



Australian College of Nurse Practitioners response to:

**Parliament of Australia**

The Senate – Standing Committee on Community Affairs

Inquiry into the provisions of the Health Legislation Amendment (Improved Medicare Integrity  
and Other Measures) Bill 2025

**Contact:**

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7 March 2025

Parliament of Australia  
The Senate  
Standing Committee on Community Affairs  
Community Affairs Legislation Committee

Apolline Kohen  
Committee Secretary

By email: email address [community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Apolline Kohen,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Health Legislation Amendment (Improved Medicare Integrity and Other Measures) Bill 2025 [Provisions].

The Australian College of Nurse Practitioners (ACNP) is the leading national body representing nurse practitioners. It drives the advancement of nursing practice and strengthens consumer access to healthcare services. Nurse practitioners are uniquely equipped to address unmet healthcare needs within communities and expand access to high-quality care, especially for underserved populations.

As stated in the supplementary explanatory memorandum the ACNP supports the proposed amendments into the Inquiry into the provisions of the Health Legislation Amendment (Improved Medicare Integrity and Other Measures) Bill 2025, to protect the integrity of, and support the ongoing sustainability of Australia's health benefits schemes – the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS), the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), and the Child Dental Benefits Schedule (CDBS).

Our response supports all amendments relating to improving Medicare integrity including:

- 1. *Dental Benefits Act 2008 and Health Insurance Act 1973* to change the timeframe for making claims relating to bulk-billed Medicare and dental services from 2 years to 1 year.**

This change aligns with the current practice, as most claims are already submitted within 1 year. Additionally, as per page 30. Discretion also remains with the Minister/Chief Executive to extend the period beyond that.

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**2. Human Services (Medicare) Act 1973 to update investigative powers in relation to Medicare fraud offences.**

In relation to investigating fraud offences related to Medicare, the ACNP supports enhanced investigative powers to ensure that any instances of fraud are addressed in a timely manner and with sufficient resources. The timely detection and resolution of fraudulent activities are crucial to preventing further financial loss and safeguarding funds. By enhancing investigative capabilities, we can improve accountability and minimize the risk of continued fraudulent behavior, ultimately protecting the integrity of the system and the allocation of these finite funds.

**3. National Health Act 1953 to streamline pharmacy approval processes.**

The ACNP we support the single stage process over four months. Attention also needs to be given to the loopholes around the relocation of pharmacy services, which does lead to corporate monopolies in certain geographical areas. Ministerial approval should take this into account.

**4. Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 to: enable the department to manage and alleviate the consequences of therapeutic goods shortages; and support compliance and enforcement activities undertaken in relation to unlawful therapeutic and vaping goods; and Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Act 2023 to clarify the intended operation of certain provisions.**

The ACNP supports the suggested amendments to the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 (the Therapeutic Goods Act), and the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Act 2023 (the Tobacco Act).

The ACNP commends the recognition and thoughtful consideration of the contributions and value nurse practitioners bring throughout this consultation process. We highlight the critical need to address the ongoing limited awareness among the public and healthcare professionals regarding the existence, capabilities, scope of practice, and contributions of nurse practitioners.

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Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this important review. We welcome further engagement and are available to provide additional clarification as needed.

Yours sincerely

**Leanne Boase**

**Chief Executive Officer**

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