

# Recommendations

## THE YOUTH HEALTH FORUM'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FEDERAL MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AGED CARE/MINISTER FOR EDUCATION.

**YOUTH AGE CONSISTENCY ACROSS JURISDICTIONS:** Young people experience challenges in accessing health services due to their age as they can be classified differently between health services across States and Territories.

- Minister to work with States and Territories to determine a nationally consistent patient centred approach for young people accessing services in the health system that factors in mental maturity. Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is a reference point for these discussions.

**NAVIGATION SUPPORT:** When young people move into the adult health system, it is vast, complex and very difficult to navigate. As it is unfamiliar to us, we can become lost and not receive the services we need, due to these challenges in navigating the system.

- Federal Government fund a national nurse navigator program that sits alongside hospitals to support and empower young people when they transition into the adult health system. An example of a successful federal program is the McGrath Foundation's Breast Cancer Nurse program.
- Government to review the Healthdirect website using a co-design approach to update it and make it more user-friendly and youth appropriate.

**AFFORDABLE ACCESS:** Affordability of health service access is a challenge for many young people, particularly as they transition from adolescence and a reliance on parents into early adulthood.

- Provide young people aged 14 – 22 with a concession card to improve access to bulkbilled services and to make them eligible for the threshold and safety net limits to reduce the financial barriers to care.
- The Government has recently doubled the number of psychology sessions available with a Medicare rebate. We recommend allowing young people the autonomy to determine whether they are receiving 10 fully-funded sessions (no gap) compared to the nationally-allocated 20 partly-reimbursed sessions. This will have no change in cost to Government from currently allocated model, but will increase access and flexibility for young people who cannot afford co-payments.

**DIGITAL HEALTHCARE DELIVERY:** Young people living in remote and regional areas have significantly benefited from the changes to service delivery introduced during the Australian COVID-19 pandemic response. Providing more services through a digital channel has aligned services more closely to younger consumers' expectations, as well as being more cost effective. Access to a digitally delivered service requires good internet access to be equitable.

- Consumers should have access to health services, referrals, prescriptions and notifications via telehealth, phone, email or text and this should be supported with relevant MBS items.
- Ensure access to basic internet services for all Australians through updates of the Universal Service Guarantee. Currently, the Universal Service Guarantee is very 'household' based and this excludes people who may be experiencing homelessness and may not be able to access through public networks e.g. public libraries have been closed during parts of 2020.

**INCLUSIVE DELIVERY:** Access to health services from Culturally And Linguistically Diverse young people is heavily dependent on their ability to access Translating and Interpreting Services and there are opportunities to improve these services for us and our communities.

- Government conduct a comprehensive review of interpreter and translation services in Australia to determine whether it meets current community needs.
- Government to provide funding for increased access to translation services. For example support for the Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS) to allow consumers to use the service for more than 1 hour to allow more flexibility
- Government mandate that all medical centres and GPs offer the service where a consumer requests or requires an interpreter
- Government to ensure TIS and health based translators have the required health or medical translation training to be able to interpret effectively and be respectful of privacy and patient confidentiality.