



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

2023–24
Budget



Priorities



Priorities

- Eliminating the claims backlog
- Reforming veteran legislation
- Modernising information communications technology
- Planning for the future

Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide



- The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide delivered its Interim Report in August 2022
- \$354.8 million over four years was invested to address recommendations 1-4 in the October 2022-23 Budget
- Significant work is underway to improve access to information and reduce the claims backlog

Legislative Reform



- \$9.5 million invested over two years in October 2022-23 Budget to create a pathway for legislative reform
- Consultation on the pathway opened in February
- Pathway proposes an improved Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act as the sole ongoing Act

Access to information



- Government announced in April that the five Royal Commission recommendations have been implemented
- Changes were made to improve access to information and personnel records held by Defence and DVA
- Information Access Units have been established in both departments and information on how to access these records is available for veterans on our website.

Budget outcomes for the veteran community



Modernisation and Sustainment of ICT systems



\$254.1 million over four years to replace DVA's financial management system and sustain DVA's existing ICT systems

- A modern and reliable payments system is required to ensure delivery of services and support across the broader veteran support system
- Modernisation will help to improve the experience for veteran and families by reducing the complexity of the claims system

Department of Veterans' Affairs Claims Processing – Additional Funding



Budget outcomes

\$64.1 million in 2023-24 for additional resources to support staff

- Maintaining support staff to meet immediate requirements across critical services experiencing increased demand associated with high claim numbers
- DVA will maintain its skilled workforce to meet demand and mitigate risks of delays in providing services to veterans and families

Sir John Monash Centre – Additional Funding



\$7.4 million over four years (\$8.3 million over six years) for technology upgrades at the Sir John Monash Centre in France

- Upgrades maintain cutting edge multi-media technology that gives visitors an interactive and immersive experience of what Australian diggers went through on the Western Front

Supporting Veterans – Volunteer Training in Suicide Recognition and Intervention



\$2 million over two years to support the continued delivery of mental health literacy and suicide intervention training

- A national series of workshops and training sessions for the ex-service community
- This training will provide the veteran community with the skills and knowledge needed to:
 - recognise those at risk suicide
 - provide support and intervention
 - enable the connection to mental health support

Supporting Veteran Families at Risk




\$0.5 million over four years to expand eligibility for the Acute Support Package

- The eligibility for the Acute Support Package will be expanding to include grandparents who are full-time carers for children of veterans
- The Acute Support Package is designed to support families who are experiencing new and challenging life circumstances that mean the family unit needs support to get back on track

Cross-portfolio measures



Cross-portfolio measures – Department of Health and Aged Care



Cross-portfolio
measures

There is a strong focus on health in the 2023-24 Budget, including significant investments to strengthen Medicare.

Key measures with positive impacts for veterans and their families:

- Supporting Bulk Billing in General Practice (Veterans' Access Payment)
- *MyMedicare* (voluntary patient registration)
- Lowering the cost of medicines through changes to maximum dispensing quantities
- Urgent Care Clinics
- Funding pay increases for Aged Care Workers

Cross-portfolio measures – Department of Health and Aged Care



Cross-portfolio
measures

Supporting Bulk Billing in General Practice (Veterans' Access Payment)

- \$33.3 million for DVA over four years.
- This measure triples the current bulk billing incentive – and the corresponding Veterans' Access Payment - for certain GP attendances, from 1 November 2023.
- The increased VAP payment will also for some telehealth services, for veterans registered with *MyMedicare*
- For Veteran Card holders, this means that the amount paid to their GP for some of the most common attendances will increase

Cross-portfolio measures – Department of Health and Aged Care



Cross-portfolio
measures

MyMedicare (voluntary patient registration)

- Patients will be able to get continuity of care from a team of health care providers through a new voluntary patient registration payment model – *MyMedicare*
- *MyMedicare* will build a stronger relationship between patients and their primary care teams. It is voluntary and open to anyone, **including veterans**, with patients able to register with their preferred practice, GP and care team. It will support access to longer GP telehealth consultations

Cross-portfolio measures – Department of Health and Aged Care




Cross-portfolio
measures

Urgent Care Clinics

- Urgent Care Clinics will take pressure off hospital emergency departments by making it easier for Australians to see a doctor or nurse when they have an urgent, but not life threatening need for care, at no cost to individuals
- This measure provides additional funding of \$2 million for DVA to support the full rollout of an expanded national network of Urgent Care Clinics
- Veterans and eligible dependents will be able to access urgent care at these clinics using their Veteran Card

Cross-portfolio measures – Department of Health and Aged Care




Cross-portfolio
measures

Lowering the Cost of Medicines Through Changes to Maximum Dispensing Quantities

- \$1.6 billion in savings for patients over four years (\$46.6 million for DVA cardholders)
- From 1 September 2023, this measure will double the amount of a medicine that many patients with chronic health conditions can buy in a single trip to the pharmacy, with the annual cost for more than 320 PBS listed medicines becoming cheaper for millions of Australians
- Veterans will benefit from fewer visits to their GP and pharmacist to get the medicines they use the most and will save up to \$43.80 a year, per medicine

Cross-portfolio measures – Department of Health and Aged Care



Cross-portfolio
measures

Funding Pay Increases for Aged Care Workers

The Government is committing \$11.3 billion to support wage increases for aged care workers. This includes:

Increase to Veterans' Home Care and Community Nursing Fees

- \$82.5 million over four years for Veterans' Home Care and Community Nursing programs

Residential Aged Care

- DVA funding of \$288.5 million over four years for residential aged care

Cross-portfolio measures – Department of Social Services



Cross-portfolio
measures

Increased Support for Commonwealth Rent Assistance Recipients

- From 20 September 2023, the Government will increase the maximum fortnightly rate of Commonwealth Rent Assistance by 15% for all recipients
- This measure provides an extra \$13.5 million to veterans and families
- The increase will automatically apply to Commonwealth Rent Assistance payments



Questions?

