



# Australian Health Care Reform Alliance

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Health Budget fails prevention, equity and reform goals

The Australian Health Care Reform Alliance (AHCRA) today expressed concern that the Health Budget delivers only short-term and superficial fixes and fails to address the underlying determinants of ill-health and disability which pose the most serious health threats to our community.

“While it has responded to some immediate needs within the health portfolio, future challenges such as the health impacts of climate change and the growing burden of obesity, have been kicked down the road for another government to address,” said Jennifer Doggett, Chair of AHCRA.

“Even those measures which respond to genuine health needs, such as funding for immunisations, Indigenous health and mental health for older people, have to be seen against the backdrop of growing inequity.

“Unfair tax cuts, a housing affordability crisis and increased punitive measures for people living on social security, will all have serious negative effects on the health of the community.

“Unfortunately, even the well-designed spending measures in this Budget will have their gains undermined by the Government’s failure to address the fundamental determinants of health, such as poverty and inequality.

“AHCRA acknowledges the support for Medicare, public hospitals and the PBS in the Budget. These are important components of our health system that need strong support. However, the Budget measures fail to address the need for reform to these programs so that they can meet our current and future health challenges, such as the need to prevent and manage chronic disease.

“AHCRA was also disappointed that the Government virtually ignored key areas such as prevention, primary health care and dental health in the Budget. These sectors of the health system are crucial in re-orienting the health system towards a more person-centred, preventive focussed and should be the first priorities for support.

“Overall, the Budget will only deliver superficial and short-term solutions and will do nothing to address the broader social determinants of health that will affect the health status of the community over the long-term.”

**For further information or comment: AHCRA Chair, Jennifer Doggett, 0403 325 980**

*AHCRA is a coalition of health groups, including consumer, provider and service delivery organisations, working together to improve the health system for Australia’s future.*

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