



# Budget 2026-27

This information is accurate as of 12 May 2026.

## Improving access and uptake of medicines and vaccines

CATEGORY: Health and disability

This measure contains a number of elements to improve access and uptake of medicines and vaccines which include:

- promotion of vaccination through electronic push SMS notifications
- extension of the Covid-19 Vaccine Claim Scheme
- adding a Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccine to the National Immunisation Program (NIP) for older Australians.

These elements will improve health care notifications and access for Australians.

### Promotion of vaccination through electronic push SMS notifications

Services Australia will send push SMS notifications to remind parents and guardians of children when they're overdue for 1 or more vaccines.

The vaccination reminder will:

- be sent to the parent or guardian of a child who is overdue for vaccination at specific age milestones
- be sent securely, ensuring the individual's privacy is upheld
- include the ability to allow individuals to opt-out of receiving electronic push SMS notifications.

These push SMS notifications will complement existing hardcopy reminder letters sent by the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR). The existing hardcopy AIR reminder letters will remain unchanged.

Services Australia will get \$7.4 million through to 2029-30 to implement this.

### Covid-19 Vaccine Claim Scheme

The Covid-19 Vaccine Scheme was introduced in September 2021. Under the scheme, Australians who suffered injury and incurred financial loss due to their Covid-19 vaccine could register a claim for financial support. The scheme closed to applicants on 30 September 2024.

Services Australia processes these claims and reviews. Funding for the scheme is due to end on 30 September 2026, however, due to a continuing volume of complex cases, it will continue until 31 December 2027.

Services Australia will get \$4 million through to 2027-28 to continue to administer the scheme.

### Adding a Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccine to the National Immunisation Program (NIP) for older Australians

Under this element, a free RSV vaccine, Arexvy, has been added to the NIP for:

- adults aged 75 and over

- First Nations people aged 60 and over.

There will also be enhancements to the AIR under this measure to identify and notify people eligible to receive free RSV vaccines under the NIP. Enhancements will also include adding due and overdue rules to identify and notify people eligible for NIP-funded influenza vaccines.

As published in the 2025-26 Finance Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements, Services Australia got \$3.7m in 2025-26 and will get \$305,000 through to 2029-30 to implement this element.

This measure is led by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and administered by Services Australia.

This measure isn't subject to legislation passing.

## **Who this measure affects**

This affects all Australians accessing vaccines.

## **When this starts and finishes**

The promotion of vaccination through electronic push SMS notifications will start on 1 March 2027 and is ongoing.

Further Covid-19 Vaccine Claim Scheme funding will start on 1 October 2026 and end on 31 December 2027. Adding an RSV vaccine to the NIP for older Australians started on 1 March 2026 and is ongoing.