



## Federal Budget Summary

The [College's Pre-Budget Submission to the Australian Treasury](#) called on the Australian Government to prioritise measures relevant to delivering and enhancing its commitments to move us towards a sustainable, resilient and future-focused health system for all Australians.

The [Budget delivered by the Australian Treasurer on Tuesday 25 October 2022](#) adopted many recommendations the College has been advocating for. This document provides a high-level overview of wins in key advocacy areas.

- **To improve First Nations health**, the Government will provide \$314.8m over 5 years to close the gap in First Nations health, including more money for infrastructure, workforce, training and programs delivered through Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations including:
  - \$164.3 million over 4 years from 2022–23 to invest in modern health clinics in areas of large and growing First Nations populations, as well as targeted investments to build capacity for chronic disease treatment and rehabilitation
  - \$45.0 million over 4 years from 2022–23 to invest in thirty new and upgraded dialysis units to improve the health of First Nations peoples with end-stage kidney disease
  - \$14.2 million over 3 years from 2022–23 to provide additional support for rheumatic heart disease treatment, detection and prevention activities in high-risk First Nations communities
  - \$1.9 million in 2022–23 to provide two dialysis treatment buses in regional New South Wales and upgrade medical equipment in order to improve access to medical support for First Nations peoples.



### What the RACP asked for:

- *Support the prioritisation, expansion, and provision of sustained and long-term funding to Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) for the delivery of primary and specialist healthcare services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.*
- **To improve child and family health and wellbeing**, related to the recommendations from the [RACP COVID Kids Catch-Up Campaign](#), the Government will provide:
  - \$203.7 million over two years from 2022–23 to provide a funding boost to every Australian school to help address the adverse impacts of COVID-19 on student wellbeing.
  - \$270.8 million over two years from 2022–23 to implement the Schools Upgrade Fund to provide grants for capital works projects to upgrade school equipment and improve ventilation in classrooms to keep students and school staff safe following disruptions caused by COVID-19.
  - \$4.7 billion to support more affordable childcare, helping more children to access quality childcare services.



- \$531.6 million over 4 years from 2022–23 to expand the Paid Parental Leave scheme and provide greater support to families. In 2026, families will be able to access up to 26 weeks of Paid Parental Leave.



What the RACP asked for:

- *Increasing funding for students with additional needs to better support children with disability and/or learning difficulties.*
  - *Expanding commitment to universal childhood education to all three- year-old children.*
- **To equip our healthcare system so it is climate ready and climate friendly**, in line with the [RACP's Healthy Climate Future Campaign](#), the Government will provide \$3.4 million over 4 years from 2022–23 to develop a National Health and Climate Strategy and establish a National Health Sustainability and Climate Unit. This unit will address emerging health risks resulting from climate change and coordinate climate change responses across the health system.



What the RACP asked for:

- *As a first step, allocate approximately \$3.7 million in 2023 to establish the National Health Sustainability Unit (NHSU) to oversee the implementation of the Strategy.*
- **To improve health care integration**, in line with the RACP's call for health care model innovation, the Government has allocated \$100m over 2 years from 2022-23 to co-develop and pilot innovative models of urgent care with states and territories to improve care pathways and inform the urgent care program.



What the RACP asked for:

- *Work with the RACP and our members to ensure that Urgent Care clinics are able to provide team-based multidisciplinary care that seamlessly integrates specialist medical care with general practice and allied health care, particularly for chronic and complex conditions which require specialist care.*
  - *Fund care pathway for specialists to be included in the Voluntary Patient Registration scheme to support team-based multidisciplinary care.*
- **To improve pandemic preparedness and prevent chronic diseases**, the Government has allocated \$3.2 million to undertake initial design for the establishment of an Australian Centre for Disease Control to improve pandemic preparedness and prevent chronic disease.



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What the RACP asked for:

- *Allocate funding specifically for the design and establishment of the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention*
- *Consult with the RACP and other key health stakeholders on its design and establishment.*

- **To better support people living with disability:**

- Total funding for the NDIS will reach \$166.6 billion over 4 years, an increase of \$8.8 billion.
- The NDIS Review will put people with disability back at the centre of the scheme.
- As an immediate action, the Government will invest \$158.2 million for an additional 380 permanent staff for the National Disability Insurance Agency.
- The Government will implement an operational plan to get NDIS participants out of hospital more quickly, by increasing dedicated support staff and improving NDIS discharge plans. This is an additional measure the College specifically requested in a brief to the Australian Minister for Health and Aged Care, The Hon. Mark Butler.
- The Government will establish a National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health and has allocated \$15.9 million to the Centre, for a total commitment of \$23.9 million over four years from 2022-23, with funding to continue beyond those four years.



What the RACP asked for:

- *Ensure the NDIS remains appropriately funded and that full transparency is provided over future sustainability issues.*
- *Establish processes within the NDIA to expedite applications and plan approvals for people with a disability who are in hospital.*
- *Improve linkages and communication between the health and disability sectors.*
- *Fund the effective implementation of the National Roadmap for Improving the Health of People with Intellectual Disability.*

- **To mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the health system and healthcare workers,** the Government will provide \$410.3 million in 2022–23 for the procurement and distribution of rapid antigen tests and personal protective equipment to support COVID-19 outbreak management and prevent the spread of COVID-19 in high-risk settings.



What the RACP asked for:

- *Be led by medical advice and use public health measures when needed. The RACP supports improving building ventilation, the use of masks in public settings, COVID-19 vaccination, equitable access to RATs, PCR testing and antiviral treatments, and general measures such as staying home when unwell, physical distancing, hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette.*
- **To improve access to healthcare in rural and regional areas**, the Government will provide \$143.3 million over 4 years to invest in primary care services, training, workforce incentives and trials for innovative models of care.



What the RACP asked for:

- *Ensure Medicare supports equity of access to care for low income and vulnerable families, particularly in rural and regional areas.*

We look forward to the Government's 2023 *Measuring What Matters Statement* which will set out a range of measures of progress and wellbeing and provide a holistic view of the budgetary decisions. We will also continue to engage constructively with the Australian Government in the lead up to the May 2023 Budget. In particular, we will be advocating strongly for:

- effective measures to address health worker burnout and workforce shortages, including an increase in the number of Specialist Training Program places for rural and regional communities
- system reforms to support equity of access for underserved patients by ensuring Medicare and telehealth arrangements are fit for purpose
- investing in innovative models of care, including through care pathways for specialist referrals for chronic and complex diseases and
- putting prevention centre stage to deliver better health outcomes for Australians and reduce the burden on the health system.

For more information or to provide feedback, please contact [policy@racp.edu.au](mailto:policy@racp.edu.au)