

## Australia gives \$6.5 M support for children with hearing loss

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**Three centres are being established and are expected to be completed by 2025**



The Australian government has delivered on a key election commitment and has provided \$6.5 million to The Shepherd Centre to address gaps in hearing services available for children with hearing loss and their families in New South Wales and Tasmania.

Construction is underway on a new facility in the Macarthur region of South West Sydney. The centre is expected to support more than 2,500 children with a hearing loss, and their families.

An additional two facilities will be established in Hobart and Launceston, Tasmania. These will be the first facilities in Tasmania to provide comprehensive on-the-ground support of this kind for children with hearing loss.

While The Shepherd Centre currently supports Tasmanian children and their families through telehealth and periodic outreach visits by their clinicians, the absence of permanent facilities in Tasmania unfairly disadvantages local children and families who need more intensive support.

The funding will also scale up the HearHub digital platform, so help is available regardless of geographical location.

HearHub provides clinical support and resources to organisations that work with children who have hearing loss. More than 9,000 Aussie kids with hearing loss and related communication difficulties, such as autism spectrum disorder, will benefit from this expanded and upgraded service.