

Health

The 2023-24 Budget delivers an addition \$2.7 billion investment in health, with a focus on infrastructure, capacity building and future proofing. The budget also invests in ensuring older Western Australians stay out of emergency departments and provides support to the terminally ill, particularly in regional areas, through investment in voluntary assisted dying and palliative care. There appears to be little investment in community-based care or preventative health services, both of which are vital to healthy communities and an effective health system.

Initiative	Community Health in a Virtual Environment Pilot (BP2, V1, P296)
Investment	\$3.4 million over 2023-24
Description	Targeted funding to expand the Community Health in a Virtual Environment project to all services in the East Metropolitan Health Service. This project works to help deliver more pathways to care for aged care residents who have traditionally had to attend an emergency department.
Implications	Important to see investment into implementing alternative models of care to support treatment of patients in the most appropriate setting. This will help reduce avoidable presentation and admissions to emergency department for people living in aged care.

Initiative	Integrated Older Adult Model of Care (BP2, V1, P296)
Investment	\$2.9 million over 2023-24
Description	Continuation of the Integrated Older Adult Model of Care program and extension of the pilot to targeted hospitals as a proof of concept. The model of care incorporates a geriatric assessment team in the ED, an ED care navigator to support complex patients to transition away from hospital-based services, and a geriatric residential outreach program to prevent hospitalisation through a proactive review and follow-up within 24 hours of discharge.
Implications	Important to see investment models that support patients to transition away from hospital-based services into more appropriate settings. The focus on preventing hospitalisation and discharge follow up will help reduce the pressure of preventable readmissions and improve health outcomes for older adults.

Initiative	Emergency Access Response/Reform Program (BP2, V1, P296)
Investment	\$8.2 million over 2023-24 to 2024-25
Description	Dedicated reform teams to examine hospital processes, eliminate barriers to timely care, and optimise the patient experience through initiatives that are developed locally, tested, refined and scaled across the health system.
Implications	Important to see investment in implementing alternative models of

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	care to support treatment of patients in the most appropriate setting and to reduce avoidable presentation and admissions for people with complex needs.
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Initiative	Regional Palliative Care (BP2, V1, P296)
Investment	\$3.1 million over 2023-24
Description	To support the palliative care workforce and enhance end-of-life choices for terminally ill patients in the regions.
Implications	It is not clear what projects will be included in this investment. Nevertheless, it is important to see investment in ensuring people living in WA's regions have access to high quality end of life options. This helps ensure people can live with dignity in their community until their death, rather than be required to move to Perth to access appropriate services. Ongoing investment will be required to ensure regional Western Australians have access to high quality end of life services.

Initiative	South West Aboriginal Medical Service Health Hub (BP2, V1, P296)
Investment	\$18.3 million over 2023-24 to 2024-25
Description	Funding to build a new South West Aboriginal Medical Services Health Hub in Bunbury to provide culturally appropriate, comprehensive health care to the Aboriginal population in the southwest regions of the State. This investment matches that of the Commonwealth for this initiative.
Implications	These services will provide much needed culturally appropriate care to Aboriginal people living in the South West, increase the uptake of health care and improve overall health outcomes for Aboriginal people.

Initiative	Medical Respite Centre Services (BP2, V1, P296)
Investment	\$2.2 million over 2023-24 to 2024-25
Description	To extend support for people experiencing homelessness to receive post-acute care during their recovery from illness or injury in a safe, community-based environment while linking the person with housing, community and social supports. This initiative was a key deliverable of the Sustainable Health Review.
Implications	Access to safe and secure accommodation is key to increasing rates of recovery and reducing unnecessary readmission to health services.

Initiative	Voluntary Assisted Dying (BP2, V1, P296)
Investment	\$2.9 million for 2023-24
Description	This funding will increase support for voluntary assisted dying services in Western Australia. This is a key activity under the Sustainable Health Review.
Implications	Important investment in supporting the continued development of Voluntary Assisted Dying care in WA. Voluntary Assisted Dying,

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	introduced in 2021, helps ensure WA adults can continue to hold autonomy over their life, even in their death. Ongoing investment will be required to ensure the continued development of Voluntary Assisted Dying services, with high quality care available to all Western Australians.
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Initiative	WA Children's Hospice (BP2, V1, P296)
Investment	\$1 million over 2023-24 to 2024-25
Description	Funding to support children accessing the Paediatric Palliative Care Service, which offers holistic and compassionate care to children with life-limiting conditions and their families while a dedicated hospice is being built. This is a key activity under the Sustainable Health Review.
Implications	Investment in interim palliative care services will provide a much-needed boost to support available to children and their families while the children's hospice is under development.

Initiative	COVID-19 Spending (BP2, V1, P296)
Investment	\$13.6 million over 2023-24 to 2024-25
Description	To fund residual COVID-19 response costs, including outbreak prevention activities.
Implications	There is little clarity on the intent on the intended projects included in this investment, but none the less, important funding to support the health systems continued transition through COVID-19 recovery. The distribution of funding, majority of which is in 2023-24, is appropriate and reflects our progress through the recovery phase.