

ADEA welcomes budget's healthcare reforms but urges for more diabetes education support

Wednesday 10 May 2023: The Australian Diabetes Educators Association (ADEA), the peak body for Credentialed Diabetes Educators (CDEs), welcomes the federal government's budget to strengthen Medicare and reform parts of the nation's primary healthcare system, including measures for stronger multidisciplinary care in the community and closer relationships between people and their primary care teams.

However, ADEA said the government could do more to boost diabetes education and increase access to CDEs to address the condition and its \$14.6 billion cost to the nation.

The government's 2023–24 budget delivered on 9 May invested hundreds of millions of dollars to increasing access to primary care with coordinated teams.

This includes \$445.1 million over five years to enable GPs to have nurses and allied health professionals working together for better care; \$98.9 million over four years to connect frequent hospital users to general practices to receive comprehensive, multidisciplinary care in the community; and, \$79.4 million over four years to support Primary Health Networks to commission allied health services to improve access to multidisciplinary care for people with chronic conditions in under-serviced communities.

The government also introduced MyMedicare, a voluntary system for people to obtain wraparound care from their GPs, nurses, and allied health professionals.

The system, which the government describes as strengthening the relationship between doctors and their patients to produce better continuity of care, has been allocated \$19.7 million over four years from 2023–24.

'In time, MyMedicare will also be extended to nurse practitioners and other primary care providers,' budget papers state.

The government is also boosting the nursing workforce by investing \$10.7 million to create 6000 clinical placements and providing incentives to clinics employing returning nurses.

This investment, which will also fund a scope of practice review to examine current models of primary care, will start in 2023–24 and run for four years.

Other health highlights in the budget include \$46.8 million starting in 2023–24 for four years to recognise the important role nurse practitioners and participating midwives play in delivering healthcare.

Further, the government has invested \$824.4 million in the nation's digital health infrastructure, which includes modernising My Health Record, to improve coordinated care.

ADEA CEO Susan Davidson said the organisation welcomed the above reforms to improve the lives of people with diabetes.

'The increase in access to primary care and measures to improve coordination among health professionals go toward helping CDEs work to their full scope in diabetes care teams,' Ms Davidson said.

'CDEs are the centre of every diabetes care team, and diabetes care teams are the epitome of multidisciplinary care teams.

'This coordination of care by the team is essential to manage complex chronic conditions like diabetes.

'We are thrilled the government recognises the importance of these teams for people living with diabetes and other chronic conditions.'

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Ms Davidson said the organisation thanked the government for introducing these measures but that more investments in diabetes education and management were needed.

'These include remuneration for diabetes health professionals to support optimal use of diabetes-management technologies, additional CDE visits for the population at increased risk of diabetes-related complications, and CDE visits for people with gestational diabetes to prevent complications and lessen the risk of type 2 diabetes,' she said.

'We will continue to advocate on behalf of ADEA members and we look forward to working with the government and other stakeholders towards implementing our diabetes education priorities.'

An ADEA analysis of the budget will be published soon.

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