

**Preliminary Analysis**  
**Federal Budget 2017-18**  
Tuesday 9 May 2017

**TIER 1**

**Budget announcements specific to family and relationship services**

**Social Services**

**Social Impact Investing Market (trials)** – \$20.2 million over 10 years from 2017-18 to encourage the development of the Australian market for social impact investments. Social impact investing is aimed at being an innovative, outcomes-based approach that brings together governments, service providers, investors and communities to deliver a range of social and environmental outcomes. The Government purposes to continue working with stakeholders to also address regulatory barriers impeding the development and sustainability of the Social Impact Investing Market.

This measure includes:

- \$12.2 million over 10 years from 2017-18 to partner with State and Territory Governments to trial social impact investing initiatives; and
- \$8.0 million over 4 years from 2017-18 to establish a Social Impact Investment Readiness Fund to build capacity in the non-government and private sector to develop social impact investment proposals.

## **Government Response to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Child Support Program**

**(implementation)** – \$12.4 million over five years from 2016-17 to implement three priority recommendations of the report of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs, *From conflict to cooperation — Inquiry into the Child Support Program*, including:

- extending the time period before determining when to adjust the amount of child care support payable, including Family Tax Benefit and other payments, in interim care determinations;
- enabling simpler and more flexible court processes to set aside and modify child support arrangements, in particular Child Support Agreements made before 1 July 1998; and
- adopting a more equitable approach to collecting child support debts and overpayments, taking into account the best interests of the child.

**Institutional Child Sexual Abuse** – \$33.4 million in 2017-18 to establish the Commonwealth Redress Scheme for Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (the Scheme). The Scheme has been designed in close consultation with the Independent Advisory Council on Redress appointed by the Prime Minister in December 2016. The Scheme will commence in March 2018 and start receiving applications from 1 July 2018 from people who were sexually abused as children in Commonwealth institutions. The Commonwealth will continue to engage with States, Territories and non-government institutions to encourage them to join the Scheme to promote a nationally consistent approach to redress. Redress payments will be exempt from income tax. This measure builds on the 2016-17 MYEFO measure titled *Redress Scheme Design*.

**Australian Longitudinal Studies** – an additional \$40.9 million over four years from 2017-18 to continue four major Australian longitudinal studies: Longitudinal Study of Australian Children; Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children; Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Study; and Building a New Life in Australia — the Longitudinal Study of Humanitarian Migrants.

## **Attorney-General's**

**Family Law Courts (improving risk identification and management)** – \$10.7 million over four years from 2017-18 (with \$2.7 million ongoing) to the Family Court of Australia, the Federal Circuit Court of Australia and the Family Court of Western Australia to employ

additional family consultants at court locations across Australia. The family consultants (which include qualified social workers and psychologists) will provide child-focused interventions to assist families and the courts where there are allegations of family violence or child abuse. This measure attempts to address the recommendations from the Family Law Council's 2016 final report on *Families with Complex Needs and the Intersection of the Family Law and Child Protection Systems*, which recognised the need to address the risk of harm to vulnerable parties.

**Legal Assistance Services (additional funding)** – \$55.7 million over three years from 2017-18 for legal assistance services. This includes \$39.0 million for Community Legal Centres (CLCs) and \$16.7 million for Indigenous Legal Assistance Providers (ILAPs). The funding for CLCs aims at providing support for victims of domestic violence and the funding for ILAPs will assist in addressing Indigenous incarceration rates.

**Specialist Domestic Violence Units (expansion)** – \$3.4 million over two years from 2017-18 to expand the trial of Domestic Violence Units (DVUs) in legal centres around Australia. The DVUs provide legal and other assistance to women who are experiencing, or at risk of, domestic or family violence. The services assist women to access other services such as financial counselling, tenancy assistance, trauma counselling, emergency accommodation, family law services and employment services. The locations of the DVUs will be determined based on areas of need, in consultation with State and Territory Governments. This measure builds on the 2015-16 MYEFO measure titled *Women's Safety Package*.

**Parenting Management Hearings (establishment)** – \$12.7 million over four years from 2017-18 to establish Parenting Management Hearings (PMHs) — a new forum for resolving family law disputes between self-represented litigants. The PMHs is aimed at being a fast, informal, non-adversarial dispute resolution mechanism. The purpose of PMHs is to give powers to make binding determinations on simple family law matters, which would otherwise require consideration by the family law courts.

## TIER 2

### Other budget items affecting children, families and communities

#### Social Services

**Family Tax Benefit Part A** – involving two measures:

- rate increase not proceeding – to achieve savings of \$1.9 billion over four years (to repair the Budget and fund policy priorities) from 2017-18 by not increasing the maximum rate of Family Tax Benefit (FTB) Part A, which was announced as part of the 2015-16 MYEFO measure titled *Family Payment Reform — a new families package*.
- consistent income treatment for families receiving FTB A) – to achieve efficiencies of \$415.4 million over five years by implementing a consistent 30 cents in the dollar income test taper for Family Tax Benefit Part A families with a household income in excess of the Higher Income Free Area (currently \$94,316) from 1 July 2018.

**Jobs for Families Package** – to achieve savings of \$2 billion over five years by maintaining the current Family Tax Benefit (FTB) payment rates for two years at their current levels from 1 July 2017. Indexation of the FTB payment rates will resume on 1 July 2019. This measure builds on the \$6.3 billion in budget improvements already achieved over the forward estimates through the first Omnibus Savings Bill.

**Cashless Debit Card (extension and expansion)** – an extension of the current cashless debit card trials in Ceduna (South Australia) and the East Kimberley (Western Australia) until 30 June 2018. Also an expansion to a further two locations from 1 September 2017. This measure extends the 2015-16 Budget measure titled *New Income Management Arrangements — trial and industry consultation*.

**Income Management (extension)** – \$145.5 million over three years from 2016-17 to extend Income Management (IM) in all current locations until 30 June 2019. IM was established in the Northern Territory in 2007, and has since been expanded to 13 other locations in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia. Under new arrangements, Financial Counselling, Capability and Resilience Hubs will be renamed Money Support Hubs, and funded for a further two years until 30 June 2019, ensuring continued access to Financial Wellbeing and Capability services in locations where IM and the Cashless Debit Card are operating. This measure extends the 2015-16 Budget measures titled *Income*

*Management — two year extension and Financial Counselling, Capability and Resilience Services in Income Management Locations — continuation.*

**Department of Human Services (improving service delivery and reducing red tape)** – a total of \$5.5 million over five years from 2016-17 will be invested to deliver on improvements to TFN and referrals processes, and improving service delivery will include:

- piloting opportunities with existing accredited Government service providers to reduce call wait times by increasing Centrelink call centre capacity by 250 full-time equivalent roles;
- more efficient information-sharing arrangements with the Australian Taxation Office by requiring welfare claimants to provide their Tax File Number (TFN) when first lodging claims; and
- streamlining of referrals for welfare fraud prosecution by allowing information held by DHS to be used in respect to potential criminal proceedings.

**National Disability Insurance Scheme (finalisation of transition arrangements)** – \$868.2 million over three years from 2017-18 to support the delivery of the Western Australian (WA) National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) under a nationally consistent, locally administered model. Funding for this model will be provided through a National Partnership Agreement. NDIS funding for WA from 2020-21 is not for publication, pending negotiations on full scheme arrangements.

\$754.0 million over five years from 2016-17 is also allocated to extending the revised arrangements for aged care and disability services under the 2011 National Health Reform Agreement (NHRA). Implementing the NHRA in WA will include transitioning Home and Community Care services for people aged 65 years and over to the *Commonwealth Home Support Programme* from 1 July 2018 and transitioning older people in Specialist Disability Services in WA to the *Commonwealth Continuity of Support Program* from 1 July 2019.

**National Disability Insurance Scheme (establishment of the Quality and Safeguards Commission)** – \$209.0 million over four years from 2017-18 to establish a new, national, independent regulatory body, the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Quality and Safeguards Commission. The Commission will implement the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework with the aim of supporting NDIS participants to exercise choice and control, ensure appropriate safeguards are in place to protect participants in care, and establish expectations for providers and the disability workforce in the delivery of quality and safe services. The Commission will commence operations on 1 January 2018 replacing the various quality and

safeguarding arrangements in each State and Territory as they reach full scheme, to deliver a nationally consistent quality and safeguarding system for the first time.

**Pensioner Concession Card (reinstatement)** – \$3.1 million in 2017-18 to reinstate the Pensioner Concession Card for pensioners who were no longer entitled to the pension following changes to the pension assets test from 1 January 2017. The intention of reinstating the Pensioner Concession Card is to enable pensioners to access Commonwealth subsidised hearing services.

**No Jab No Pay (Healthy Start for School - new compliance arrangements)** – to achieve efficiencies of \$15.0 million over four years from 2017-18 by introducing new compliance arrangements for the No Jab No Pay (NJNP) and Healthy Start for School (HSS) policies to ensure that all families receiving Family Tax Benefit (FTB) Part A are encouraged to meet immunisation and health check requirements. From 1 July 2018, families who do not meet the NJNP and HSS requirements will have around \$28 per child withheld from their fortnightly rate of FTB Part A. This measure builds on the 2015-16 Budget measure titled *No Jab No Pay* and the 2011-12 Budget measure titled *Healthy Start for School*.

## Health

**Medicare** – numerous measures will affect families:

- aligning reciprocal health care – to achieve efficiencies of \$0.7 million over five years from 2016-17, which will be redirected by the Government to fund other health policy priorities.
- development of the Health Care Homes trial – The trial will support up to 20 selected general practices and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services to commence services under the Health Care Homes model of coordinated primary health care from 1 October 2017, with the remaining 180 Health Care Homes services to commence from 1 December 2017. These implementation arrangements are based on advice from the clinician-led Health Care Homes Implementation Advisory Group.
- Medical Services Advisory Committee (continuation) – \$44.5 million over four years from 2017-18 to continue the work of the Medical Services Advisory Committee, which provides independent advice on services covered by the Medicare Benefits Schedule and examines the evidence for proposed new medical technologies and procedures.

- Medicare Benefits Schedule (improved compliance) – changes under this measure are intended to enable compliance activities to better target unusual business billing and improve the consistency of administrative arrangements. The *Health Insurance Act 1973*, the *Dental Benefits Act 2008* (and Rules) and the *National Health Act 1973* will be amended to compulsorily offset a portion of future MBS payments against MBS debts of practitioners.
- Medicare Benefits Schedule (indexation) – \$1.0 billion over four years from 2017-18 for the phased re-introduction of indexation for certain items on the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS):
  - bulk-billing incentives for General Practitioners will be indexed from 1 July 2017;
  - standard consultations by General Practitioners and specialist attendances will be indexed from 1 July 2018;
  - specialist procedures and allied health services will be indexed from 1 July 2019;
  - Medicare Benefits Schedule (new and amended listings) – \$16.4 million over four years from 2017-18 for new and amended Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) and Veterans' Benefits items, based on recommendations of the independent Medical Services Advisory Committee; and
  - Medicare Benefits Schedule Review (continuation) – \$44.2 million over three years from 2017-18 to continue the Review of the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) through the MBS Review Taskforce. Guaranteeing Medicare — modernising the health and aged care payments systems.

**Mental Health** – numerous measures will affect families:

- Improving telehealth for psychological services in regional, rural and remote Australia – \$9.1 million over four years from 2017-18 to improve access to psychological services through telehealth in regional, rural and remote Australia. Medicare Benefits Schedule items are to be amended to allow psychologists to provide video consultations to clients living in eligible regions, improving access and outcomes for people who currently have to travel to access these services.
- Psychosocial Support Services (funding) – \$80.0 million over four years from 2017-18 for psychosocial support services for people with mental illness who do not qualify for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). This funding is contingent on a matching commitment from the States and Territories, with the intention of securing a national approach to maintaining community mental health services outside the NDIS.

- Research – \$15.0 million over two years from 2017-18 to support research into mental health, including contributing to the National Centre for Excellence in Youth Mental Health (Orygen) for research infrastructure, and the Black Dog and Thompson Institutes for further work on prevention and early intervention.
- Suicide prevention support programs – \$11.1 million over three years from 2017-18 to help prevent suicide at high risk locations and provide additional support, including:
  - \$9.0 million for the States and Territories to fund infrastructure projects aimed at preventing suicide by installing barriers, fencing and lighting; and
  - \$2.1 million for Lifeline to further support its activities in preventing suicide.

**Aged Care** – numerous measures will affect families:

- Commonwealth Home Support Program Funding Arrangements (extension) – \$5.5 billion over two years from 2018-19 to extend the *Commonwealth Home Support Program* (CHSP) and Regional Assessment Services (RAS) funding arrangements. The CHSP and RAS contribute to essential home support services, such as meals (Meals on Wheels), personal care, nursing, domestic assistance, home maintenance, and community transport, to assist older people to keep living independently in their own home.
- developing an aged care workforce strategy – \$1.9 million over two years from 1 July 2017 to establish and support an industry-led aged care workforce taskforce. The taskforce will explore options to improve productivity in the aged care workforce and contribute to the development of an aged care workforce strategy, including for regional and remote areas.
- My Aged Care (operations) – \$3.1 million in 2017-18 to support the operations of the My Aged Care platform that provides advice and assistance to aged care consumers and providers.

**Primary Health Networks** – \$145.5 million over two years from 2017-18 for Primary Health Networks to continue to fund locally tailored after-hours health services based on community need. Funding for after-hours services has already been included in the forward estimates.

**At Home Palliative Care** – \$8.3 million over three years from 2017-18 to provide palliative care services for people who would prefer to be cared for in their homes rather than in a hospital or hospice setting. Funding will be provided through the Primary Health Care Networks.

## Education and Training

**Family Day Care (further improving integrity)** – the Government has achieved savings of \$251.5 million over two years from 2016-17 by introducing changes to family assistance law to further improve the integrity and sustainability of the family day care sector. The changes took effect on 13 March 2017. Under the changes, family day care educators are no longer eligible to receive Commonwealth child care fee assistance for child care provided to children aged 14 years or older, or children who attend secondary school, unless an exemption applies. The changes will also set a maximum hourly subsidy rate of \$12.67 per hour for the Grandparent Child Care Benefit and the Special Child Care Benefit.

**National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education (extension)** – \$429.4 million over two years from 2017-18 to extend the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education for the 2018 calendar year, and to undertake the related National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection in early 2019. The extension will give a further cohort of preschool children the opportunity to participate in 15 hours of early childhood education and care through accredited preschool programs each week (600 hours per year) in the year before school.

### Jobs for Families Package

- Budget Based Funded services (continuation) – \$61.8 million per year from 2017-18 from within the Community Child Care Fund to ensure continued support for the existing *Budget Based Funded Program* and to increase the participation of Indigenous children in early learning and care. The *Budget Based Funded Program* provides child care in regional, remote and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities where the market might otherwise fail to deliver services to children and families. The cost of this measure will be met from within the existing resources of the Community Child Care Fund within the Department of Education and Training.
- Jobs for Families Package (upper income threshold) – to achieve savings of \$119.3 million over three years from 2018-19 by better targeting the Child Care Subsidy only to families with incomes below \$350,000 per annum (in 2017-18 terms). The upper income threshold of \$350,000 per annum will be indexed annually by CPI from 1 July 2018.

**Closing the Gap (English language learning for Indigenous children trial)** – \$5.9 million over four years from 2017-18 to trial the use of digital applications to improve English literacy outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The trial will be undertaken over two years, 2019 and 2020, in 20 preschools around Australia.

## Employment

**ParentsNext (national expansion)** – \$263.0 million over four years from 2017-18 to expand the *ParentsNext* program. The *ParentsNext* expansion will be delivered in two streams providing different levels of support across specific *jobactive* regions:

- \$150.1 million over four years to expand *ParentsNext* nationally to the 51 employment regions covered by *jobactive* providers. Services will include participants meeting with a *ParentsNext* provider every six months, developing a Participation Plan and participating in activities that are intended to help prepare them for employment.
- \$113.0 million over four years to provide an intensive service offering to all *ParentsNext* participants in 30 locations where a high number of Parenting Payment recipients are Indigenous. The intention of expanding the program to these locations is to provide intensive support to help boost the participation of Indigenous parents in the labour market and help achieve the Closing the Gap employment targets. The increased services will include additional pre-employment training and outcome fees to encourage successful placements.

**Disability Employment Services** – \$24.0 million over four years from 2017-18 to implement a new framework and funding model for the *Disability Employment Services* (DES) program from 1 July 2018.

**Closing the Gap (additional funding for employment services)** – \$55.7 million over five years from 2016-17 to help meet the Government's Closing the Gap employment target for Indigenous Australians. Aimed at enabling stronger engagement by employment services providers with Indigenous communities and provide enhanced support for Indigenous participants.

## Immigration

**Community Support Programme (establishment)** – to expand Australia's Humanitarian Programme to 16,250 places in 2017-18 and to 18,750 places in 2018-19. From 1 July 2017, the Government will allocate up to 1,000 places from the Humanitarian Programme to a new

Community Support Programme. The Community Support Programme will enable individuals, groups and businesses to sponsor humanitarian entrants to Australia. All permanent humanitarian visa holders, including Community Support Programme entrants, will continue to have access to Medicare, English language tuition and employment services (if eligible).

## **Other Media Releases**

### Guaranteeing the NDIS and providing stronger support for people with disability

Joint Media Release (The Hon Christian Porter MP, Minister for Social Services; Senator the Hon Zed Seselja, Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs; The Hon Jane Prentice MP, Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services)

### Commonwealth Redress Scheme for Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse

Joint Media Release (The Hon Christian Porter MP, Minister for Social Services; Senator the Hon George Brandis, Attorney-General)

### A fairer welfare system that supports more people into work

Joint Media Release (The Hon Christian Porter MP, Minister for Social Services; Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, Minister for Employment; The Hon Alan Tudge MP, Minister for Human Services)

### This Budget forgets that we're all in this together

Anglicare Australia

### Welcome change of tack in health education and housing, but vilification of people who are unemployed continues

Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS)

### Funding of NDIS now secure

Australian Federation of Disability Organisations

### Mixed messages in new Turnbull Budget - some good news, but compliance regime raises worries for vulnerable

Brotherhood of St Laurence

### Additional pain inflicted on the neediest Australians

Catholic Social Services Australia

### Budget 2017: Government delivers some good news for older Australians but misses some key challenges of an ageing Australia

COTA Australia

### No surprises Budget for early education

Early Childhood Australia

### A fully funded NDIS: Certainty for Every Australian

Every Australian Count

FECCA concerned about impact of key Budget measures on migrant Australians  
Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia

Funding the NDIS through the Medicare Levy adds certainty  
National Disability Services

Federal Budget invites states to close critical gaps in mental health  
Mental Health Australia

Federal Budget 2016 - Mixed budget for vulnerable Australians  
Mission Australia

Budget guarantees ongoing legal help for survivors of child sexual abuse  
National Association of Community Legal Centres

Salvation Army Federal Budget Reponse: A lucky dip for vulnerable Australians  
Salvation Army

UnitingCare Australia welcomes moves to restrict television gambling advertising (8 May)  
UnitingCare Australia

Uni cuts counter to jobs, growth and global competitiveness  
Universities Australia

