

## **\$2.9 B package drives revamping of Australia's primary healthcare system in 2022-23**

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### **Budget October 2022–23 strengthening medicare**



The Australian Government's 2022-23 Budget begins the task of strengthening medicare after a decade of cuts and neglect. The government will make it easier for Australians to see a doctor when they need it by establishing 50 Medicare Urgent Care Clinics that will help reduce the pressure on the hospital system.

The government will provide \$235 million from 2022-23 to commence the rollout, including \$100 million over 2 years from 2022-23 to co-develop and pilot innovative models with states and territories to improve care pathways and inform the urgent care program rollout. A new general practitioner (GP) grants programme will provide a much-needed boost to local GP practices and improve care (\$229.7 million).

To support the best outcomes for Australia newborns, the government will ensure Australia's Newborn Bloodspot Screening programmes (NBS) world-leading status by increasing the number and consistency of conditions screened across the country (\$39 million).

Women's health during and after pregnancy will be strengthened with updated pregnancy care clinical guidelines and new postnatal care guidelines (\$5.9 million). The Budget invests in a new national network of perinatal mental health and wellbeing centres (\$26.2 million) and families bereaved by stillbirth will get more support (\$13.9 million).

The government is making medicines cheaper for Australian households. For the first time in its 75-year history, the maximum cost of general scripts under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) will fall. The maximum co-payment of \$42.50 will drop to \$30 (\$787.1 million) from 1 January 2023.

This Budget will address workforce shortages particularly beyond our capital cities, making new investments in preventive health and improving mental health support.