

Federal Budget 2023 -24

Health priorities for Australia

10 May 2023



Acknowledgement of Country

I wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we are all living and working today and their continuing connection to the land, water and seas.

I am on the lands of the Ngambri and Ngunnawal people and pay my respects to their elders, past present and yet to come.

I also pay our respects to any First Nations people here with us today.

Overview

1. Set the Budget Context.
2. Overview of the Health Budget
3. What others have said
4. Highlights and Lowlights
5. Discussion of CHF priorities



What's in the Federal Budget for Health 2023-24?

Top ten things consumers want

Did the Budget deliver?

Put consumers at the centre of any healthcare reform

✓✓✓

Increase access to more bulk billing GPs

✓✓✓

Provide wraparound care for those who need it most

✓✓✓

Address rural and remote inequities

✓✓

Integrate care to treat the whole person

✓

Greater cooperation between governments

✓

Let health professionals operate within full scope

✓

Help consumers navigate the health system

✓

Build health literacy into preventative health initiatives

✓

Promote digital health

✓✓

Budget context

- Tight fiscal environment with cost-of-living pressures due to high inflation, rising interest rates, increasing energy costs and lagging wage growth
- Decreased access to bulk billing for people on low incomes
- Pressure from GPs to ease costs of General Practice
- Small (and unexpected) Budget surplus

Health Budget overview

A more compassionate Budget

- Strengthening of Medicare measures eg increasing bulk billing incentives
- Beginning the process of rebuilding and modernising primary care
- Introducing the voluntary registration scheme (MyMedicare) and easier access to telehealth
- Reducing the cost of medicines for people with chronic common illnesses
- Funding for Digital Health and MyHealth Record
- Investment in the health of women and babies
- Support for low-income Australians, First Nations people and those with a chronic condition
- An interim Australian Centre for Disease Control (ACDC) to be established

Stakeholder views

ACOSS disappointed with the low level of increases for Jobseeker and associated income support payments. Welcomed support for single parents and bulk billing increases.

AMA welcomes increases in bulk billing incentives and other investments in primary healthcare

AHPA welcomes funding to support allied health to input into My Health Record

ANMF welcomes the review of scope of practice for health professionals including nurses and midwives

Australian Patient Association welcomes directions of investment in health care but wants to see more detail

Australian Primary Health Care Nurses sees the budget as laying the groundwork for structural change and using the nursing workforce in primary to its full potential

Stakeholder views

APS believes workforce measures are a win for psychologists and patients

COTA believes the Budget is positive news for older Australians across health and aged care, especially the bulk billing initiatives and improvement to aged care

FECCA welcomes the \$2.5m for the Multicultural Health Collaborative but believes more is needed to ensure equitable access to health for people from CALD communities

Medicines Australia welcomes the significant additional investment in primary care

Mental Health Australia welcomes investment across health but flags the need for more long-term investment in systemic reform to ensure there is a world class mental health system

MTAA welcomes the additional funding across the health system, particularly the investment in primary health care

Stakeholder views

National Rural Health Alliance sees the Budget as a missed opportunity to improve the health of people in rural communities

NACCHO the Budget shows the Government is listening to First Nations people with a range of measure that will help to Close the Gap.

Pharmacy Guild is unhappy with the changes to dispensing arrangements and not convinced that the package of other measures for community pharmacy will ensure the community is not disadvantaged

PHAA believes the \$90m allocated for the forthcoming Australian Centre for Disease Control is a welcome first step, but will need long-term investment

RACGP welcomes the increased investment in primary health care.



Highlights: Strengthening Medicare

\$6.1 billion overall investment in Medicare

- \$3.5b to triple the bulk billing incentive for people on low income and children (telehealth, in person, MyMedicare)
- \$5.9m for MyMedicare telehealth appointments over 5 years and
- \$98.9m for MyMedicare appointments managing complex conditions over 4 years
- \$19.7m for Dept. Of Health to implement MyMedicare over 4 years
- \$358.5m to set up 8 new Medicare Urgent Care Clinics (currently 50)
- \$77.9m for PHNs to extend After Hours programs for another 2 years
- \$7m for after-hours Health Direct GP helpline



Strengthening Medicare

Focus on improving quality of services

- \$3.5m for the Dept of Health to implement and monitor the helpline (HealthDirect)
- \$586.9m for mental health and suicide prevention in target populations and to extend digital mental health services
- \$40M to develop a Clinical Quality Registries
- \$47.8m Wound care and Chronic Wound Consumables Scheme (over 5 years and \$12.3m per year ongoing)
- \$98.2m in new Medicare rebates for consultations of 60 minutes or longer
- \$118.2m for new and amended MBS items including heart health checks



Priority Populations

- \$0.9m for a 10-year national action plan for the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ people, and establish an LGBTIQ+ Health Advisory Group
- \$25.4m to establish a Homelessness Support Program
- \$14.8m to establish a PHN Multicultural Access Program (\$15.3m) and for PHNs to support implementation



Digital Health

- \$3.1 million to digital mental health services
- Making telehealth accessible for those with Covid-19
- \$8.7 million to continue capacity of digital mental health services and to maintain the Head-to-Health website
- \$111.8 million over 4 years from 2023–24 (and \$24.2 million ongoing) to e-prescription
- \$3.5 billion to increase bulk billing, including telehealth appointments
- \$19.7 million to implement MyMedicare



Digital Health

- \$5.9 million for longer telehealth consultations through the MBS
- \$429.0 million over two years from 2023–24 to modernise My Health Record (MHR)
- \$325.7 million over 4 years from 2023–24 (and approximately \$79.9 million per year ongoing), to establish the Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA) as an ongoing entity
- \$69.7 million over 4 years from 2023–24 (and \$4.2 million per year ongoing) to respond to the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce Report, and the Independent Review into Medicare Integrity and Compliance to digitise additional health services
- Funding for the Commonwealth’s contribution to the Intergovernmental Agreement on National Digital Health



Highlights: Preventative Health

- 30,000 eligible adult public patients to receive dental treatment
- An Australian Centre for Disease Control
- Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) activities aimed at protecting public health e.g. compliance/enforcement, managing shortages, providing information to consumers
- Targeted preventative health initiatives including: research to support womens health, supporting Mens Shed and mens health research, chronic condition prevention and early intervention, and healthy food reforms
- A new national lung cancer screening program that is predicted to prevent over 4,000 deaths
- Boosting efforts to end HIV transmissions in Australia by 2030



Highlights: Health Service linkage and wraparound

- Connecting frequent hospital users to a general practice to receive comprehensive, multidisciplinary care in the community to reduce hospital re-admission
- PHNs to commission allied health services to improve access to multidisciplinary care for people with chronic conditions in underserviced communities
- MyMedicare to formalise the relationship between patients and their primary care providers to improve patient care and health outcomes



Highlights: Health Service linkage and wraparound

- Trialing integrated services and joint commissioning across primary health, First Nations health services, disability, aged care, and veterans' care sectors in up to 10 locations; to improve access to primary care.
- Modernising My Health Record (MHR) by creating a new National Repository platform to securely share data across all healthcare settings, improving the sharing of pathology and diagnostic imaging information, and increasing allied health professionals' connection to MHR
- Workforce incentives for primary care practices to provide team-based, patient-centred, high-quality primary care.



Highlights: Rural and regional

- Increasing bulk billing incentives from \$13.15 - \$36.65 in rural and remote communities
- Doubling funding for Rural Pharmacy Maintenance Allowance in regional and remote areas (\$79.5 million).
- Royal Flying Doctor Service to provide primary care and aeromedical evacuations to remote communities (\$29.1m over 2 years)



Highlights: First Nations People

- \$141.2m to expand the Tackling Indigenous Smoking program to include vaping
- \$238.5m to address 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
- \$17.2m to expand the Deadly Choices Program and the Practice Incentives program Indigenous Health Incentive to increase uptake of annual health checks.
- \$1.4m 'Strong Born' awareness campaign for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD)
- Increase renal services (\$28.2m)



Highlights: Consumer Engagement

- \$10.5 million to strengthen the capacity of the Consumers Health Forum (CHF)
- \$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.
- \$8.7 million over 3 years from 2023–24 to establish and operate 2 independent national mental health lived-experience peak bodies to advise on mental health policies and programs and to support lived-experience research
- Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) Consumer Engagement in Primary Care Reform - \$13 million over 4 years

Highlights: Pharmacy and prescriptions

- Allowing 2 months' worth of certain PBS medicines to be dispensed by pharmacies from 1 September 2023.
- Electronic-prescription delivery infrastructure and services, including mandating the use of e-prescribing for high risk and high cost medicines subsidised under the PBS
- Subsidising community pharmacies to administer eligible National Immunisation Program vaccines
- Doubling the Regional Pharmacy Maintenance Allowance to ensure the ongoing viability of pharmacies due to reduced dispensing income
- Funding the Therapeutic Goods Administration to assist medicine sponsors repurpose targeted medicines by expanding approval for their use in Australia.

Highlights: Vaping and smoking

- A public health information campaign to discourage people from taking up smoking and vaping and encouraging people to quit (\$68.3m)
- Expanding programs and health services to support people quitting smoking and vaping (\$29.5m)
- Increasing tobacco tax by 5% every year for three years, making cigarettes more expensive and less attractive, and taxing all tobacco at the same rate
- Targeted education, services and supports for First Nations peoples (\$379.7m)



Young people

- Mental health
- Access to GPs and bulk billing
- Vaping education and cessation
- Government support payments – Youth Allowance, JobSeeker, StudyAssist, Rent Assistance etc.
- Scholarships and Job placements



Health Professionals Overall

Doctors

- Bulk billing (\$3.5b)
- MyMedicare funding for telehealth (\$5.9m) and long appointments (\$98.9m)
- Medicare rebate for long appointments (\$98.2m)
- New and amended Medicare items targeting heart disease (\$118.2m)
- Expand healthcare teams in general practice \$445.1m)

Nurses and Nurse Practitioners

- 30% increase in Medicare patient rebates and relaxing legislation (\$46.8m)

Pharmacists

- Amended or new PBS Listings (\$2.2b)
- National Immunisation Program vaccines (\$114.1m)
- Delivering opioid dependency medications (\$377.3m)
- Rural Pharmacy Maintenance Allowance (\$79.5m)

Allied Health

- No allied health specific measures announced

Lowlights: Prevention and COVID

- Limited movement on dental care
- No plan to increase funding on prevention to reach 5 per cent of health budget
- COVID measures largely limited to vaccinations and diagnoses



Lowlights: Wellbeing and Climate

A disappointing lack of focus

- Wellbeing is intrinsically linked with the environment
 - Food availability, temperature, natural disasters
- Despite this, the climate crisis and biodiversity crisis are not well covered
- Environment section talks about trying to push towards renewables but not much substance
- Significant oversights
 - Eg. Total money for transport emission reduction \$20m over 5 years
 - Vehicular emissions have both an immediate and a long term health impact
 - Much more needs to be done
- Greater action on climate and biodiversity should be a health priority



More information

- The official Budget website: <https://budget.gov.au/index.htm>
- Health stakeholder pack including fact sheets on all Health and aged care measures:

[Stakeholder pack – Budget 2023–24 | Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care](#)

- Budget Paper No 2 which has all the expenditure measures: [Budget Paper No 2](#)

Webinar

Join Minister Mark Butler in a webinar to ask your question about the Budget

What would you like to know about the Budget 2023-24?

Minister Mark Butler will be joining us to discuss healthcare, the Budget and his vision in this webinar for consumers, members and stakeholders on **Friday 9 June 2023**.



We'd like you to join us. You are invited to send your questions, and we'll choose a selection of these to put to the Minister. Invited guests will be able to pose their questions live during the webinar. Fill out [our application form](#) to get your question included.

Register for [this webinar here](#)

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**Thank you for
your time**

