

Australia delivers \$115.5 B in 2020–21 budget for healthcare

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The Australian government is delivering a record \$115.5 billion in 2020–21 and \$467 billion over the forward estimates to deliver the essential health services Australians need under the Long Term National Health Plan.

The 2020–21 Budget funds the Government's ongoing health response under the Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan, extending initial key COVID-19 health initiatives. It helps chart the road out, including through unprecedented mental health support, and implementation of our COVID-19 Vaccine and Treatment Strategy.

The government has committed more than \$16 billion to the emergency health response to the pandemic. Aged care is a particular focus. Since the pandemic began, the government has invested more than \$1.6 billion to protect senior Australians and workers in aged care, and support providers.

At the same time, this year's Budget strengthens the four pillars of Long Term National Health Plan. It guarantees Medicare, delivers a Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) New Medicines Funding Guarantee, invests in mental health and backs medical research.

The Government's record investment in health includes:

- A record four-year investment of \$467 billion, up \$32 billion over last year's Budget
- A record \$115.5 billion in health investment in 2020–21, up \$11.5 billion on last year's Budget
 - More than \$16 billion for the pandemic health response
- Medicare investment of \$119.3 billion over the forward estimates, up \$6 billion
 - \$2.4 billion total investment in telehealth
- \$41.5 billion for medicines funding over four years
 - Including the creation of the PBS New Medicines Funding Guarantee
- Ensuring hospital capacity with a \$133.6 billion investment over five years, and 2020–21 funding of \$23.6 billion
 - An increase of \$33.6 billion through the new five-year National Hospital Funding Agreement
 - \$3.3 billion for the National Medical Stockpile, Australia's strategic reserve of time-critical and essential medical

supplies

- Continuing Private Health Insurance (PHI) Reforms to deliver reduced costs for insurers and consumers
- \$5.7 billion for mental health
 - Doubling of support under Better Access, from 10 to 20 Medicare-funded psychological services
- \$20 billion Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) has reached maturity to deliver life-changing research, with \$424.3 million in new grants programs and opportunities
- \$2.3 billion investment in COVID-19 treatments and vaccines
- Funding for aged care boosted to \$23.9 billion, up \$2.2 billion
 - Includes \$1.6 billion for 23,000 additional home care packages
- A \$230.8 million injection into sport and preventive health
 - \$44.9 million support for thalidomide survivors.