

Members briefing note:

2026-27 WA Budget summary

Key points

- The Western Australian Budget was handed down on 7 May 2026, with key focus areas being cost of living relief, housing, health and jobs
 - There is a record \$9.1 billion in new spending for health and mental health, including \$6.5 billion for frontline hospital services; \$1.5 billion investment in the Building Hospitals Fund to deliver new health infrastructure; and 900 additional hospital beds
 - Cost of living initiatives include a one-off \$100 payment for everyone with a driver's licence to help with fuel costs; the continuation of student payments for every primary and high school student (up to \$250 per child) and free student fares on public transport; and, \$13 million to extend the rent relief program
 - Housing initiatives include changes to stamp duty (exemptions for houses worth \$600,000 or less, a concessional rate for houses up to \$800,000 and waived for first homebuyers buying blocks of land up to the value of \$450,000); \$4.7 billion over the next four years for the creation of more housing; and, \$1.5 billion over the next four years to build 1,591 new social and affordable homes.
- This Budget delivers a \$3.5 billion surplus for the current financial year, the eighth year in a row, with strong economic growth continuing in WA
 - However, global uncertainty has been recognised and may require adjustments to the budget, and there will be cuts of 1,500 jobs in the public sector (in areas other than frontline services).

Budget highlights

Health

Hospital services

- \$500 million for the Building Hospitals Fund to resource major hospital projects including the New Women and Babies, Royal Perth and New Mandurah Hospitals, and the Perkins WA Comprehensive Cancer Centre

- \$294 million additional investment in regional hospitals, including Bunbury, Albany, Tom Price, Meekatharra, Geraldton, Laverton and South Hedland (Step Up/ Step Down facility)
- \$225 million to buy, commission and commence operations at Mount Lawley Hospital, bringing 118 beds into the public hospital system from September 2026
- \$36.2 million to establish a new Central Commissioning Office to ensure a coordinated operational readiness and commissioning program to bring beds online
- \$214 million for capital hospital maintenance (in addition to the more than \$1.1 billion recurrent spend on maintaining our hospitals and medical equipment over the next four years)
- \$143 million for medical and imaging equipment.

Improving Access to Emergency Department Alternatives

- \$433 million to improve access to health services, including alternatives to emergency departments and improvements to patient flow such as:
 - Extending the State Health Operations Centre to improve emergency access and a virtual emergency department
 - Investing in surge private bed capacity during peak winter months
 - More Time to Think beds and transition care places, assisting older patients ready to leave hospital
 - More post-acute care through the Medical Respite Centre to support people experiencing homelessness
 - Training of 200 extra pharmacists to diagnose and treat common conditions
 - Expanding Hospital in the Home to support patients in residential aged care
 - Enhancing immunisation access through FluMist, and free flu and RSV vaccinations.

Mental Health

- \$414 million for mental health and alcohol and other drugs services, including:
 - \$43.8 million baseline funding uplift for community mental health and Alcohol and Other Drug services
 - \$48.6 million to provide culturally appropriate social and emotional wellbeing support for Aboriginal people
 - \$29.7 million to extend suicide prevention initiatives, including \$4.9 million for supports for young people who have lost someone to suicide
 - \$15.4 million for WA's first Crisis Recovery and Intervention Support Service.

Rural health

- The Budget includes \$492 million of new investment in regional health and mental health over the next four years, including:
 - \$294 million additional investment in regional hospitals - Bunbury, Albany, Tom Price, Meekatharra, Geraldton, Laverton and the South Hedland Step Up/ Step Down facility
 - \$16.2 million additional investment in the Broome Renal Hostel project, to support delivery of renal dialysis treatments for people in the Kimberley

- \$68.6 million to extend regional palliative care, renal care support, cancer and other regional health services

Rural infrastructure

- There is a \$4 billion investment in Royalties for Regions, and a \$9.5 billion pipeline of regional infrastructure works over the next four years. Key initiatives in rural communities include:
 - \$659 million toward the Dampier Seawater Desalination Plant
 - \$419 million to support accommodation for essential workers in regional areas
 - 150 million for the Vanadium Battery Energy Storage System near Kalgoorlie
 - \$116 million for the new residential developments in South Hedland and Broome
 - \$6.5 million to continue the Kimberley Schools Project during the 2027 school year.

Of interest to ACRRM members

- AMA WA has welcomed the scale of investment in hospitals and health care, deeming it necessary, but highlighting that services can only be delivered if there is a workforce available and seeking a clear plan for recruiting and retaining doctors
 - There is some mention of increased staffing in hospitals and health services in budget materials, but with little detail provided at this stage
 - Budget documentation from also notes that more than 6,500 nurses and 2,700 doctors (FTE) have joined the WA health system since 2017.
- AMA WA will receive \$800,000 to design and deliver training and education that supports medical practitioners to meet the health and wellbeing needs of LGBTIQ+ people
- The ACRRM policy team will continue to work with WA members, monitor developments and consider these issues in public policy processes and representations to government.

Contacts: Lauren Gale & Dan McIntyre

Email: policy@acrrm.org.au

Website: <https://www.acrrm.org.au/about-us/about-the-college/advocacy>

ACRRM acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the custodians of the lands and waters where our members and staff work and live across Australia. We pay respect to their elders, lores, customs and Dreaming. We recognise these lands and waters have always been a place of teaching, learning, and healing.

