



National Cabinet extra public hospital funding must translate into better health consumer experience

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The Consumers Health Forum of Australia (CHF) welcomes today's announcement from National Cabinet that a new five-year agreement on the future of public hospital funding has been reached. This landmark commitment will see the Commonwealth invest a record \$219.6 billion in state and territory public hospitals from 2026–27 to 2030–31, including \$25 billion in additional funding, three times the additional investment of the previous agreement.

“Right now, Australians don’t experience health funding agreements, they experience waiting lists, cancelled appointments and closed books. The new funding is welcome, but Australians will want to see tangible improvements to hospital experiences and wait times,” said CHF CEO Dr Elizabeth Deveny.

“Making healthcare more affordable, more accessible and fairer has been at the heart of CHF’s advocacy for many years, and it’s fantastic to see these priorities reflected in a unified national response.

“Today’s agreement demonstrates that governments across the country are listening to the lived experience of consumers and acting on the urgent need to strengthen healthcare for all Australians,” said Dr Deveny.

As this record investment is rolled out, CHF urges state and territory governments to demonstrate how it will translate to real world improvements the next time people need to go to hospital.



“We will be looking at how this funding will change waiting lists and access to outpatient services. These tangible experiences are what the community really cares about,” said Dr Deveny.

As part of the most recent National Consumer Sentiment Survey, CHF asked 5,000 Australians what they thought of the current healthcare system. Fifty-five per cent said there were some good things about Australian healthcare but major changes are needed to work better.

The top 5 issues consumers identified for improvements were:

- More doctors, nurses and other healthcare workers (66%)
- The cost of care and/or medicines (59%)
- Better access to care (42%)
- Better quality of care (26%)
- Listening to patients more (25%)

CHF will continue working with governments, health services and communities to ensure this investment delivers real, measurable improvements in health outcomes for all Australians. And to ensure the consumer voice drives those decisions.

Media contact

Benjamin Graham – Public Affairs Manager CHF

0461 545 395

b.graham@chf.org.au