



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

Minister for Health and Ageing

## **Tony Abbott MHR**

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### **New Medicare item for nurses to provide antenatal checks in rural areas**

The Commonwealth Government today announced that it will introduce a new Medicare item to fund antenatal checks by nurses, midwives and registered Aboriginal Health Workers in rural and remote Australia.

This will mean that qualified nurses, midwives and registered Aboriginal Health Workers will be able to deliver services rebated through Medicare when providing antenatal checks to pregnant women on behalf of a GP or specialist.

The government is determined to make the best use of the existing medical workforce to provide people in rural areas with better health care services.

Most rural and remote health services rely on a variety of primary health care staff in the delivery of maternal health care. Establishing a new Medicare item for rural nurses, midwives and Aboriginal Health Workers is recognition of the care they provide and a further sign of the government's commitment to making the best possible use of the rural health workforce.

Details of the new Medicare item will be developed in consultation with members of the profession and will be introduced within the next six months. It is expected that the rebate will be about \$18 and that this measure will cost about to \$5 million a year.

**For more information call Mr Abbott's office on ph 02 6277 7220.**