



FACT SHEET

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

NATIONAL HEALTH PLAN

National Medical Stockpile – Purchase of Masks, Other Personal Protective Equipment and Pharmaceuticals

As part of the Australian Government's response to the COVID-19 outbreak we will increase Australia's supply of personal protective equipment and pharmaceuticals held in the National Medical Stockpile.

Why is this important?

The National Medical Stockpile is a fundamental part of Australia's critical infrastructure. It provides life-saving essential pharmaceuticals and personal protective equipment (PPE) (masks, gloves, aprons, protective eyewear). The National Medical Stockpile is critical in managing the COVID-19 outbreak by protecting health professionals and patients.

Who benefits?

All Australians – public and health professionals.

The effective protection of health professionals treating patients helps critical health staff avoid infection. When used by patients, PPE can also be effective in preventing transmission of COVID-19.

This measure will also allow for the purchase of additional antibiotics and antivirals to assist in the treatment of secondary infections associated with COVID-19. The timely supply of antibiotics for vulnerable and at-risk groups, such as the elderly, has the potential to reduce the possibility of people getting another health condition or dying because of COVID-19. In addition, this means patients will have a shorter stay in hospital which reduces pressure on the public hospital system.

How much will this cost?

This measure will invest \$1.1 billion.