



Australian Government
Department of Health and Aged Care

Ref No: MC24-014278

Ms Linda Scott
President
Australian Local Government Association
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Dear Ms Scott

Thank you for your correspondence of 12 September 2024 to the Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon Mark Butler MP, regarding the resolutions arising from the 2024 National General Assembly of Local Government held in early July. The Minister has asked me to reply.

Motion number 100 City of Onkaparinga SA

As you would be aware, the Australian Government has set up the National Immunisation Program (NIP) which aims to increase national immunisation coverage to reduce the number of vaccine preventable diseases throughout Australia. From this, the responsibility of the Government extends to the policy and purchase of NIP vaccines, and the coordination and oversight of the immunisation service delivery and distribution is held by State and Territory governments. As you have identified, since 1 January 2024, pharmacies have been provided with funding to administer free NIP vaccines to eligible consumers and under this arrangement they can access payments of \$19.32 per vaccination administered.

I understand that the Hon Mark Butler MP also wrote to Ms Moira Were AM, Mayor of the City of Onkaparinga on 22 August 2024 relating to this. Funding local governments to deliver immunisation at parity with payments available to pharmacies would require significant consideration of the mechanisms in place for the distribution of vaccines, as well as workforce arrangements for service delivery. Given this, and the key role that State and Territory governments play, it is suggested that this issue would be worth raising with the South Australian Government's immunisation coordinator.

Motion number 108 City of Kingston VIC

The Government acknowledges the new Aged Care Act will have impacts for local governments who deliver Commonwealth funded services and is committed to working closely with them to improve the quality of aged care services for all older people. The Government is aiming for this transition to be as streamlined as possible. Following an [announcement by Minister Wells on 28 November 2023](#), the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) has been further extended until 30 June 2027 meaning that providers will transition to the new Support at Home Program no earlier than July 2027. This allows CHSP providers more time to prepare for the reforms and ensure a smooth transition for their clients. I encourage you to engage with the new [Support at Home program handbook](#) which provides further information for providers to help prepare for the transition to Support at Home. As well, further information about the CHSP 2025-27 extension process will be available at the upcoming webinar on 22 October 2024, with registrations available at [Commonwealth Home Support Programme \(CHSP\) 2025–27 extension webinar | Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care](#).

Motion number 108.1 Camden Council NSW

The Department of Health and Aged Care has actively engaged with Councils and local governments across Australia about the reforms and the future of in-home care, reinforcing the messaging that

the Government wants to retain a diverse and high-quality market for aged care services and that they play an essential role in aged care into the future. Through the recent reforms, the Government is investing and supporting the delivery of and access to these programs and is supporting them to achieve the highest quality person-centred care for older people, where and when they need it. And crucially, so that the delivery of these programs can be sustainable into the future. Most recently the Government has invested \$13 million on top of the \$5.6 billion invested into aged care to drive innovation across the aged care sector with a focus on innovative care models and workforce solutions. Investments like these ensure that all programs are sustainably delivered to the highest quality into the future.

Motion number 110 Blacktown City Council NSW

As was raised, the differing management of cooling tower systems across Australia may cause complexities regarding public health concerns and penalties for breaches. Part of the department's role and responsibility of the Government is to support all States and Territories with guidance on responding to a notifiable disease event, as opposed to the regulation of cooling tower systems regarding public health. From this, the department reviews current research and statistics to maintain current guidelines, and in this case on legionellosis. You can find this information here within the [Legionellosis – Communicable Diseases Network Australia National Guidelines for Public Health Units](#). In addition, the department also monitor's cases through the [National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System](#).

Motion number 113 Shire of Dundas WA

Making sure all Australians have access to quality, affordable and safe health care is a key priority, and the Government recognises the unique challenges to accessing healthcare faced by people living in regional, rural and remote areas. As noted, local governments and other providers play a significant role in the delivery of services in these areas and as you may be aware, the Government currently has initiatives for increasing the provision of medical services in these areas through supporting the medical workforce. This includes the [National Rural Generalist Pathway](#) and the [Rural Health Multidisciplinary Training Program](#).

As well, there has been significant investment into aged care services in rural and remote communities to help older Australians access quality aged care services through supporting providers in these areas. This includes \$900 million for rural, remote and specialist aged care services and 100 more residential care places. These supports recognise the challenges faced by aged care providers in these regions and will help older people in rural and remote communities stay closer to their family and friends with the support they need.

Thank you for writing on this matter.

Yours sincerely



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