



## How the 2022–23 Budget is investing in digital health

The Australian Government is investing \$107.2 million to modernise our health care system, to deliver Australia's *Long Term National Health Plan*.

This investment will deliver innovative new methods to provide care, and continue the momentum for embracing new technologies achieved during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Connecting Australians with health services, including GPs, nurses, specialists, midwives, allied health and mental health, has been critical in protecting patients and doctors from the risk of COVID-19 infection. It has also removed one of the biggest barriers to accessing health care for millions of Australians – distance. Through telehealth, a health professional can be available online or over the phone.

The Health Delivery Modernisation Program centres on strengthening primary health care through digital enablement, delivering new digital health services and modernising the critical Services Australia health payments system for all Australians.

The Government's continued digital health investment includes \$72 million over four years to support Phase Three of the Program to build on the successful delivery of earlier program phases, by commencing the transformation of health payments and services toward a more streamlined, digital model.

In this phase, a focus for the majority of investment is on improving interactions with Medicare for healthcare organisations, providers and consumers. Government will also be able to better target health policy by being able to form a single view of health organisations and their providers. This will include:

- New Digital Services:
  - Track and Manage Medicare Complex Care Plans Digitally
  - Modernise Medicare Provider Number Registration Process
  - Enhance Digital Service Offer for Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) Written Authorities
  - Digitise Medicare Enrolment and Re-Enrolment
  - Streamline Medicare Entitlement Statement (MES) Application, and
  - Enable Digital Claiming for Continence Aids Payment Scheme (CAPS).

- New Health Transformation Capabilities:
  - Block Payment Capability into the Organisation Register
  - Reform of the Healthcare Identifiers Legislative Framework
  - Cross-Agency ‘One Stop Shop’ for Health Care Organisations, and
  - Health Assessment and Payment Capabilities - Business Rule Definition and Design Validation.

We are also committing \$32.3 million of continued funding under a 12-month extension to the *2018–2022 Intergovernmental Agreement on National Digital Health* (IGA). An extended IGA would also see \$32.3 million contributed by states and territories. This will ensure interoperability within Australia’s national digital health infrastructure to deliver improvements to health system quality and safety, accountability, transparency and patient-centred healthcare.

In delivering the highest quality health care for Australians, the Government is also investing \$2.9 million towards Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) to safeguard national health data critical to informing the Government’s Long-Term National Health Plan and improving the health and wellbeing of all Australians.

### **Why is this important?**

The Australian Government is delivering digital modernisation of health services for all Australians, driving improvements in health care delivery, access and efficiency. Support for new and innovative technologies and their application within the health, aged care and mental health systems are helping to deliver better outcomes for Australians.

The Government’s continued delivery of the Program and investment in telehealth ensures that we are delivering critical health transformation capabilities to enable primary health care reform and whole of economy benefits for all Australians.

Completion of Phase Three of the Program will mean that Australians will no longer have to visit service centres, and health consumers and health care providers will no longer have to make telephone calls or undertake manual processes for certain transactions with Government.

Australians have enthusiastically taken up telehealth in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and it is now a permanent part of Australia’s health system, greatly improving access to care. The Australian Government’s ongoing investment and refinement to the telehealth system will continue to deliver improvements to service and efficiency for patients and clinicians.

### **Who will benefit?**

All Australians who access Medicare, PBS and other health services will benefit from the continued modernisation of the healthcare system and the Australian Government’s investment in digital technologies.

Stronger connections between health care providers, businesses who deliver Medicare, PBS and other health services, regulators and government will also lead to increased efficiencies in service delivery. Health systems and services will also be better positioned to deliver future health policies and reforms.

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The Program will place health consumers, health care providers and health care organisations at the centre of health services and systems, while developing core business and technology capabilities that can support effective delivery across Programs.

The Government's approach to telehealth will benefit all Australians and their health practitioners and ensure that healthcare is affordable and accessible for Australians enrolled in Medicare.

### **How much will this cost?**

The Australian Government will invest around \$107.2 million in digital programs and innovations to modernise our health care system.