



Guaranteeing Medicare – Improving the health of people with intellectual disability

The Australian Government will invest \$12.7 million to improve the health and care of people with an intellectual disability by implementing 3 priority actions under the proposed National Roadmap for Improving the Health of People with Intellectual Disability.

The 2021–22 Budget includes:

- \$6.7 million to improve the uptake and implementation of annual health assessments for people with intellectual disability, to better prevent and manage chronic and complex conditions
- \$1.4 million to enable scoping and co-design of a model for a National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health. The scoping and co-design will focus on national leadership and coordination, and the development of a sustainable model leveraging existing expertise and institutions to improve the quality of health care delivered to people with intellectual disability, and
- \$4.7 million for intellectual disability health curriculum development to support the delivery of specific and specialised content as part of tertiary education curricula. This will better equip health professionals to provide quality care for people with intellectual disability.

Why is this important?

Australians with intellectual disability have much higher rates of avoidable hospitalisations than the general population, and substantially higher mortality rates and avoidable deaths.

Improving the uptake and implementation of annual health assessments for people with intellectual disability will help to address these health inequalities by enabling better preventive health care and management of chronic and complex conditions.

Some states have supported the development of centres of clinical excellence in quality health care for people with intellectual disability, but national consistency and coordination is lacking. Scoping and co-designing a model for establishing a National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health is a vital step towards supporting quality care for people with intellectual disability no matter where they live.

Research has shown that medical professionals generally have minimal training in intellectual disability health care, and that there has been no significant increase in attention to intellectual disability content in medical schools over the past 20 years. Development of curricula to

improve the attitudes, knowledge, skills and capability of health professionals in intellectual disability health care will be essential in reducing the health inequities experienced by people with intellectual disability.

These initiatives will help to address issues raised through the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

Who will benefit?

People with intellectual disability will benefit from the initiatives, through more consistent delivery of preventive health care in general practice, and better equipped health professionals and health services to meet their health needs and improve their health outcomes.

States and territories, other non-government organisations and people with intellectual disability will benefit from the development of a suitable model for a National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health, as a comprehensive and coordinated source of national leadership and expertise.

Australia's future health professionals will benefit from specific training to ensure they have the appropriate attitudes, skills and knowledge to deliver quality health care for people with intellectual disability.

How much will this cost?

The Australian Government is investing \$12.7 million over 4 years, from 2021–22.