

COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS OF MEDICAL COLLEGES

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The Hon Michael McCormack MP
Minister for Small Business
Parliament House
Canberra, ACT 2600
E: department@treasury.gov.au

Dear Minister

2017-18 Pre-Budget Submission

The Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges appreciates the invitation to make a submission regarding priorities for the 2017-18 Budget noting the Government's focus on economic growth and job creation.

CPMC is the unifying organisation that supports Australia's Medical Colleges, which oversee and maintain professional standards for doctors in their individual areas of specialty. CPMC seeks to ensure that individual medical specialties have a broad base of intercollegiate knowledge so as to enable them to provide for the Australian community the highest quality of medical care delivered in accordance with accepted clinical principles and to improve, protect and promote the health of the Australian public. The individual member Colleges are responsible for the determination and maintenance of standards for their respective disciplines and for the training and education of medical specialists in that discipline.

CPMC supports universal health care and equity of access for all Australians regardless of geographical isolation, including initiatives which are aimed at ensuring the highest quality and safety in the organisation and delivery of health services.

Working in all areas and in every part of the country from the city to the bush, Australia's medical specialists have extensive knowledge of the health and ageing system as they navigate it on a daily basis to manage patients.. They see the challenges being faced by Australians and the need for system reform. CPMC's vision is for an integrated Australian health care system which is adequately funded to support seamless care pathways for all patients in our care.

Recommended Priority Areas

The 2017-18 Budget is an opportunity for the Turnbull Government to commit to system reform which ensures equity in access across the primary, acute, aged and disability sectors. The \$160 billion spent on healthcare, approximately ten per cent of GDP, is likely to have to rise given the ageing of the population, changing clinical profiles towards the management of chronic disease, and higher costs of technology and new drugs.

Costs can be controlled by greater attention to integrated care which reduces duplication of effort, and with adequate funding can build the interface needed between primary through to specialist care.

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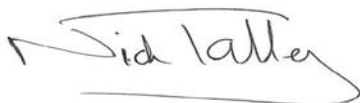
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CPMC recommends that greater equity in access for all Australians can be achieved in the following ways:

- Lifting the freeze on Medicare rebates to enable access for all Australians to timely and affordable primary health care and restore indexation back-dated to 2014.
- Enable improved brokerage arrangements for better coordinated care, by adequately funding the *Health Care Homes* initiative for practice eligibility, patient eligibility, and payment systems.
- With 7% of current government funding going to support 14% of the burden of disease, mental health care is under-funded and CPMC recommends the government commits to adequately funding the existing requirements.
- Formulate a national health workforce plan which includes strategies to better manage the training pipeline to control against oversupply of medical graduates.
- Provide incentives to address the geographic mal-distribution of medical practitioners in rural and remote areas of Australia because this impacts upon the ability of people living there to access timely and effective health care. CPMC supports policy levers which encourages specialist training in rural and regional centres.
- Focus on accessible oral and dental health care within the Medicare system.
- Enable greater investment in clinical research.
- Establish a National Obesity Prevention Taskforce.
- Establish a coordinated national response to the very high prevalence of preventable ear and eye disease for Australian children and particularly in Indigenous communities.

The Council welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Federal Government for Budget 2017-18.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sid Talley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Laureate Professor Nicholas Talley

Chair CPMC