

## Australian Federal Budget falls short of systemic responses and reforms - Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators

The 2024-2025 Australian Federal Budget delivered some wins for patients and access to health care but fell short of systemic responses and reforms.

RACMA had advocated for a focus on reforms and budget measures that:

- Raise standards of clinical governance across Australia.
- Improve health workforce planning and associated regulatory settings to address workforce shortages and support the delivery of quality and safe healthcare.
- Increase investment in retention and adjustment services for overseas-trained healthcare practitioners.
- Support proactive industry-led initiatives to foster a better professional environment for health practitioners.
- Support the establishment of risk-based management approaches for the use of AI in health settings.

We are pleased to see \$227.0 million to grow the number of Medicare Urgent Care Clinics to 87 and \$882.2 million to take pressure off hospitals. The hospital funding is designed to support states and territories to provide hospital outreach in the community, deliver virtual care to prevent avoidable hospitalisations and upskill the residential aged care workforce. These initiatives are small steps that will improve and will assist in retention of the health workforce and support access to and delivery of quality and safe healthcare. We continue to advocate for improved regulatory settings and programs to address workforce shortages, particularly in rural and regional areas.

The additional \$91.1 million in funding for supply of healthcare in areas of shortage is a welcome start to an urgent challenge for the system. This must only be the start of increased funding and programs to address attraction and retention of the health and medical workforce, particularly in rural and regional areas.

There were also some wins for the aged care workforce in line with the RACMA submission to the [Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety](#). The budget delivered \$88.4 million to continue to attract and retain the aged care workforce, in addition to other announcements over the past year begin to address the issues we have raised about the composition and quality of the aged care workforce. The additional \$111.0 million to enhance the capability of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission responds to our long-term advocacy for a regulatory and complaints system that delivers a robust and transparent aged care sector that Australians can have confidence in.

Whilst the individual program and funding announcements in the 2024-2025 budget will continue to deliver incremental improvements to access to quality health care, it does not deliver the systemic reforms and funding that improve outcomes in the longer-term. As health system leaders, RACMA and its members will continue to advocate for more wholesale and ambitious reforms and funding models that deliver lasting and sustainable change.

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