



Roadmap for Hearing Health: Improved Hearing Health for Indigenous Australians

The Australian Government is investing \$21.2 million over the next five years to implement key initiatives from the [Roadmap for Hearing Health](#). One of the aims of the Roadmap is to improve access to high quality hearing services for vulnerable Australians including Indigenous Australians.

What is the investment?

\$5.0 million in 2020-21 for improvements in, and early identification of, hearing and speech difficulties for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children including improvements in assessment and screening in primary care settings and early childhood centres.

Funding will include:

- \$2.0 million in a targeted competitive grants approach to market to fund eligible Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services to create quiet spaces for audiology assessments, with priority given to rural and remote clinics; and
- \$3.0 million to advance improvements in hearing for Indigenous children including building on the Parent-evaluated Listening and Understanding Measure (PLUM) and Hear and Talk Scale (HATS) implementation.

This funding will also support investment in outreach audiology service delivery, recruitment of Clinician Coaches and Aboriginal Community Engagement Officers and development of a training curriculum.

Hearing Australia will work closely with the Department of Health's Indigenous Health hearing programs to deliver these funded Roadmap activities.

Why is this investment being made?

Indigenous Australians have significantly higher rates of hearing loss and ear disease than non-Indigenous Australians. Improved hearing health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is intrinsically linked to broader improvements in health, education, and social and economic outcomes.

What does this mean for Indigenous Australians?

Indigenous children and their families will benefit from improved assessments and screening, which in turn will help reduce the incidence and consequences of avoidable hearing loss.

What does this mean for providers?

Eligible Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services will benefit from quiet spaces to undertake audiology assessments.

Providers from a range of sectors including primary care and early childhood, who support Indigenous children and patients, will benefit from the increased investment in screening and assessment.