

Federal Budget 2015–2016 Submission – Medicare Rebates for Stuttering Treatment

SPEECH PATHOLOGY AUSTRALIA recently submitted a proposal to the Australian Government Department of Treasury for the federal budget 2015-2016. Given the difficult political and budgetary climate, and in anticipation of a government response to the recommendations made from the Senate Inquiry – the budget proposal focused on a single budget initiative.

We argued that Medicare should be targeted towards health interventions that are evidence-based, effective, safe and minimise future health treatment needs. Our proposal focused on an internationally recognised intervention, developed in Australia and based on the most robust scientific evidence of effectiveness – the Lidcombe Program – to treat stuttering in young Australian children.

Thank you to the team at the Australian Stuttering Research Centre who provided expert advice about the evidence base for the Lidcombe Program and supported the Association's submission.

Our proposal... That Medicare rebates be made available for the evidence-based speech pathology intervention 'Lidcombe Program' for eligible three and four-year-old children for the treatment of stuttering. The estimated investment is \$15.2 million per year from the federal budget.

Future Budget Submissions? We are keen to hear from members if you have an idea for a future budget submission. Ideas need to focus on an evidence-based intervention for a specific group of people or condition. Send ideas to policy@speechpathologyaustralia.org.au.

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