

## Commonwealth budget 2018-19

**May 2018**

### Supporting providers to deliver high quality aged care services

There was significant investment in aged care that was largely announced before the budget. While it needs to be determined as to which of the announced funding pools can be accessed by members, the announcements included:

- \$1.6 billion for an additional 14,000 new high level home care packages over four years from 2018-19 in addition to the 6,000 high level packages delivered in the 2017-18 MYEFO
- Capital grants funding of \$40.0 million over four years from 2019-20 for aged care facilities in regional, rural and remote Australia
- As recommended in the Carnell and Patterson review, funding for establishment of a new Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission from 1 January 2019
- \$82.5 million for mental health services for people in residential aged care facilities
- 13,500 residential aged care places and 775 short term restorative care places in the 2018-19 Aged Care Approvals Round will be released, with a \$60.0 million capital investment to support new places
- Funding of \$105.7 million over four years from 2018-19 (including \$32.0 million from within the existing resources) to support the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program to deliver additional residential aged care places and home care packages in remote Indigenous communities
- Funding of \$61.7 million over two years from 2018-19 to make the My Aged Care website easier to use and will develop simpler assessment forms for people to access aged care services
- Funding of \$14.8 million over two years from 2018-19 to support preparatory work for a new national assessment framework for people seeking aged care
- Funding of \$7.4 million over two years from 2018-19 to trial navigator services to assist people seeking information about aged care to make decisions that are right for them
- \$300,000 in 2018-19 for an impact analysis of allocating residential care places to people seeking care, rather than to the providers of that care in response to the 2017 Legislated Review of Aged Care
- The combining of the Residential Care and Home Care programs from 1 July 2018 to provide greater flexibility to respond to changes in demand for home care packages and residential aged care places
- \$8.6 million over four years to improve management of prudential risk in residential aged care facilities including through the introduction of a levy to

secure accommodation bonds (in 2015, the Minister for Aged Care tasked the Aged Care Financing Authority to examine the existing Accommodation Payment Guarantee Scheme as well as any alternatives and provide advice to government. ACFA put forward 5 options but recommended that only 3 warranted further attention, this included the now funded recommendation 'to create a guarantee fund pool through a prospective levy on all providers')

- \$22 million to protect older Australians from abuse, including by funding trials of specialist elder abuse support services

### Disability

- Commitment to ongoing security for the NDIS despite the Medicare levy increase being scrapped
- \$92.1 million for those who are not eligible for the NDIS but are in programs that are transitioning to the NDIS.
- An NDIS Jobs and Market Fund to be established at a cost of \$64.3 million to grow the NDIS workforce and service providers

### Enshrining longer term funding

This budget reiterated government will provide \$130.2 billion over five years from 2020-21 to the states and territories for public hospital services after the expiry of the current agreement on 30 June 2020. As part of the agreement, the government has committed to continue existing Activity Based Funding arrangements, including the existing 45 per cent of growth in hospital services, and the existing 6.5 per cent per annum growth cap to the Commonwealth's contribution. Victoria is, of course, yet to sign and is likely to hold out for a better deal in other areas.

### Supporting care in rural communities

Despite some positive signals early on unfortunately we haven't seen action from the government to improve oral health. While there is a slight increase, \$134.8m up from \$107.8 million, the funding doesn't come anywhere near what the VHA was calling for. This is particularly disappointing given the significant connections that exist between poor oral health and poor outcomes. State allocations are yet to be determined.

### Longer term commitment to improve oral health

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## **Tackling the burden of chronic disease**

We didn't see much investment in preventative health through this budget, however, there were some measures that will have positive impacts on chronic disease including a \$77 million women's and children health package and a \$41.7 million over the next two years to extend the Sporting Schools Program.

## **Building capacity and awareness of My Health Record**

There was relatively little investment in ICT in this budget, however, there is opportunity with funding being provided for training the health workforce that it could include better utilisation of my health record.

## **Maintaining choice for privately insured hospital patients**

There is nothing in the budget papers that suggest the right of patients to be admitted as a private patient in a public hospital has been undermined.

## **Ensuring remote communities have equitable access to care**

There is significant funding in this budget for aged care, including \$14.8 million in funding that supports preparatory work for a new national assessment framework and the additional high need home care packages. The VHA will advocate on behalf of the seven multi-purpose services to ensure that their needs are considered as part of those reviews.

## **For more information contact:**

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