

MEDIA RELEASE:

10.05. 2023

Members Health welcomes budget focus on boosting access to primary care

Matthew Koce, CEO of Members Health Fund Alliance has welcomed last night's Federal Budget announcement of \$3.5 billion in funding to strengthen Medicare by tripling bulk-billing incentives for the most common consultations with children under 16, pensioners and other concession cardholders.

"This much-needed investment will help to stop the decline in bulk billing and improve access to vital primary care for some of Australia's most vulnerable. We commend the Government for recognising the importance of primary care in maintaining population health and investing in Medicare to ensure it remains strong and sustainable."

"We also applaud the Government's strong commitment to Australia's mixed public-private healthcare system, as evidenced by the ongoing support for the private health insurance rebate. As not-for-profit, member-owned health funds, we are proud to provide our members with access to affordable and high-quality healthcare," Mr Koce said.

In addition to the funding for Medicare, the Alliance is also pleased to see the Government's investment to improve digital health initiatives. The funding includes support for enhancements to My Health Record.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of digital health in providing safe and effective healthcare," said Mr Koce.

"We welcome the Government's investment in improving digital health initiatives, which will help to ensure that all Australians have access to high-quality more convenient healthcare services."

Members Health remains committed to working collaboratively with the Government to create a stronger healthcare system for all Australians. "By building on the measures in this budget, including investments in digital health infrastructure, efforts to reduce smoking and vaping rates, and improved access to affordable medicines and clinical services, we can create a healthcare system that puts the needs of Australians first and foremost."

Members Health is the peak industry body for an alliance of 25 health funds that are not-for-profit or part of a member-owned group, regional or community based. They all share the common ethic of putting their members' health before profit. Our funds represent the interests of more than 5 million Australians.

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Putting members' health before profit

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Page 1 of 1