with complex, chronic disease out of hospitals (\$98.9 million over 4 years).**

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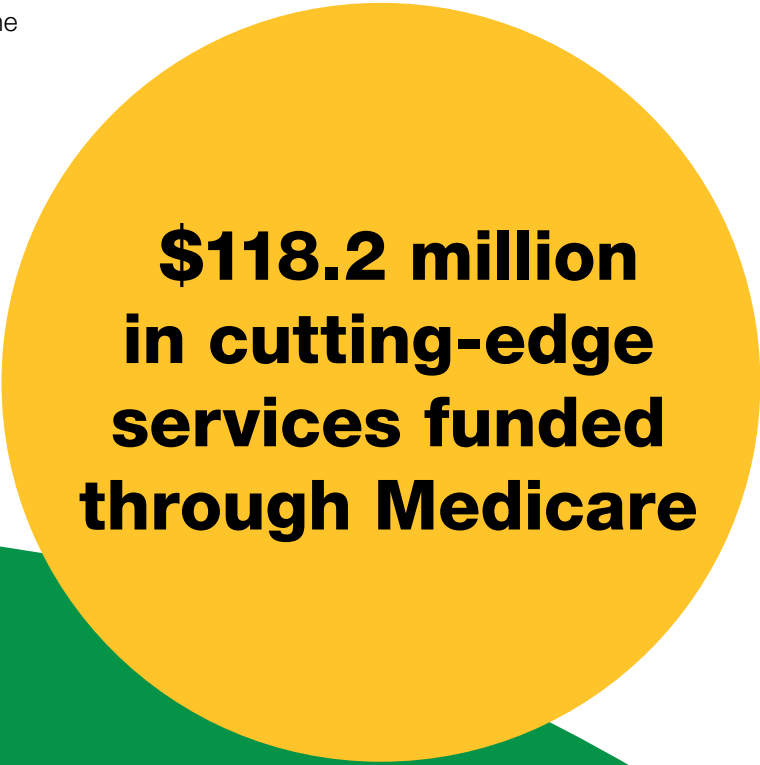
This will help the more than 13,000 patients with complex, chronic conditions who go to hospital 10 or more times each year because they are not getting the comprehensive, team-based care they need.

People with chronic conditions and complex needs will also benefit from rebates for longer consultations of 60 minutes or more, to give doctors the support they need to provide high-quality care to those who need more time (\$98.2 million). Eligible patients with a chronic wound and diabetes will have access to more affordable wound care (\$47.8 million).

Heart health checks to protect Australians against heart disease will be extended. New cutting-edge patient clinical services will be funded through Medicare (\$118.2 million over 5 years) including:

- genetic testing for childhood hearing loss
- genetic testing for haematological malignancies
- profiling tests to determine a patient's risk of recurrent breast cancer
- testing for the diagnosis of mitochondrial disease.

The Government will also subsidise the costs of storage for future use of eggs, sperm or embryos for cancer patients of reproductive age, and people at high risk of passing on genetic diseases or conditions.



**\$118.2 million  
in cutting-edge  
services funded  
through Medicare**



## Case study

Arun is a 4-year-old boy who is the youngest of 3 siblings. Arun's parents are recent immigrants to Australia and English is their second language. Arun's family live in a regional town.

Arun complains to his parents of an earache. Arun's parents use the multicultural access program coordinated by their local Primary Health Networks (PHNs) to schedule an appointment with a general practitioner who can speak their primary language. Arun's parents register online with their general practice via MyMedicare so that they can receive ongoing and coordinated care from a team of providers. Arun's general practice is in an under-serviced area and has received additional funding via the local PHN to attract nurses and allied health professionals to work there.

Arun has an appointment with his general practitioner and is diagnosed with a middle ear infection, which is recorded in his My Health Record. However, that evening, Arun's symptoms worsen. His parents contact Healthdirect's free helpline, and Arun and his parents are supported to seek care from his usual general practice after hours instead of the emergency department.

Arun is reviewed and prescribed antibiotics. This care has avoided an unnecessary visit to the emergency department and ensured Arun gets well quickly.



## Improved digital systems to drive better care and better connections

A stronger Medicare relies on a better digital system that meets the current and future needs of patients and health professionals. To achieve this, the Budget includes a \$951.2 million over 4 years investment in digital health technologies to build a more efficient, connected and collaborative healthcare system.

With \$325.7 million, it will make the Australian Digital Health Agency an ongoing entity, so that it can continue to deliver important digital health infrastructure, including upgrading My Health Record.

A \$429 million investment will ensure that My Health Record is easier to use, is compatible with the information and billing systems that health practitioners are already using, and connects the health system so that patients can access and securely share their health data.

The Intergovernmental Agreement on National Digital Health will be renewed for 4 years to progress the secure, safe and efficient sharing of information across the health system (\$126.8 million).

### Case study

**Mariana is a 74-year-old woman living independently at home with type 2 diabetes. Mariana wants help managing a recent leg ulcer that is a complication of her diabetes. Mariana is registered with her general practice via MyMedicare and can schedule a consult lasting more than 60-minutes.**

Mariana and her general practitioner, with the support of her MyMedicare team, develop a suitable care plan (for complex needs and chronic diseases) that includes wound care, access to subsidised dressings under the new wound consumables scheme and a review of her care plan with a diabetes nurse educator. Mariana's general practice visit and care plan are recorded in her My Health Record along with updates from her wound care and diabetes education sessions, and is retrievable by other authorised providers.

Mariana's general practitioner identifies additional clinical care needs and refers her to other specialists, including an endocrinologist for support with her medications and a vascular surgeon for concerns with toe pressure and her leg ulcer. Mariana's other specialists can view up-to-date summaries and test results on My Health Record and order select diagnostic tests, avoiding the cost and inconvenience of needless tests.

By using an up-to-date and easily shareable My Health Record with her health providers, Mariana was able to avoid unnecessary medical tests, make better healthcare decisions, and minimise the risk of errors.

## A growing workforce with more support for our health workers to do what they're trained to do

A stronger Medicare will build a bigger health and aged care workforce that is skilled, diverse, motivated, well-distributed and sustainable, and has all clinicians working to the full extent of their skills and training.

The Budget takes the first steps in better using the skills of the entire care workforce including nurses, midwives, allied health professionals, psychologists, aged care workers and pharmacists.

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## This will help free up overstretched GPs to deliver the high-value care they are trained to provide, take pressure off hospitals and make it easier for all Australians to get affordable care when and where they need it.

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It will be especially valuable for patients with chronic conditions who will benefit from a coordinated team of health workers working together to support their long-term health.

To improve the accessibility and affordability of primary care in rural areas, a new pre-fellowship program for non-vocational doctors will be established (\$30.5 million). This program will support international medical graduates, who are new to Australia, to work in primary care and remain in smaller communities.

Changes to scholarship arrangements – with a focus on nursing, midwifery and First Nations health workers – will boost the workforce in primary care, aged care, regional and rural areas and other areas of workforce shortage (\$1.1 million in 2023–24).

This Budget will unlock the potential of Australia's highly-educated and trusted nurses and midwives to use and increase their skills to provide more primary care. It funds:

- 6,000 clinical placements to provide nursing students with practical experience of primary healthcare nursing, to help meet future demand in primary care (\$4.2 million over 4 years)
- 1,850 postgraduate scholarships to train more nurse practitioners and endorsed midwives (\$50.2 million over 4 years)
- \$1 million in incentives to get 500 nurses back into the workforce.

GP registrars in regional, rural and remote locations will be able to deliver services in community-based medical practices without losing employment benefits as they move between employers, through an extension of the Single Employer Model trials (\$4.5 million over 4 years).

The Budget will significantly increase incentives for primary care practices to employ various health professionals, to provide team-based, patient-centred, high-quality primary care. Small and medium practices will receive a 30% increase to their maximum payment, while large practices will receive at least 4% more, and more general practices will be eligible for the maximum payment (\$445.1 million over 5 years).

Current practice and workforce incentive programs will be extended, and a review will be undertaken to ensure incentive payments appropriately support primary care practices to deliver the care Australians expect (\$60.2 million in 2023–24).

PHNs will be funded to commission multidisciplinary care from allied health professionals, nurses and midwives (\$79.4 million over 4 years) to support primary care practices in under-served areas, particularly small or solo practices, to increase patient access and improve the management of chronic conditions and mental health.

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**We are unlocking the potential of our trusted nurses, nurse practitioners and midwives to use their training, education and skills to provide the care that patients need.**

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Medicare patient rebates for care provided by nurse practitioners will be increased by 30% (\$45 million over 4 years). The Government will also enable our highly-trained nurse practitioners and participating midwives to prescribe PBS medicines and provide services under Medicare without the need for a legislated collaborative arrangement (\$1.8 million over 4 years).

Patients will have continued access to medication management and dose administration aids programs, with funding for community pharmacy programs increased (\$654.9 million over 4 years). The total budget for the Regional Pharmacy Maintenance Allowance will be doubled (\$79.5 million over 4 years).

Pharmacists will be funded to administer National Immunisation Program vaccines (\$114.1 million over 5 years), authorised in their state and territory, at no cost to patients, and the more than 50,000 Australians who need treatment for opioid dependency will have funded support to access the treatment they need from their local pharmacy at a cost they can afford (\$377.3 million over 4 years).

The Government is  
**supporting our  
trusted pharmacists  
to play an even  
bigger role** in  
the healthcare of  
Australians





# Funding details

## Strengthening Medicare

- Tripling of bulk billing incentive – \$3.5 billion over 5 years
- Implementing MyMedicare – \$19.7 million over 4 years
- Investing in a modernised My Health Record to drive a digitally connected healthcare system for all Australians – \$429 million over 2 years
- Medicare Urgent Care Clinics – \$358.5 million over 5 years
- Improving patient care through MBS nurse practitioner services and removal of legislated collaborative arrangements – \$46.8 million over 4 years
- MBS new and amended listings – \$118.2 million over 5 years
- Monitoring and evaluation – \$6.1 million over 4 years
- PHN commissioning of multidisciplinary teams – \$79.4 million over 4 years
- Reform of after hours programs – \$143.9 million over 2 years
- Support for James Cook University under the Australian Training Program – \$4.2 million over 2 years
- GP levels C and D phone consultation for registered patients – \$5.9 million over 5 years
- Scholarships for primary care nurses and midwives – \$50.2 million over 4 years
- Single Employer Model for rural health professionals – \$4.5 million over 4 years
- Workforce Incentive Program: increased payments to support multidisciplinary care – \$445.1 million over 5 years
- Wraparound primary care for frequent hospital users – 98.9 million over 4 years
- Supporting health, care and support services in thin markets – \$47.2 million over 5 years
- Reform of general practice incentives programs – \$60.2 million in 2023–24
- Intergovernmental Agreement on National Digital Health – \$126.8 million over 4 years
- Chronic Wound Consumables Scheme: for patients with diabetes – \$47.8 million over 5 years
- Consumer Engagement in Primary Care Reform – \$13 million over 4 years
- Education for the future primary care workforce – \$31.6 million over 2 years
- Reducing disparity in access to primary care – \$29.1 million over 2 years
- Securing the Australian Digital Health Agency to lead digital enablement of healthcare – \$325.7 million over 4 years
- Health delivery modernisation: enabling reform – \$69.7 million over 4 years
- Expand the nursing workforce to improve access to primary care – \$10.7 million over 4 years

## New and amended listings

- PBS new and amended listings – \$2.2 billion over 5 years
- New Listings on the Life Saving Drugs Program – \$5.7 million over 5 years


## Other critical health infrastructure

- Australia's first National Clinical Quality Registry Program – \$40 million over 4 years
- Response to initial Independent Review of Medicare Integrity and Compliance – \$29.8 million over 4 years
- Strengthening electronic prescribing and targeted digital medicines enhancements – \$111.8 million over 4 years
- Continuous review of the MBS – \$10.9 million in 2023–24
- Enhanced patient care and PBS Savings through medicines repurposing – \$10.1 million over 4 years



All information in this publication  
is correct as at May 2023

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## Laying the groundwork for mental health and suicide prevention system reform

### Summary of package

**With a \$586.9 million investment, the 2023–24 Budget continues reforms to the mental health and suicide prevention system by addressing workforce shortages, extending critical services, addressing urgent gaps and laying the groundwork for future reform.**

The Budget addresses bottlenecks in the psychology training pipeline with additional postgraduate psychology places, internships and supervisor training sessions. It will also help upskill the broader health workforce, so they have the knowledge and skills to recognise and respond to mental health issues. Improving the availability of workforce will ensure there is equity in service delivery and enable reform.

The Australian Government is continuing and expanding mental health and suicide prevention supports for:

- people with severe mental illness not in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) who need psychosocial support
- children and young people
- people with eating disorders
- people bereaved by suicide
- people and communities impacted by disasters
- culturally and linguistically diverse communities, including refugees and migrants who have experienced torture and trauma
- First Nations people in the lead up to, during, and following the referendum to enshrine an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice in the Constitution

The Government's commitment to strengthening Medicare will also have benefits across the mental health and suicide prevention system by increasing access and equity to care for all Australians, through MyMedicare which will allow multi disciplinary teams to deliver tailored care to patients with complex health needs.

### Total value of package

# \$586.9 million

**\$260.2m**

**Psychosocial support  
(over 2 years)**

**\$136m**

**Humanitarian and CALD  
(over 4 years)**

**\$10.5m**

**Voice to Parliament  
(in 2023–24)**

## Who benefits

With 1 in 3 psychologists at capacity and unable to see new clients, people who need access to psychologists will benefit from \$91.3 million over 5 years to address acute bottlenecks in the psychology training pipeline.

This funding will build up the workforce, reduce pressure on the system, and encourage more psychology students to complete their studies while longer-term reforms are progressed. It includes:

- \$56 million for universities to create 500 additional postgraduate psychology places
- \$27.7 million for 500 one-year internships for provisional psychologists
- \$5.9 million for 2,000 fully subsidised supervisor training sessions

The broader health workforce will benefit from \$17.8 million for initiatives to upskill staff to recognise and respond to distress, deliver high-quality mental health treatment, protect the mental health of early-career health practitioners, and continue providing vital support to health workers. This includes funding of:

- \$9.2 million over 3 years for online training, resources and professional development
- \$6.8 million over 3 years for mental health first aid training for 7,800 medical students and 55,500 nursing, midwifery and allied health students
- \$1.4 million over 3 years to ensure undergraduate nursing, midwifery and allied health students receive consistent education in mental health.
- \$0.3 million over 2 years to develop national standards for counsellors and psychotherapists.

Extended funding for child and youth mental health services (\$6.9 million over 2 years) will ensure young Australians can continue to access the:

- Raise Foundation's early intervention and prevention student mentoring program
- headspace youth programs in Newcastle
- headspace digital work and study program for young Australians whose mental health is a barrier to work and study.

Eating disorders have one of the highest mortality rates of any mental illness, and they are on the rise, with an increasing demand for support services. This Budget extends funding to ensure people with eating disorders, their carers and families get critical support and services (\$2.8 million in 2023–24). This includes funding for the:

- Wandi Nerida residential recovery centre in Queensland
- National Eating Disorder Collaboration to develop clinical resources, implement the National Eating Disorders Strategy and support workforce development
- Eating Disorders Families Australia's Strive program, which offers online carer support and education groups
- Butterfly Foundation's Body Bright education program for schools
- Australian and New Zealand Academy for Eating Disorders to continue the eating disorder credential and expand its remit to include GPs.

The broader health workforce will benefit from **\$17.8 million** for initiatives to upskill staff



In the lead up to, during and following the referendum to enshrine an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice in the Constitution, the Government will provide \$10.5 million in 2023–24 to boost mental health support for First Nations people. Through culturally safe and trauma informed services, support will be provided during this period of heightened mental health and wellbeing risk for First Nations people.

The Government is extending funding for digital mental health services (\$8.7 million in 2023–24), including to continue the Head to Health website while the Government works with the mental health sector to design and implement a sector-led approach for the future of the website platform.

This Budget continues support for Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse communities – who are traditionally less likely to access mental health support – through:

- \$134.8 million over 4 years for the world renowned Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma, which provides specialised trauma support and psychosocial services
- \$0.4 million in 2023–24 to deliver a report on the state of multicultural mental health in Australia
- \$0.8 million in 2023–24 to extend the Embrace Suicide Prevention Pilot.

Critical psychosocial support for more than 18,000 people with severe mental health illness not in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will be extended (\$260.2 million over 2 years). This will help them recover and live safely in the community without adding to the strain on hospital beds or the NDIS.

The StandBy Support After Suicide will continue, with \$14.4 million over 2 years committed. This program helps to prevent suicide and supports people and communities experiencing grief and distress as a result of suicide.

Individuals and communities impacted by disasters will receive critical mental health support through \$7.2 million over 2 years for:

- the Black Dog Institute's National Emergency Workers Support Service
- the Australian Psychological Society's Disaster Response Network.



## Funding details

- Extension of terminating child and youth mental health measures – \$6.9 million over 2 years
- Extension of terminating eating disorders measures – \$2.8 million in 2023–24
- Ensuring continuity of psychosocial support for people with mental illness – \$260.2 million over 2 years
- Bilateral agreements with states and territories – postvention national service continuity – \$14.4 million over 2 years
- Mental health support for humanitarian entrants and culturally and linguistically diverse communities – \$136 million over 4 years
- Longer-term mental health support for Australians impacted by disaster events – \$7.2 million over 2 years
- Digital mental health services – \$8.7 million in 2023–24
- Addressing critical shortages in the psychology workforce – \$91.3 million over 5 years
- Upskilling Australia's broader health workforce in mental health – \$17.8 million over 4 years

Funding will **build up the workforce, reduce pressure on the system, and encourage more psychology students** to complete their studies



All information in this publication is correct as at May 2023

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## Health protection, preventive health and sport

### Summary of package

**In the 2023–24 Budget, the Government is investing \$1.1 billion to ensure the health of all Australians is better protected now and into the future through continuing investments in health protection, preventive health and sport.**

Everyone should have the opportunity to live a healthy life, regardless of their financial means, where they live or their background.

As well as social benefits, preventive health has enormous economic benefits. Every dollar invested in preventive health saves an estimated \$14.30 in healthcare and other costs. Up to 38% of the burden of disease could be prevented by reducing risk factors such as being overweight and obesity, physical inactivity, smoking and alcohol and other drug use.

Ensuring no Australian is left behind in getting the best opportunity to live a healthy life is a top priority for the Government.

This Budget takes the first key step towards establishing a world-class Australian Centre for Disease Control to better prepare Australia for future pandemics and health threats, signalling the Government's continued commitment to the protection and promotion of all Australians' health and wellbeing.

The 2023–24 Budget also includes additional investment in the health of women and babies, and support for low-income Australians, First Nations people and those with a chronic condition.

There are also continued efforts to end Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) transmission in Australia and to ease the burden of chronic illness.

The Budget also promotes healthy communities through sport with investments to maximise the benefits of Australia's 'Green and Gold Decade'.

### Total value of package

# \$1.1 billion

**\$738.6m**

**Health protection**

**\$378.8m**

**Preventive health**

**\$23.6m**

**Sport**

## Who benefits

**The 2023–24 Budget will help prepare Australia for future pandemics and health threats by taking the first key step towards a world-class centre for disease control. An interim Australian Centre for Disease Control (ACDC) will be established within the Department of Health and Aged Care (\$91.1 million) from 1 January 2024, led by the Australian Government Chief Medical Officer.**

This Budget is the beginning of a significant and long-term investment that will reduce illness, save lives and restrict social and economic disruption from future viruses and diseases. The ACDC will provide a national focal point for disease prevention and management to improve Australia's response to health emergencies and other public health challenges.

The National Medical Stockpile will be replenished and begin transitioning into the ACDC.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) will receive long-term funding for activities aimed at protecting public health (\$61 million over 4 years) including:

- compliance and enforcement for products and companies outside the regulatory system
- managing medicines and medical device shortages
- providing information to consumers and healthcare professionals
- continued assistance to small and medium enterprises particularly those developing emerging technologies.

The National Immunisation Program (NIP) will be expanded, including the addition of the herpes zoster (shingles) vaccine Shingrix (\$446.7 million over 4 years). The inclusion of Shingrix will ensure continuation of a shingles vaccine on the program to increase coverage and reduce rates of vaccine preventable diseases. The vaccine will be available under the NIP for those aged 70 years, First Nations people aged 50 years and older and immunocompromised individuals at high risk of shingles infection aged 18 years and older.

An additional 360,000 eligible adult public patients will be able to receive dental treatment, improving their oral health and helping to increase access to public dental services (\$219.4 million). The funding will see services continue while longer-term, more fit-for-purpose funding arrangements are developed with states and territories.

First Nations peoples will benefit from a number of specific programs in this Budget to help close the gap in health and wellbeing outcomes including:

- funding to increase uptake of free annual First Nations People Health Checks, a national expansion of the Deadly Choices program, and expanding the Practice Incentives Program Indigenous Health Incentive (\$17.1 million over 4 years).
- a national expansion of the recently launched 'Strong Born' awareness campaign for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (\$1.4 million over 2 years).
- further support for renal services, including dialysis, in First Nations communities (\$28.2 million).

The beginning of a  
**significant and long  
term investment**  
that will reduce illness,  
save lives and restrict  
social and economic  
disruption

These are in addition to broader measures to improve healthcare, and dedicated funding to improve First Nations cancer outcomes and mental health supports.

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**The 2023–24 Budget includes measures to support equity in the healthcare system and improve the health of Australian women and girls (\$26.3 million over 4 years), including through the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women’s Health and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare National Maternity Data development project.**

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New mothers and babies will benefit from continued funding for donor breast milk bank services (\$6 million over 2 years), and ongoing support for the Australian Breastfeeding Association’s National Breastfeeding Helpline (\$4.8 million).

The Budget also continues the important public information campaign for routine childhood immunisation (\$3.4 million over 2 years). Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) prevention, diagnosis and support activities will be extended (\$5 million over 2 years).

Recognising that alcohol and illicit drug use is a major cause of preventable disease and illness in Australia, funding has been committed to a number of alcohol and drug prevention and treatment programs (\$33.6 million over 2 years) including:

- Alcohol and Drug Foundation
- Hello Sunday Morning
- SMART Recovery
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Service Maintenance (DATSM)
- The Gulgul Nyugang Aboriginal Corporation – the Glen for Women to support First Nations women.





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**The Budget includes \$0.9 million to develop a 10 Year National Action Plan for the Health and Wellbeing of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and Asexual (LGBTIQA+) people, and to establish an LGBTIQA+ Health Advisory Group.**

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The plan will provide a national framework to drive improvements in the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQA+ people and address the health disparities they experience.

Building on the HIV Taskforce, announced by the Government in December 2022, this Budget supports continued efforts to end HIV transmission in Australia by 2030. Additional funding will ensure access to HIV treatment for people who are ineligible for Medicare (\$10 million over 4 years), and to extend measures that support increased access to testing, treatment and information (\$3.2 million in 2023–24).

The Blood Borne Virus (BBV) and Sexually Transmissible Infection (STI) National Response will also be continued to increase prevention, early detection, treatment and care for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, syphilis and other STIs (\$6.6 million in 2023–24).

## Sport

As we enter the ‘Green and Gold Decade’ and the lead up to the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Victoria and the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Brisbane, the Budget will support the development of a new National Sport Plan and a review of the *Australian Sports Commission Act 1989* (\$0.8 million in 2023–24). This will ensure a strategic approach to the investment and delivery of major sporting events across the next decade.

The Government will implement the Major Sporting Events Legacy Framework to ensure upcoming major international sporting events held in Australia deliver lasting social, economic and sporting benefits for all Australians (\$0.2 million in 2023–24). The budget will also support the Confederation of Australian Sport’s bid to host the World Masters Games 2029 (WMG) in Perth (\$5 million over 3 years). The WMG is one of the largest international, multi-sport participation events in the world with more than 35,000 athletes competing in more than 50 sports, including para-sports.

In the coming decade, Australia will showcase the excellence and popularity of women’s sport across an unprecedented sequence of international sporting events. Funding is being provided to advance the rights of women and girls, and broader human rights objectives, and for a talent and development program that will increase the number of female coaches, officials and administrators from grassroots through to elite level (\$2.1 million over 2 years).

Australia will  
**showcase the  
excellence and  
popularity of  
women’s sport**

Financial assistance will be given to thousands of junior competitors, coaches and officials to attend state, national and international sporting competitions through the Local Sporting Champions and Local Para Champions programs (\$8.3 million in 2023–24). These vital pathways for junior sportspeople have fostered many of our past Commonwealth Games, Olympic and Paralympic medallists.

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**There is critical funding for community sport initiatives including for Australian Surf Life Saving training (\$3.3 million), and an expansion of the The Big Issue Community Street Soccer Program, with funding for 25 community-based soccer programs nationally and an additional 5 women only programs (\$3.3 million).**

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RecLink, the not-for-profit group that works with local organisations to provide sport and recreation programs for people who may experience disadvantage, will be expanded to the Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory (\$1.6 million over 3 years).

**Local champions  
will be supported  
to attend a  
range of events**



## Funding details

- Continuation of the National Incident Centre and Transition to the Australian Centre for Disease Control – \$26.9 million over 2 years
- Funding for the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) public good activities – \$61 million over 4 years
- Ensuring ongoing radiation protection and nuclear safety for all australians– \$9 million over 4 years
- Preparatory work for the implementation of new legislation to modernise the Nationally Harmonised Gene Technology Scheme: more effective delivery of regulation– \$3.2 million over 4 years
- Continuation of the childhood immunisation education campaign – \$3.4 million over 2 years
- Continuing investment in fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) prevention, diagnosis and support – \$5 million over 2 years
- Enhancing gender equity and strengthening women's health – \$26.3 million over 4 years
- Enhancing evidence and continuing support for male health – \$10.9 million over 2 years
- Increase uptake of First Nations Peoples' Health Checks and National Rollout of Deadly Choices – \$17.1 million over 4 years
- Expanding FASD awareness among First Nations communities – \$1.4 million over 2 years
- Better Renal Services for First Nations people – \$28.2 million
- Dengue and other disease mitigation through mosquito control in Tennant Creek – \$0.4 million in 2023–24
- Extension of alcohol and other drug activities – \$33.6 million over 2 years
- Engagement strategy to increase Covid-19 vaccination rates among culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities – \$4.7 million in 2023–24
- Preventive Health Reform – Continuation of a coordinated network of donor human milk bank services – \$6 million over 2 years
- Preventive Health Reform – evidence – \$6.3 million over 3 years
- Preventive Health Reform – Healthy Food Choices – \$3.2 million over 3 years
- Preventive Health Reform – information and support on chronic conditions – \$4.3 million over 2 years
- Preventive Health Reform – information and support on breastfeeding – \$5.3 million over 2 years
- 10 Year National Action Plan for LGBTIQ+ Health and Wellbeing and Establish LGBTIQ+ Health Advisory Group – \$0.9 million over 2 years

**First Nations  
Australians will  
benefit** from a number  
of specific programs in  
this Budget



- Funding for the regulation of medicinal cannabis – cost recovery model update – \$3 million in 2023–24
- Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) scheme – securing the long term future of the program – \$2.2 million over 5 years
- Good Friday Telethon – \$6 million over 3 years
- Implementation of the National Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infections Strategies – Eliminating HIV in Australia – Phase 1 – \$13.2 million over 4 years
- National Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infections Strategies – continuation of the National Response – \$6.6 million in 2023–24
- Long-term dental funding reform developmental work and interim funding – \$219.4 million
- Strategic Investment Model (Major Sporting Events Legacy Framework Implementation) – \$0.2 million in 2023–24
- Support for Surf Life Saving training – \$3.3 million in 2023–24
- The Big Issue – Community Street Soccer Program – \$3.3 million over 2 years
- Local Sporting Champions – \$8.3 million in 2023–24
- National Sport Plan and Review of the *Australian Sports Commission Act 1989* – \$0.8 million in 2023–24
- World Masters Games 2029 – \$5 million over 3 years
- Australian Sports Foundation – Cyber risk and critical funding – \$3.8 million in 2023–24
- FIFA Women's World Cup legacy – \$2.1 million over 2 years

All information in this publication  
is correct as at May 2023

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## Tackling smoking and vaping, and improving cancer outcomes

### Summary of package

**The 2023–24 Budget funds strong action to reduce smoking and vaping rates – particularly among young Australians – through stronger legislation, enforcement, education and support.**

Almost 10% of Australians (2 million adults) still smoke tobacco daily. Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and disability in Australia and is responsible for about 21,000 deaths each year.

Vaping is also rapidly increasing in Australia, particularly among young people. Latest estimates show that 1 in 6 teenagers aged 14 to 17 has vaped, and 1 in 4 people aged 18 to 24 has vaped.

Nicotine is highly addictive and poses serious health risks, and medical experts have serious concerns about the health effects of other harmful substances in vaping products. There is strong and consistent evidence that young people who vape are 3 times as likely to take up smoking, compared to those who don't.

The Government is proposing stronger regulation and enforcement of all e-cigarettes, including new controls on their importation, contents and packaging.

The Government will work with states and territories to stamp out the growing black market in illegal vaping, including to:

- stop the import of non-prescription vapes
- increase the minimum quality standards for vapes including by restricting flavours, colours, and other ingredients
- require pharmaceutical-like packaging
- reduce the allowed nicotine concentrations and volumes
- ban all single use, disposable vapes.

### Total value of package

# \$737 million

\$263.8m

Lung cancer screening  
(over 4 years)

\$141.2m

Tackling Indigenous smoking  
(over 4 years)

\$29.5m

Support smoking and vaping cessation  
(over 4 years)

A new public health information campaign will be developed to discourage Australians from taking up smoking and vaping, and encourage more people to quit.

A new National Lung Cancer Screening Program will provide screening to eligible current and former smokers, saving thousands of lives through early diagnosis and treatment.

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**The Budget will address the inequity in cancer outcomes for First Nations people. Funding will build the capacity and capability of the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services sector to support cancer care on the ground and also ensure mainstream cancer services are culturally safe and accessible**

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The highly successful Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) program will be extended and widened to reduce vaping among First Nations people, while also maintaining efforts to reduce tobacco smoking.

These measures will help address the significant threat to public health caused by tobacco products and vapes, and maintain Australia's hard-fought success in tobacco control.

The tax on tobacco will be increased, making cigarettes more expensive and less attractive, and all tobacco will be taxed at the same rate.

## Who benefits

**The measures in this Budget will protect more Australians, particularly young people, from the addiction and long-term health implications associated with smoking and vaping.**

The Government is proposing to strengthen controls on the importation of all vaping products. This will involve only allowing entry of products to be supplied for smoking cessation or to treat nicotine addiction through a Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) approved pathway. As part of this package, stronger controls are also proposed for e-cigarette packaging and contents (including flavours).

Existing controls will be strengthened to reduce the significant health risks of vaping, especially for children and young people.

Subject to further consultation with stakeholders, this may include requiring companies to notify the TGA of their products' pre-market compliance, and strengthening minimum TGA quality and safety standards, such as:

- restricting flavourings, colourings and other ingredients
- requiring pharmaceutical-like plain packaging
- reducing the allowed nicotine concentrations and volumes



The Government  
is **investing**  
**\$737 million in**  
**measures to take**  
**action** on smoking  
and vaping

Tax on tobacco will be increased by 5% for 3 years in addition to normal indexation. The tax treatment of loose-leaf tobacco products will also be aligned with the manufactured stick excise rate to ensure these products are taxed equally.

Together, these changes will raise an additional \$3.3 billion over the coming 4 years, helping to support our health system, and the health of current and former smokers and vapers.

The Budget expands specialised programs and health services to support Australians to quit smoking and vaping (\$29.5 million over 4 years).

This will include:

- establishing an online quitting support hub
- redeveloping and modernising the My Quit Buddy app to include vaping
- scaling up state and territory Quitline and other quit services to meet increased demand
- updating clinical guidance to support the health workforce.

A public health information campaign (\$63.4 million over 4 years), with a strong focus on at-risk groups, including young people, will seek to:

- drive and support tobacco and e-cigarette quit attempts
- denormalise smoking and vaping
- increase support in the community for quitting
- reduce the likelihood of people substituting smoking for vaping (and vice versa) instead of quitting.

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**This package will also include funding to strengthen education and training in smoking and nicotine cessation among health practitioners.**

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Thousands of Australians who are current or former smokers will benefit from early diagnosis and treatment of lung cancer, thanks to the new National Lung Cancer Screening Program (\$263.8 million over 4 years), which is estimated to prevent more than 4,000 deaths from lung cancer.

Eligible Australians aged between 50 and 70 years with a history of cigarette smoking, can have scans every 2 years, including through mobile screening services for some regional areas. First Nations people and the Aboriginal community-controlled health sector will be key partners in the design of these services, while consistent data collection will facilitate follow ups with participants and allow assurance and evaluation of the program.

\$141.2 million over 4 years will expand the Tackling Indigenous Smoking program to reduce vaping among First Nations people, while also maintaining efforts to reduce tobacco smoking.

First Nations communities carry a higher burden, when it comes to rates of smoking and cancer, and this budget seeks to close the gap in life expectancy through a \$238.5 million investment over 4 years to improve cancer outcomes, and provide culturally safe care for First Nations people.

These measures will benefit all Australians, by helping to reduce the burden on the health system and the significant costs to the economy from smoking, estimated at \$136.9 billion.

## Funding details

- Smoking and vaping cessation activities – \$29.5 million over 4 years
- Public health information campaign on vaping and tobacco control – \$63.4 million over 4 years
- Tackling Indigenous Smoking program extension to vaping – \$141.2 million over 4 years
- A National Lung Cancer Screening Program, providing screening to eligible current and former smokers – \$263.8 million over 4 years.
- Building the capacity of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services to support cancer care – \$238.5 million over 4 years

The measures in  
this Budget will  
**protect more  
Australians,  
particularly  
young people**



## Delivering the largest ever pay rise to aged care workers

### Summary of package

**The Australian Government is restoring dignity to aged care and ensuring older Australians are treated with the respect they deserve, with \$11.3 billion to increase the wages of aged care workers, roll out a new regulatory model, and embed new aged care assessment arrangements.**

The Government recognises the complex and previously undervalued work of the aged care workforce which is why we are investing to fund the Fair Work Commission's interim decision for a 15% pay increase.

This is the largest ever pay increase for aged care workers. It signifies real progress towards genuinely valuing their dedication and skill, and will help aged care providers attract and retain staff.

Better, fairer pay will help attract and retain workers, while training programs will advance skills, enrich aged care careers and improve quality care.

The Government funds and regulates residential aged care providers to ensure they are well-staffed, financially viable, and deliver high quality, safe care. This Budget delivers a historic increase to the daily rate for aged care residents. The Australian National Aged Care Classification (AN-ACC) funding will be increased by 17%, per resident, per day, meeting the real cost of delivering care.

Many aged care providers are facing ongoing viability issues, with added pressures to adapt to reforms. This Budget will fund continued advisory services to aged care providers to improve capability, better manage financial risk, and expand professional support to providers in small to medium rural towns.

Additionally a new grant will be offered to aged care providers at greatest financial risk, to help them improve their performance.

### This package includes

**\$11.3b**

**to deliver 15% pay increase**

**\$487m**

**to extend Disability Support  
for Older Australians**

**\$98.7m**

**for provider viability  
support**

**\$12.9m**

**to strengthen nutrition for  
aged care residents**

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## **The Budget also delivers stronger regulation, reporting and improved data so that older Australians, their families and carers will have the right information to choose their provider.**

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A new regulatory framework, to be reflected in the new Aged Care Act, will improve the quality and safety of aged care services, as well as restore trust and confidence in aged care providers. Funding is provided to upgrade Star Ratings and uplift food standards.

Older Australians increasingly want to receive aged care and live independently in their own homes for longer. Measures in this Budget provide additional Home Care Packages and establish new aged care assessment arrangements from July 2024.

First Nations elders, their families and carers, will have better access to culturally safe care where it is needed and an interim First Nations Aged Care Commissioner will help address barriers to accessing care.

## **Who benefits**

Aged care workers will receive their largest ever pay rise, with the Government investing \$11.3 billion to fund the Fair Work Commission's interim decision for a 15% increase.

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## **The wage rise will deliver cost-of-living relief for over 250,000 aged care workers. It is the largest ever pay increase in the history of the Fair Work Act.**

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Funding arrangements with providers will be put in place to deliver the increased wages to aged care workers.

We will progress the National Worker Registration Scheme with \$59.5 million over 4 years.

A new regulatory framework and prudential model (\$72.3 million in 2023–24) will enable changes in how providers are regulated, and be complemented by action to:

- improve aged care residents' dining experiences and food and nutrition reporting (\$12.9 million over 2 years)
- require residential aged care services to provide residents with Monthly Care Statements on care provided and occurrences of significant change.





- enable continuous improvement and enhance Star Ratings for older Australians, and work to expand the Quality Indicator program to in-home care services (\$139.9 million over 4 years)

The Government will invest \$166.8 million for an additional 9,500 home care packages in 2023–24, to meet the growing preference for older people to remain in their own home.

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**A newly established single assessment system will use existing assessment organisations to simplify and improve access to aged care services. Older people will no longer be bounced between different organisations to assess need.**

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A new Aged Care Taskforce will be established to review aged care funding arrangements and develop options to make the system fair and equitable for all Australians.

The Taskforce will also inform the final design of the Support at Home program which will be postponed to commence on 1 July 2025, in response to feedback and to allow time to further refine the design. Existing grant arrangements for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme will be extended for a further 12 months to 30 June 2025.

The Disability Support for Older Australians program will be extended and made ongoing with \$487 million in funding over 4 years. Older people with disability will benefit from delivery of consistent, timely, and high quality disability services so they can live in their homes and communities.

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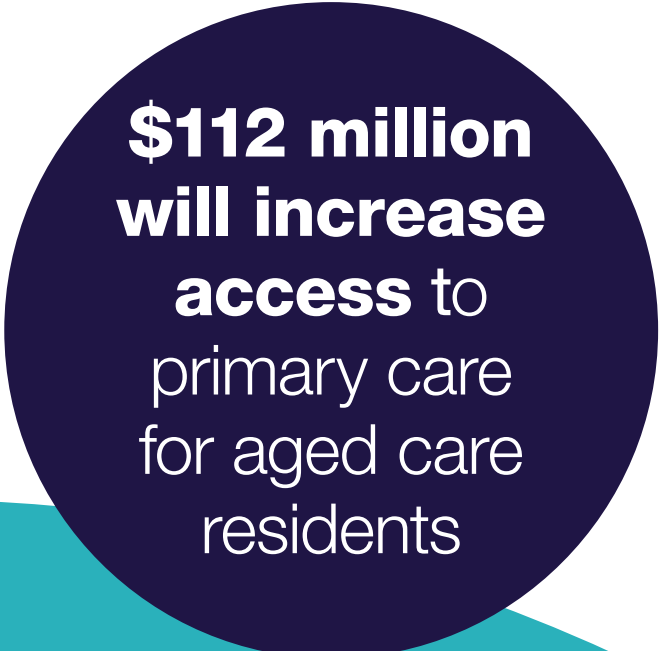
**Aged care recipients will have greater choice and control in decision making with \$41.3 million in funding for systems that will assign residential care places to people, not providers.**

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\$112 million over 4 years will increase access to primary care for aged care residents, with new incentives for GPs. Aged care residents will benefit from more integrated care delivered by their chosen primary care provider, including regular visits to their aged care home and annual care planning. Their GPs can address health concerns as they arise, which reduces risk of avoidable hospitalisations.

Rural and remote areas, in particular, will benefit from \$98.7 million over 2 years to support the viability of local aged care providers. Rural and remote communities around Australia, will also benefit from \$47.2 million over 4 years to strengthen access to care and support through integrated services and workforce.

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program will be further funded \$77.3 million over 4 years to ensure First Nations elders access high quality, culturally safe care and we will build the capacity of Aboriginal Controlled Organisations including \$8.2 million to ensure on Country services. \$1.6 million will fund an interim First Nations Aged Care Commissioner.



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## Funding details

- Fair Work Commission – Aged Care Work Value Case \$11.3 billion over 4 years
  - Residential Aged Care funding increase \$8.5 billion over 4 years
  - Home Care Packages program subsidy increase \$2.2 billion over 4 years
  - Commonwealth Home Support Programme grant increase \$310 million over 4 years
  - Flexible aged care programs funding increase \$236.8 million over 4 years
  - Veterans' Home Care and Community Nursing fees increase \$82.5 million over 4 years
  - Funding for leave liabilities \$98.7 million in 2023–24
- Establish a National Worker Registration Scheme for Aged Care \$59.5 million over 5 years
- Building a strong regulatory framework for aged care \$59.4 million in 2023–24
- Improving transparency, Star Ratings \$139.9 million over 4 years
- Strengthening nutrition \$12.9 million over 2 years
- Development and delivery of a Bill for a new Aged Care Act and associated ICT changes \$81.9 million over 3 years
- Home Care Reform (Support at Home) \$172 million over 4 years
  - Aged Care Taskforce \$0.7 million in 2023–24
  - Trial of an assistive technology loans program \$10.9 million over 2 years
  - ICT Capability Development \$73.1 million in 2023–24
  - Single Comprehensive Assessment \$15.7 million over 2 years
- Additional Home Care Packages \$166.8 million in 2023–24
- Places to People: Embedding Choice in Residential Aged Care \$41.3 million over 4 years
- General Practice Incentive in Aged Care \$112 million over 4 years
- Aged Care Viability Support \$98.7 million over 2 years
- Aged Care Prudential Reform \$12.9 million in 2023–24
- Preliminary Report on the capability review of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission \$25.3 million in 2023–24
- Supporting First Nations Elders in Aged Care \$77.3 million over 4 years
- Disability Support for Older Australians \$487 million over 4 years



All information in this publication is correct as at May 2023

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