

# Election Statement



**Healthcare reform  
that delivers:**

**Seven actions for  
immediate impact.**

**A unified call from Australia's peak  
nursing and midwifery groups**

This election, voters are demanding more affordable and accessible healthcare. Nine peak nursing and midwifery groups have come together to present seven reform actions that will improve care, reduce waiting times, and deliver better health outcomes with minimal budget impact.

## **Patient access to specialist care, faster**

**ACTION 1** Enable Nurse Practitioners and Endorsed Midwives to directly refer patients to relevant specialists, reducing waiting times for care.

Enabling Nurse Practitioners and Endorsed Midwives to make direct referrals within their scope of practice, as per the Scope of Practice review, will ease the burden on GPs, reduce wait times, reduce cost to patients, and ensure they receive the timely care they need.

## **More nurse and midwife-led clinics, especially in rural and remote Australia**

**ACTION 2** Introduce funding and regulatory reforms that support nurse and midwife-led clinics and innovative care models, particularly in rural, remote, and underserved communities, enabling nurses to take leadership roles in delivering community-based primary care.

In recent years, nurse and midwife-led clinics have been expanding across Australia. Nurse and midwife led care improves health outcomes, increases access to healthcare for vulnerable Australians, and reduces wait times for everyone

## **Support Registered Nurses to prescribe under the PBS**

**ACTION 3** Work with State and Territory Governments to pass laws to support qualified Registered Nurses in every State and Territory to prescribe approved medications under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

Health Ministers agreed in 2024 to allow Registered Nurses to prescribe basic medication. Legislation needs to be passed for Registered Nurses in every State and Territory to prescribe under the PBS – ensuring patients receive affordable, efficient treatment.



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## Healthcare reform that delivers: Seven actions for immediate impact.

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### More nurses and midwives in general practice

**ACTION 4** Increase the Workforce Incentive Payment (WIP) Practice Stream cover up to seven healthcare professionals, and tie payments to higher scope clinical care.

The WIP-Practice Stream provides financial incentives to general practices to hire health professionals, including nurses, midwives, and allied health workers, to improve care for local communities with complex needs. Tying the WIP to clinical care will ensure practices deliver more personalised and accessible services, helping people get the care they need, especially in areas with fewer resources.

### Access to pathology and diagnostic imaging, faster

**ACTION 5** Authorise Nurse Practitioners, Endorsed Midwives and qualified Registered Nurses to order diagnostic tests such as mammograms, X-rays and DEXA scans. For Endorsed Midwives this includes NIPT, pelvic ultrasound, multiple pregnancy items, iron studies etc. This is safe and effective reform that aligns with the bipartisan commitment to women's health, would cut frustrating delays and costs for women, and is within normal scope of practice.

This policy will enable Nurse Practitioners, Endorsed Midwives, and qualified Registered Nurses to simply work to scope, ensuring faster diagnosis and treatment for patients, especially in rural and regional areas. It will also reduce cost to patients as they will not be required to see a GP as well to get an MBS rebate.

### Support women's health

**ACTION 6** New and amended Medicare Benefit Schedule (MBS) items for Endorsed Midwives to support pre-conception counselling, primary sexual and reproductive health, intrapartum care outside of a hospital setting (homebirth), and a general consult item for women's health.

This will enable women to be funded for the care they receive within an Endorsed Midwives' scope and enable access and equity of care improving outcomes for women, babies and their families.

### The highly trained health workforce Australians need

**ACTION 7** Implement a primary healthcare workforce development strategy to unlock 15,000 extra education and training places for Registered Nurses, Nurse Practitioners and midwives in the places and settings that need them most.

Our health system will have the capacity to respond to the needs of our growing, diverse population with more nurses with academic qualifications to educate other nurses, as well as more teaching and student placements for nurses, specialist nurses, nurse practitioners and midwives in settings such as mental health, aged care and maternal child healthcare, and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services. More opportunity to learn in primary care services, in a culturally safe and flexible way, means greater job readiness and likelihood that students will choose to work in primary healthcare and regional Australia.