



# Budget

## 2017-18

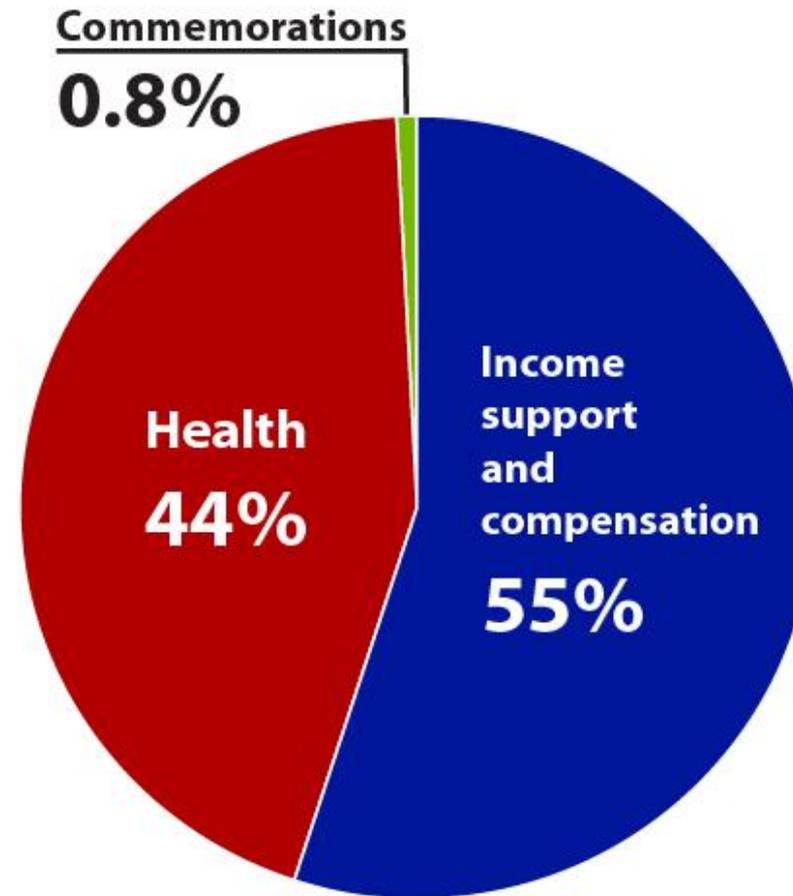
## DVA Federal Budget

\$11.3 billion has been allocated for Veterans' Affairs in 2017-18.

This will support around 293,000 clients (veterans and dependants), down from 306,000 clients last year.

Funding in 2017-18 comprises \$6.2 billion for income support and compensation and \$5 billion for health services.

\$105.5 million is allocated to commemorations.



Division of Department of Veterans' Affairs  
2017-18 Budget



## What we will cover

1. DVA Budget measures
2. Cross-portfolio measures – Department of Social Services
3. Cross-portfolio measures – Department of Health

## DVA Measures

### Investing in mental health:

- Mental health treatment for current and former members of the Australian Defence Force – expanded access
- Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) - expansion
- Suicide prevention pilots

### Supporting veterans through rehabilitation, employment and treatment:

- Improved access to health care for Australian participants of British Nuclear Tests and veterans of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force
- Increasing veterans' employment participation
- Supporting veterans' employment opportunities

### Claims processing

- Improved claims processing

## DVA Measures cont.

### Ongoing Transformation of DVA

- Veteran Centric Reform
  - proactive interventions
  - mitigating cyber security risk

### Supporting the Anzac Centenary – Century of Service

- ANZAC Centenary program – additional funding

### Other Measures

- Improved health care arrangements
- Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme – new listings and price amendments 1 July 2017
- Income Support Bonus – continuation

## Mental health treatment for current and former members of the Australian Defence Force – expanded access

- \$33.5 million to extend non-liability health care to all current and former permanent members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) for treatment of **all** mental health conditions.
- A DVA White Health Card will provide additional benefits, including access to counselling from VVCS.

## Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service - expansion

\$8.5 million to increase VVCS eligibility to:

- any partner, dependant or immediate family member will have access to the services and support provided by VVCS, including counselling and group programs
- former partners of ADF personnel will also be able to access VVCS up to five years after a couple separates, or while co-parenting a child under the age of 18.

## Suicide prevention pilots

\$9.8 million to pilot new approaches to suicide prevention and improve care and support available to veterans.

- The Mental Health Clinical Management Pilot will assess the benefits of providing intensive case management services to address the client's mental health and social needs once they have discharged from a mental health hospital.
- A separate pilot project will expand the successful Coordinated Veterans' Care (CVC) program to support veterans with long-term physical and mental health comorbidities as a result of their service.

## **Improved access to health care for Australian participants of British Nuclear Tests and veterans of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force**

- \$133.1 million to provide veterans and civilians involved in the BNT program and BCOF veterans with a Gold Card from 1 July 2017.
- The approximately 1,800 surviving participants of the BNT program and approximately 1,100 surviving veterans who served as part of the BCOF will be able to access treatment for any condition under DVA arrangements, whether service-related or not.

## Increasing veterans' employment participation

\$9.1 million for a package of initiatives to improve rehabilitation outcomes:

- Accelerated access to rehabilitation – pilot
- Streamlined access to incapacity payments
- Amend 10-year work restrictions.

## Supporting veterans' employment opportunities

\$2.7 million to support the Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program:

- the recently established Industry Advisory Committee
- create an Ex-Service Organisation Industry partnership register
- develop and manage the Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Annual Awards

## Improved claims processing

The 2017-18 Budget provides DVA with \$13.5 million to address ongoing financial pressures. Funding will:

- help support the workload associated with the growth in claim numbers
- help support processing of current claim backlogs
- address the Department's short-term financial sustainability pressures.

## Veteran Centric Reform

\$166.6 million to provide the veteran community with improved services through:

- reform of business processes and culture
- identification and implementation of government-endorsed best practice service options
- targeted ICT redevelopment.

## Veteran Centric Reform – proactive interventions

As part of Veteran Centric Reform, funding will be provided to implement a suite of proactive interventions from 1 July 2017, including:

- analysing the services veterans access through the Department, from car bookings through to health and rehabilitation services, to gain more meaningful insights into the needs of our clients
- identifying common themes across client groups and proactively changing support arrangements to meet their needs
- applying behavioural economics approaches across our business to ensure the programs we provide are best practice
- conducting a trial that will see medical treatment provided from the time a claim is submitted, rather than from the date a claim is approved.

## Veteran Centric Reform – mitigating cyber security risk

- As part of Veteran Centric Reform, funding will be provided to mitigate the Departments cyber security risks.
- The Australian Government Protective Security Policy Framework recommends that upgrading to newer operating systems should be a high priority, particularly for computers which are running significantly out-of-date versions.

## ANZAC Centenary program – additional funding

\$19.6 million to:

- support domestic and international commemorations for the final stage of the Anzac Centenary and Century of Service
- ensure appropriate security measures for international commemorations
- provide local communities and cultural institutions funding through a targeted community grants program to commemorate the end of the First World War
- promote community engagement, support online learning and encourage the collection of a community record of Anzac Centenary and Century of Service commemorations as a national legacy
- Continue support for specified travel arrangements for Victoria Cross recipients, partners and dependants to attend commemorative events and related activities in the public interest.

## Improved health care arrangements

- \$171 million saving over the forward estimates for the adoption of a market-based pricing model for the purchase of private hospital services for veterans and war widow/ers.
- This new approach ensures private hospital services represent value for money, while improving the quality of services available to the veteran community.
- The measure also aligns prices that DVA pays for a range of surgically implanted medical devices with recent adjustments to the Prostheses List administered by the Department of Health.

## Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme – new listings and price amendments

From 1 July 2017, the Repatriation Schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits will be updated to include:

- the addition of five generic brand medicines
- price variations to a range of existing items.

## Income Support Bonus – continuation

\$1.2 million to retain the Income Support Bonus (ISB) for DVA clients. Eligible children may be paid the ISB if they receive an education allowance under either:

- the Veterans' Children Education Scheme
- the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act Education and Training Scheme.

## Cross Portfolio measures summary – Department of Social Services

### 1. Energy assistance payment

- One off payment of \$75 (single) or \$62.50 (partnered).
- Paid in the week commencing 3 July 2017.
- Paid to income support and compensation recipients.
- Compensation recipients will receive the single rate.

### 2. Working age payment reforms

- Wife pension under the social security law will cease to be paid in March 2020.
- Recipients will need to qualify for an alternate income support payment (e.g. Age Pension).

## Cross Portfolio measures summary – Department of Health

1. National Cancer Screening Register – Transition Arrangements
2. Guaranteeing Medicare – Medicare Benefits Schedule – Indexation
3. Guaranteeing Medicare – Medicare Benefits Schedule – New and Amended Listings
4. Improving Access to Medicines – Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme – New and Amended Listings
5. Unlegislated Budget Repair Measures – Reinvesting in the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Co-Payments and Safety Net Thresholds
6. Improving access to medicines – support for community pharmacies
7. Improving access to medicines – Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme – Price amendments
8. Improving access to medicines – Cheaper Medicines