



The Hon. Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health

The Hon. Kelly O'Dwyer MP
Minister for Jobs and Industrial Relations
Minister for Women

MEDIA RELEASE

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More support for women with endometriosis this Women's Health Week

The Morrison Government will provide more support for women with endometriosis by helping educate employers, doctors and nurses on managing this common but little known condition that affects over 700,000 Australian women.

Safe Work Australia will develop workplace-specific materials to educate employers on the prevalence and impact of endometriosis, so that they are better-equipped to support employees suffering from endometriosis in the workplace.

Minister for Health Greg Hunt said this move addresses a key recommendation of the National Action Plan for Endometriosis.

“It will increase awareness and understanding of endometriosis among employers, allowing women to get better and more support,” Minister Hunt said.

Minister for Jobs and Industrial Relations and Minister for Women Kelly O’Dwyer said that on average it is estimated that women with endometriosis can lose up to 11 hours per week of workplace productivity.

“With at least one in ten women of reproductive age in Australia suffering from endometriosis, it is important that this large part of the Australian workforce is supported in the workplace”, Minister O’Dwyer said.

“These employees should feel understood, supported and comfortable to discuss their common chronic condition with their employer, and seek the support they need in order to embark upon or continue a productive and rewarding career.”

Minister Hunt said the Coalition Government is also investing almost half a million dollars to educate nurses and doctors as part of \$1 million set aside in the 2018-19 Federal Budget for improving awareness and education of endometriosis among the primary healthcare profession.

“More than \$400,000 will be provided to develop Australia’s first clinical practice guideline for endometriosis as recommended by the National Action Plan for Endometriosis.”

“To date, there have been no national evidence-based clinical practice guidelines for the diagnosis and management of endometriosis in Australia,” Minister Hunt said.

“Endometriosis patients wait seven to 12 years on average for a diagnosis, frequently experiencing crippling pain, and enduring multiple and sometimes unnecessary surgical interventions.”

This clinical guideline will be a tool for the suite of medical professionals who encounter patients with endometriosis, including GPs, emergency doctors, nurses and specialists to achieve best practice care in diagnosing and managing endometriosis.

In addition \$39,360 will be invested to develop the first in-depth tertiary unit of study in endometriosis for Australian nurses.

The Australian College of Nursing, in collaboration with Australia’s first endometriosis specialist nurse, Dr Melissa Parker, will develop this subject to specifically address endometriosis education for nurses.

“School nurses, practice nurses and community nurses are ideally placed as a first port of call for many women and girls experiencing symptoms of endometriosis, who have not yet been formally diagnosed,” Minister Hunt said.

“This initiative responds directly to the National Action Plan for Endometriosis’ key recommendations to upskill nurses and other allied health professionals in identifying symptoms of endometriosis and facilitating appropriate treatment pathways to improve clinical management and care.”

The Government looks forward to working with the states and territories on the roll out of the new Safe Work Australia workplace materials, following unanimous endorsement of the National Action Plan for Endometriosis, by all health ministers, at the recent COAG Health Council.

Last month the Coalition Government launched Australia’s first National Action Plan for Endometriosis and has invested a total of nearly \$5 million to date to combat the condition.

(ENDS)

Authorised by Greg Hunt MP, Liberal Party of Australia, Somerville, Victoria.