

2024-2025 Federal Budget starts work on sexual and reproductive health

The Family Planning Alliance Australia (FPAA) is a long-standing alliance of the key sexual and reproductive health organisations from every Australian state and territory and is their national policy and advocacy voice.

FPAA works primarily at the national level to uphold, strengthen, and advance sexual and reproductive health and rights, so that all people have freedom and autonomy over all matters related to sexuality, reproduction, gender and wellbeing.

“We welcome the overall approach to budgeting this year, as it shows the Government is beginning to address some of the structural changes required to achieve gender equality for women – as well as starting the important job of responding to the recent *Senate Inquiry into universal access to reproductive health care*.” said Tracey Hutt, CEO.

While there is much more to do, FPAA welcome all of the Federal Governments announcements on sexual and reproductive health including:

- permanent MBS item numbers for Telehealth for consultations related to sexual and reproductive health care and blood borne viruses.
- funding longer gynaecological consultations
- training placements for GPs to qualify to insert long-acting reversible contraception (such as IUD's and contraceptive implants)
- a virtual contraception decision-making tool
- free period products for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander women
- the removal of nuisance tariffs on menstrual products
- imaging request rights for nurse practitioners to support termination of pregnancy
- confirmation of funding for the AUSCAPPS network
- menopause training for health practitioners.

We also welcome the announcements that the government will ensure they complete a gender audit of all Medicare rebates.

We are however concerned about the lack of new investment in primary prevention such as national supports and additional resourcing for states and territories to implement the UNESCO guidance on comprehensive relationships and sexual health education in schools and the wider community. Something that more than 90% of parents, regardless of political persuasion support. This leaves Australia falling behind other wealthy countries and leaves young people vulnerable in the future.

Therefore, we look forward to future announcements over the coming months, as we lead into the 2025 federal election.

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