

National Council of Primary Care Doctors

Joint statement on the 2025 federal election priorities

The National Council of Primary Care Doctors (NCPCD) is Australia's peak collaborative body for primary care doctors. It welcomes recent commitments to invest in primary healthcare, while acknowledging more work is needed to properly fund complex care, improve access for rural and remote Australians, and better target co-ordinated care through MyMedicare. Additional funding for GPs to bulk bill more patients will help reduce cost barriers for some Australians, but further reforms are needed to ensure Medicare meets today's needs.

Health investment welcomed but reform is needed

A strong general practice workforce is essential for a healthy Australia. In 2023, more than 22 million Australians were treated by a general practitioner (GP), making GPs the [most accessed health professional](#) in our health system.

The increase in the number of general practice training places, salary incentives and access to parental and study leave will make the profession more attractive for doctors to choosing a career in general practice and rural generalism, while improving patient access to primary care. These measures are in direct response to the advocacy of the NCPCD and its members.

Extra support for GP supervisors and training practices will be essential if we are to ensure general practice can provide additional training places as part of a high-quality training experience for prevocational trainees and GP registrars.

Properly fund complex care

Rising rates of complex and chronic disease means more patients are presenting to general practice with [increasingly complex needs](#). Patients need to be supported to spend more time with their GP through an MBS consultation item structure that does not penalise longer consultations. This will improve access to GP care, enhance patient outcomes and lower health costs through fewer avoidable hospital admissions.

Increased funding for the Workforce Incentive Program, as part of a well-coordinated GP-led team, will also increase access to multidisciplinary care delivering comprehensive health services for patients with complex conditions.

Improve healthcare access for rural and remote Australians

Healthcare in rural and remote Australia needs greater investment. Australians in [rural and remote areas](#) face shorter life expectancies, higher rates of disease and injury, and have limited access to healthcare. Many rural general practices struggle to recruit enough specialist GPs and rural generalists to meet local demand and cover staff leave, leading to an over-reliance on costly locums. This financial burden makes general practice and rural generalism increasingly

unviable, contributing to practice closures. The NCPCD is calling for a national rural health strategy to build sustainable services that meet rural and remote community needs.

Targeted MyMedicare enrolment for co-ordinated care

The NCPCD is calling on government to better target co-ordinated patient care by funding specific gaps within the current system, such as child and maternal care in general practice. Having a regular GP is linked to better health outcomes, higher patient satisfaction, reduced hospitalisation and emergency department visits, and improved co-ordination and quality of care. The current incentives and supports linked to MyMedicare are limited and voluntary patient enrolment benefits are yet to be realised.

The National Council of Primary Care Doctors (NCPCD) represents the interests of general practice and primary care in Australia, comprising leaders from the Australian Medical Association (AMA), Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP), Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA), Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), General Practice Supervision Australia (GPSA), General Practice Registrars Australia (GPRA) and Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (AIDA).

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