



Infant Health – keeping children safe by reducing injury risk

The Government will invest \$77.9 million in infant and maternal health. The Government will develop a new National Injury Prevention Strategy to reduce the risk of injury for Australian children. The strategy will identify priorities across a range of groups and settings, with a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The strategy aims to reduce deaths and hospitalisations due to injury, and ongoing repercussions like physical or mental impairment.

Why is this important?

Injury represents a substantial burden to the Australian community and is the highest cause of death and hospitalisation in Australian children aged one to six years.

A recent study found childhood injury rates did not decrease over the decade from 2002 to 2012, and that children injured in regional and rural Australia were more likely to die from their injuries.

The current rates of preventable injuries place a significant burden on the healthcare system. The total cost of hospitalisations of children due to injury from 2002–2012 was \$2.1 billion.

Starting with new parents who are motivated to change behavior in their children's best interests provides the opportunity to build long term habits for injury prevention.

Who will benefit?

Children have been identified as a priority for preventing injury, however the whole community will also benefit from this strategy.

Evidence shows that a whole-of-population approach to the prevention of injuries and an all ages strategy represent the most effective approach.

Populations with high rates of injury – including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, homeless people, people at socioeconomic disadvantage, people with mental illness, and people living in remote, rural and regional locations – will be specifically addressed through the strategy.

Public and private organisations benefit from a framework that maximises the reach, efficiency and effectiveness of investment in injury prevention.

How much will this cost?

This will cost \$0.9 million from 2018–19 to 2020–21.