

IVR SCRIPTS – MAIN BUSINESS LINES

Recorded by Telstra

Hot Topic Families and Parenting Line

#1

If you are calling about the 2014/2015 Budget, a comprehensive update is available by calling 132468 or by visiting humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget. If you're calling to hear 2014/2015 budget measures that impact families, please say "Budget"

#2

Please listen carefully. There are a number of 2014/2015 budget measures detailed in the following message, so please make sure you listen to the end. Please note that the changes outlined in the measures will automatically be applied and you do not need to take any further action. (pause) From the 1st of July, 2014 the following changes will take effect: (pause) The indexation of three income free area thresholds will be fixed for three years. These thresholds are the Family Tax Benefit Part A income free area, the Family Tax Benefit Part A maintenance income free area and the Family Tax Benefit Part B secondary earner income free area. (pause) The indexation of the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A will be fixed for two years. The base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A will remain at \$1438.10 for each child per year or \$53.31 per fortnight. (pause) The indexation of the maximum rates of Family Tax Benefit Part A and Part B will be fixed for two years. (pause) If these changes impact you, they will be automatically applied. You do not need to do anything. (pause) The following changes will take effect on the 1st July 2015: (pause) The Family Tax Benefit Part A income limit will be the same for all families regardless of the number of children in your care. The income limit is \$94,316. (pause) Families with four or more children will continue to receive the Large Family Supplement for the fourth and subsequent child. Large Family Supplement will no longer be paid to families with three children. Large Family Supplement is paid as a component of Family Tax Benefit Part A. (pause) The primary earner income limit for Family Tax Benefit Part B will be \$100,000 instead of \$150,000. This means that Family Tax Benefit Part B will only be payable if the income of the primary earner in a family is \$100,000 or less. (pause) New customers will only be eligible for Family Tax Benefit Part B if their youngest child is under six years of age. However, existing arrangements will continue until 30 June 2017 for families with a youngest child aged six years and over and already receiving Family Tax Benefit Part B. (pause) Family Tax Benefit Part A and Part B supplements will be returned to their original values of \$600 and \$300 respectively, and stay the same every year. (pause) A new \$750 annual allowance will be available to single parent families in receipt of Family Tax Benefit Part A. The allowance will be paid automatically to customers who are eligible for Family Tax Benefit Part A, and who also meet additional eligibility criteria. If these changes impact you, they will be automatically applied. You do not need to do anything. (pause) There are changes to the Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance program. The payment will be capped to a maximum amount of \$8.00 per hour per child, and for those parents doing approved study activities, will be limited to 36 hours per week per child (pause) For more information of any of these budget measures, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget. (pause) There have been changes to the indexation of some payments. For more information on indexation call 132468 or visit the humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget.

Hot Topic Disabilities, Sickness and Carers Line

#1

If you are calling about the 2014/2015 Budget, a comprehensive update is available by calling 132468 or by visiting humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget. If you're calling to hear 2014/2015 budget measures that impact the disability support pension, say "Budget".

#2

Please listen carefully to the following three 2014/2015 budget measures. (Pause) Disability Support Pension – review recipients aged under 35 years. (pause) From the first of July 2014, Disability Support Pension recipients under age 35 who were granted Disability Support Pension between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2011 will have their Disability Support Pension reviewed under the revised impairment tables and will have their work capacity assessed. (Pause) This does not apply to Disability Support Pension recipients who were granted on manifest grounds, or who are assessed as having a work capacity of less than eight hours per week. Customers eligible for this measure will be contacted by the department in the period between 1 July 2014 and 1 December 2015. Customers will be asked to provide medical evidence of their condition and may need to undergo a Job Capacity Assessment. (Pause) Disability Support Pension – compulsory participation requirements for recipients aged under 35 years. (pause) From the first of July 2014, Disability Support Pension recipients under age 35 with an assessed work capacity of eight or more hours per week who were granted Disability Support Pension after the first of January 2008, or who are new claimants, will be required to have a participation plan which includes compulsory activities which will help them find and maintain employment. This does not apply to Disability Support Pension recipients who were granted on manifest grounds, or who are assessed as having a work capacity of less than eight hours per week. (Pause) Disability Support Pension – reduced portability. (pause) The rules for being paid Disability Support Pension while overseas are changing. This change will affect you if you intend to travel outside Australia on or after the first of January 2015 for more than four weeks in every 52 weeks. (pause) There have been changes to the indexation of some payments. For more information on indexation call 132468 or visit the humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget

Hot Topic Older Australians Line

#1

If you are calling about the 2014/2015 Budget, a comprehensive update is available by calling 132468 or by visiting humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget. If you're calling to hear 2014/2015 budget measures that impact Older Australians, say "Budget".

#2

Please listen carefully to the following 2014/2015 budget measures. The current qualification age for the Age Pension is 65 years, increasing to 67 years by 1 July 2023. On 1 July 2025 the qualifying age will increase from 67 years by six months every two years until 1 July 2035 when the Age Pension qualifying age will reach 70. This change applies to people born after 30 June 1958 who claim Age Pension from 1 July 2025. (Pause) The Seniors Supplement for Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders will no longer be paid beyond the June 2014 quarterly payment. From this date Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders will continue to receive only the Energy Supplement each quarter. Aged Pensions and Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders will continue to receive

the Energy Supplement, with the rate of payment as of 30 June 2014 fixed for future payments. This Supplement was formally known as the Clean Energy Supplement. If these changes impact you they will be automatically applied. You do not need to do anything. (Pause) Aged Pensions and Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders will continue to receive the Energy Supplement, with the rate of payment as of 30 June 2014 fixed for future payments. This Supplement was formally known as the Clean Energy Supplement (Pause) From September 2014, more people will be eligible for the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card because the income threshold will be indexed annually in line with the consumer price index. (pause) There have been changes to the indexation of some payments. For more information on indexation call 132468 or visit the humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget.

Jobs, Education Training Child Care Fee Assistance Budget Bulletin Board Families and Parenting Line

From 1 January 2015, there are changes to the Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance program. The payment will be capped to a maximum amount of \$8.00 per hour per child, and for those parents doing approved study activities, will be limited to 36 hours per week per child. For more information go to www.humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget.

Pensioner Education Supplement Main Business Lines Bulletin Board

From the 1st of January 2015, the Pensioner Education Supplement for eligible income support recipients will no longer be available. Eligible students will still be able to access employment services and targeted study assistance. For more information, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget

Hot Topic Employment Services Line

#1

If you are calling about the 2014/2015 Budget, a comprehensive update is available by calling 132468 or by visiting humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget. If you're calling to hear 2014/2015 budget measures that impact job seekers, please say "Budget".

#2

Please listen carefully. There are a number of 2014/2015 budget measures detailed in the following message, so please make sure you listen to the end. Please note that the changes outlined in the measures will automatically be applied and you do not need to take any further action. From the 1st of January 2015, the Pensioner Education Supplement for eligible income support recipients will no longer be available. Eligible students will still be able to access employment services and targeted study assistance. (pause) The following changes take effect for new claimants from 1 January 2015. The 2014-15 Budget announced changes to increase the age of eligibility for Newstart Allowance and Sickness Allowance. Some Special Benefit claimants will also be impacted. (pause) If you are aged between 22 and 24 years of age you will only be able to apply for Youth Allowance. (pause) If you are aged 25 years or over you will be able to apply for Newstart Allowance or Sickness Allowance. (pause) If you are currently receiving these payments and are aged 22 to 24 years of age on 31 December 2014, you will continue to receive payments unless you lose qualification. (pause) The 2014-15 Budget announced changes to the eligibility of Newstart Allowance and Youth Allowance (other) for people aged 18 to 30 years of age including a waiting period of up to six months before gaining

access to payments unless they are exempt. Some Special Benefit recipients aged 18 to 30 years old will also be impacted. If you are claiming these payments, we will tell you if this impacts you at the time of making your claim. (pause) We will contact existing customers before that date to advise how the changes affect them. If you lose payment and reclaim after the first of January 2015 you may be immediately impacted. Further information will be available closer to the initiative's start date. (pause) For more information of any of these budget measures, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget. (pause) There have been changes to the indexation of some payments. For more information on indexation call 132468 or visit the humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget.

Bulletin Board Youth and Students Line

#1

If you are calling about the 2014/2015 Budget, a comprehensive update is available by calling 132468 or by visiting humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget. If you're calling to hear 2014/2015 budget measures that impact Youth and Students, please say "Budget".

#2

Please listen carefully. There are a number of 2014/2015 budget measures detailed in the following message, so please make sure you listen to the end. Please note that the changes outlined in the measures will automatically be applied and you do not need to take any further action. From the first of January 2015 the Pensioner Education Supplement for eligible income support recipients will no longer be available. Eligible students will still be able to access employment services and targeted study assistance. (pause) Recipients of Youth Allowance or ABSTUDY Living Allowance, who are from a city area and are undertaking full-time study at a higher education institution in a city area, will no longer receive the Relocation Scholarship. In the majority of cases, this includes where they move from one city to another. Students, who are from a regional area, or those who study in a regional area, will retain eligibility for the Relocation Scholarship. (pause) The following changes will take effect. (pause) The Education Entry Payment will no longer be available. Eligible students will still be able to access employment services and targeted study assistance. (pause) From the first of January 2015, Students will be able to access a Student Start-up Loan, which replaces the Student Start-up Scholarship at the same rate of payment. (pause) From the first of October 2014, the rules for being paid student payments whilst overseas are changing. This change may affect you if you intend to travel outside of Australia on or after the first of October 2014. (pause) The 2014-15 Budget announced changes to the eligibility of Newstart Allowance and Youth Allowance (other) for people aged 18 to 30 years of age including a waiting period of up to six months before gaining access to payments unless they are exempt. Some Special Benefit recipients aged 18 to 30 years old will also be impacted. If you are claiming these payments, we will tell you if this impacts you at the time of making your claim. These changes take effect for existing recipients of these payments from 1 July 2015. We will contact existing customers before that date to advise how the changes affect them. If you lose payment and reclaim after the first of January 2015 you may be immediately impacted. For further information please refer to the humanservices.com.au website. Further information will be available closer to the initiative's start date. (pause) For more information of any of these budget measures, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget. (pause) There have been changes to the indexation of some payments. For more information on indexation call 132468 or visit the humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget.

Farmer Assistance main menu

#1

If you are calling about the 2014 Budget Announcement of the Interim Farm Household Allowance, please press 1.

#2

The Interim Farm Household Allowance has been available since 1 March 2014 to provide farm families with support. The Farm Household Allowance commences on 1 July 2014 for farmers in financial hardship. It is paid at the same rate as Newstart Allowance and is payable for a maximum of three cumulative years. Recipients will work with a Farm Household Case Officer to meet their reciprocal obligations, which will be outlined in a written plan. For more information on eligibility please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash farm household allowance.

Employment Services Line Bulletin Board

The 2014-15 Budget announced changes to increase the age of eligibility for Newstart Allowance and Sickness Allowance. Some Special Benefit claimants will also be impacted. The changes take effect for new claimants from 1 January 2015. If you are aged between 22 and 24 years of age you will only be able to apply for Youth Allowance (other). If you are aged 25 years or over you will be able to apply for Newstart Allowance or Sickness Allowance. If you are currently receiving these payments and are aged 22 to 24 years of age on 31 December 2014, you will continue to receive payments unless you lose qualification. For more information, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

Employment Services Line Bulletin Board Participation

The 2014-15 Budget announced changes to the eligibility of Newstart Allowance and Youth Allowance (other) for people aged 18 to 30 years of age including a waiting period of up to six months before gaining access to payments unless they are exempt. Some Special Benefit recipients aged 18 to 30 years old will also be impacted. The changes take effect for new claimants from the first of January 2015. If you are claiming these payments, we will tell you if this impacts you at the time of making your claim. These changes take effect for existing recipients of these payments from 1 July 2015. We will contact existing customers before that date to advise how the changes affect them. If you lose payment and reclaim after the first of January 2015 you may be immediately impacted. For further information please refer to the Humanservices.com.au website. Further information will be available closer to the initiative's start date.

Youth and Students Line Bulletin Board Portability

From the first of October 2014, the rules for being paid student payments whilst overseas are changing. This change may affect you if you intend to travel outside of Australia on or after the first of October 2014. For more information visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

Youth and Students Line Bulletin Board Student Start Up Replacement

#1

and are you calling about the Relocation Scholarship?

#2

From 1 January 2015, recipients of Youth Allowance or ABSTUDY Living Allowance who are from a city area and are undertaking full-time study at a higher education institution in a city area, will no longer receive the Relocation Scholarship. In the majority of cases, this includes where they move from one city to another. Students who are from a regional area, or those who study in a regional area, will retain eligibility for the Relocation Scholarship. For more information go to humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget.

#3

From the first of January 2015, students will be able to access a Student Start-up Loan, which replaces the Student Start-up Scholarship at the same rate of payment. For more information, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

Youth and Students Line Bulletin Board Participation

The 2014-15 Budget announced changes to the eligibility of Newstart Allowance and Youth Allowance (other) for people aged 18 to 30 years of age including a waiting period of up to six months before gaining access to payments unless they are exempt. Some Special Benefit recipients aged 18 to 30 years old will also be impacted. The changes take effect for new claimants from the first of January 2015. If you are claiming these payments, we will tell you if this impacts you at the time of making your claim. These changes take effect for existing recipients of these payments from 1 July 2015. We will contact existing customers before that date to advise how the changes affect them. If you lose payment and reclaim after the first of January 2015 you may be immediately impacted. For further information please refer to the Humanservices.com.au website. Further information will be available closer to the initiative's start date.

Energy Supplement Bulletin Board Main Business Lines

Aged Pensions and Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders will continue to receive the Energy Supplement, with the rate of payment as of 30 June 2014 fixed for future payments. This Supplement was formally known as the Clean Energy Supplement. For more information go to humanservices.gov.au/budget

Medicare Optometric

The 2014-15 Budget introduced changes to the period in which Medicare benefits will be payable for comprehensive eye examinations. From the first of January 2015, a Medicare benefit will only be payable for a comprehensive eye examination for patients without symptoms of an eye condition, aged under 65, once every three years. Benefits for patients without symptoms aged 65 years and over will be payable annually. For a complete list of Budget measures for the Medicare Programme, including those impacting optometrists, visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

Medicare Public/Provider Lines

From the first of July 2015 the Medicare benefit will be reduced by \$5 for all patients for:

- non-referred general practitioner consultations
- out-of-hospital pathology episodes
- out-of-hospital diagnostic imaging services.

A patient contribution of \$7 will be introduced and this may be charged by the provider. For more information, please go to humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

Disabilities, Sickness and Carers Line Bulletin Board

#1

The rules for being paid Disability Support Pension while overseas are changing. This change will affect you if you intend to travel outside Australia on or after the first of January 2015 for more than four weeks in every 52 weeks. For more information visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

#2

From the first of July 2014, Disability Support Pension recipients under age 35 with an assessed work capacity of eight or more hours per week who were granted Disability Support Pension after the first of January 2008, or who are new claimants, will be required to have a participation plan which includes compulsory activities which will help them find and maintain employment. This does not apply to Disability Support Pension recipients who were granted on manifest grounds, or who are assessed as having a work capacity of less than eight hours per week. For more information on this measure, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

#3

From the first of July 2014, Disability Support Pension recipients under age 35 who were granted Disability Support Pension between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2011 will have their Disability Support Pension reviewed under the revised impairment tables and will have their work capacity assessed. This does not apply to Disability Support Pension recipients who were granted on manifest grounds, or who are assessed as having a work capacity of less than eight hours per week. Customers eligible for this measure will be contacted by the department in the period between 1 July 2014 and 1 December 2015. Customers will be asked to provide medical evidence of their condition and may need to undergo a Job Capacity Assessment. For more information on this measure, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

Commonwealth Seniors Health Card Older Australians Line Bulletin Board

From September 2014, more people will be eligible for the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card because the income threshold will be indexed annually in line with the consumer price index. For more information, please visit the humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget.

Older Australians Line Bulletin Board Budget Pension Rise

The current qualification age for the Age Pension is 65 years, increasing to 67 years by 1 July 2023. On 1 July 2025 the qualifying age will increase from 67 years by six months every two years until 1 July 2035 when the Age Pension qualifying age will reach 70. This change applies to people born after 30 June 1958 who claim Age Pension from 1 July 2025. For more information, please visit the humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget.

Older Australians Line Bulletin Board Budget Pension Supplement

The Seniors Supplement for Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders will no longer be paid beyond the June 2014 quarterly payment. From this date Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders will continue to receive only the Energy Supplement each quarter. If these changes impact you, they will be automatically applied. You do not need to do anything. For more information, please visit the humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget

Energy Supplement Bulletin Board Older Australians Line

Aged Pensions and Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders will continue to receive the Energy Supplement, with the rate of payment as of 30 June 2014 fixed for future payments. This Supplement was formally known as the Clean Energy Supplement. For more information go to humanservices.gov.au/budget

Youth and Students Line Bulletin Board Education Entry Payment

The Education Entry Payment will no longer be available from 1 January 2015. Eligible students will still be able to access employment services and targeted study assistance. For more information, please visit the humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget.

Pensioner Education Supplement Bulletin Board Main Business Lines

From the 1st of January 2015, the Pensioner Education Supplement for eligible income support recipients will no longer be available. Eligible students will still be able to access employment services and targeted study assistance. For more information, please visit the humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget.

Participation Solutions Line

If you are calling about the 2014/2015 Budget, a comprehensive update is available by calling 132468 or by visiting humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

Single Portfolio Telephone Line – Budget scripts

The Budget was handed down on Tuesday, 13 May 2014. To hear information about the proposed changes to:

Indexation for families, allowees, pensioners and Commonwealth Seniors Health Card Holders say “Indexation”

The income and assets free areas will be fixed for a period of three years from the first of July 2017 for Age Pension and other pension payments.

From the first of July 2014 indexation of the income free area and asset test limit will be fixed for three years for all working age allowance payments, student payments and parenting payment.

Indexation of student income bank limits for student payments and Child Care Benefit income thresholds will be fixed from the first of July 2014 for three years.

From the first of July 2014, the maximum and base rates of Family Tax Benefit Part A will be fixed for two years.

From the first of July 2014, the rate of Family Tax Benefit Part B will be fixed for two years.

From the first of July 2014, the Family Tax Benefit Part A lower income-free area and the maintenance income-free area thresholds will be fixed for three years.

From the first of July 2014, the threshold for the Family Tax Benefit Part B secondary earner income-free area will be fixed for three years.

From the first of July 2014, all non-pension payments, including Parenting Payment Single, will be indexed to the Consumer Price Index only.

From the first of July 2017, Age Pension and other pension payments will be indexed to the Consumer Price Index only.

From the twentieth of September 2017 the deeming provision thresholds for payments which are means tested will be reset to \$30 000 for singles and \$50 000 for couples for both pensioners and allowees. The current thresholds are \$46 600 for singles, \$77 400 for pensioner couples and \$38 700 for members of allowee couples.

From September 2014, more people will be eligible for the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card because the income threshold will be indexed annually in line with the Consumer Price Index.

Age pensioners and Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders will continue to receive the Energy Supplement, formerly known as the Clean Energy Supplement, with the rate of payment fixed from 30 June 2014.

For older Australians say “Older Australians”,

The current qualification age for the Age Pension is 65 years increasing to 67 years by July 2023. From July 2025, the qualifying age to receive the Age Pension will continue to increase from 67 years by six months every two years until it reaches 70 years in July 2035. This change does not affect people who currently receive the Age Pension or those born before 1 July 1958.

Payment of Seniors Supplement to Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders will no longer be paid beyond the June 2014 quarterly payment. Affected customers will continue to receive Energy Supplement payments.

From January 2015, eligibility for Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders will change to include income from superannuation account-based income streams in the income test. This will not

apply to existing superannuation account-based income streams held by current card holders. For more information on these measures, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

For People with disabilities and carers say “Disabilities”

From the first of July 2014, changes to the Disability Support Pension, known as DSP, will help young people with disability enter the workforce if they are able to do so. DSP recipients under age 35 who were granted DSP between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2011 will have their DSP reviewed under the revised impairment tables and will have their work capacity assessed. This does not apply to DSP recipients who were granted on manifest grounds, or who are assessed as having a work capacity of less than eight hours. DSP recipients under age 35 with an assessed work capacity of eight or more hours per week who were granted DSP on or after the first of January 2008, or who are new claimants, will be required to have a participation plan which includes compulsory activities which will help them find and maintain employment. This does not apply to DSP recipients who were granted on manifest grounds, or who are assessed as having a work capacity of less than eight hours per week. The rules for being paid DSP while overseas are changing from the first of January 2015. This change will affect you if you intend to travel outside Australia on or after the first of January 2015 for more than four weeks in every 52 weeks. For more information on these measures, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

For those looking for work say “Looking for work”

From the first of January 2015, young people aged 18 to 30 years who are able to work full-time will be encouraged to either learn or earn through tighter payment conditions for Newstart and Youth Allowance (other).

New recipients will need to wait up to six months before they receive these payments, depending on their work history. For every one year of work history, one month will be discounted from their waiting period, pro-rated for part-time/casual work, to a maximum of five months' discount from the waiting period.

Following the waiting period, income support will be available for six months in a 12-month period, dependent on the recipient participating in Work for the Dole for at least 25 hours per week.

Job seekers will still have access to the full range of employment services to help them find a job and gain work-related skills. Job seekers will be expected to take up any available work, will be supported to relocate to where the jobs are and be self-supporting wherever possible.

People exempt from the six-month waiting period are those who:

- are in full-time education;
- have a partial work capacity (less than 30 hours per week);
- are a single parent receiving Family Tax Benefit for a child;
- a part-time apprentice;
- a principal carer parent;
- a stream 3 or stream 4 job seeker (or Remote Jobs and Communities Programme equivalent) under the current employment services arrangements; or
- eligible for Disability Employment Services.

From the first of January 2015, young job seekers aged 22 to 24 years who become unemployed will receive Youth Allowance (other) until they turn 25 years old. They will not be eligible for Newstart Allowance.

For more information on these measures, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

For families say “Families”

From the first of July 2015, a new \$750 annual allowance will be available to single parent families in receipt of Family Tax Benefit Part A. The allowance will be paid automatically to customers who are eligible for Family Tax Benefit Part A, and who also meet additional eligibility criteria.

From the first of July 2015, new customers will only be eligible for Family Tax Benefit Part B if their youngest child is under six years of age. Customers already receiving Family Tax Benefit Part B as at 30 June 2015 will not be impacted by this change until 1 July 2017.

The primary earner income limit for Family Tax Benefit Part B will be \$100,000 instead of to \$150,000. This means that Family Tax Benefit Part B will only be payable if the income of the primary earner in a family is \$100,000 or less.

From the first of July 2015, the Family Tax Benefit Part A income limit will be the same for all families regardless of the number of children in your care. The income limit is \$94,316 from 1 July 2015.

Families with four or more children will continue to receive the Large Family Supplement for the fourth and subsequent child. Families with three children will no longer be eligible. Large Family Supplement is paid as a component of Family Tax Benefit Part A.

From the first of January 2015, there are changes to the Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance Program. The payment will be capped to a maximum amount of \$8 per hour per child, and for those parents doing approved study activities, will be limited to 36 hours per week per child.

For more information, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

For students say “Students”

From the first of January 2015, higher education students on Youth Allowance (student), Austudy or ABSTUDY (Living Allowance) will be able to access the Student Start-up Loan, which replaces the Student Start-up Scholarship, at the same rate of payment.

From the first of January 2015, students from city areas will no longer be eligible for the Relocation Scholarship unless they move to a regional area to study. Students living in regional areas will continue to be eligible for the Scholarship.

From the first of October 2014, Students will no longer be eligible for student payments while holidaying overseas, but will remain eligible while studying through formal overseas exchange programmes as part of their Australian qualification, when receiving eligible medical treatment or when attending a family crisis.

From the first of January 2015, the Education Entry Payment and the Pensioner Education Supplement for income support recipients will no longer be available. Eligible students will still be able to access employment services and targeted study assistance.

For more information on these measures, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

For health care say “Health Care”,

From the first of July 2015 the Medicare benefit will be reduced by \$5 for all patients for non-referred general practitioner consultations; out-of-hospital pathology episodes and out-of-hospital diagnostic imaging services. A patient contribution of \$7 will be introduced and this may be charged by the provider.

There will be changes to the period in which Medicare benefits will be payable for comprehensive eye examinations. From the first of January 2015, a Medicare benefit will only be payable for a comprehensive eye examination for patients without symptoms of an eye condition, aged under 65, once every three years. Benefits for patients without symptoms aged 65 years and over will be payable annually.

For more information, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

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2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: HEALTH MATTERS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Medicare Benefits Schedule – introducing patient contributions for general practitioner, pathology and diagnostic imaging services

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2015 the Medicare benefit will be reduced by \$5 for all patients for:

- non-referred general practitioner (GP) consultations
- out-of-hospital pathology episodes
- out-of-hospital diagnostic imaging services.

A patient contribution of \$7 will be introduced and this may be charged by the provider. A maximum of 10 patient contributions per calendar year across these services would be payable by concessional patients (including children under 16), where the provider charges a patient contribution. After 10 patient contributions have been paid, the Medicare benefit for concessional patients for these services will revert to the full amount. All patient contribution amounts charged will be excluded from the Medicare Safety Net.

Where patients assign their Medicare benefit directly to a provider, changes will be made to legislation to allow providers to charge the patient a \$7 patient contribution.

A Low Gap Incentive will also be introduced and paid to providers that accept a concessional patient's (including children under 16) assignment of Medicare benefit, and charge a patient contribution of \$7 only.

The bulk bill incentive will stop for:

- non-referred GP consultations in groups A1, A2, A11, A22 and A23
- pathology and diagnostic imaging services for general and concessional patients.

The bulk bill incentive will continue to be paid for other GP services (not in groups A1, A2, A11, A22, and A23) that do not attract a patient contribution.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect GPs, pathology and diagnostic imaging providers and all patients entitled to Medicare benefits.

Am I eligible for this measure?

All patients entitled to Medicare will still be eligible. This Budget measure will not change the way people qualify for Medicare benefits, but will change the amount of the Medicare benefit payable for these services.

Patients may also experience higher out-of-pocket costs for these services where providers charge a patient contribution, including services where they assign their Medicare benefit to the provider.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 July 2015 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Training will be given to staff in the face-to-face network, Smart Centres and Medicare Provider Services.

Information about the change will also be available on eReference for all staff, closer to when this is implemented.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

From 1 July 2015 Medicare benefits for non-referred GP consultations in groups A1, A2, A11, A22 and A23, out-of-hospital pathology episodes and out-of-hospital diagnostic imaging services will be reduced by \$5 for all patients.

A patient contribution of \$7 will be introduced. A new Medicare item will be created and providers will need to use this item if they charge the patient contribution.

A total of 10 patient contributions per calendar year across non-referred GP consultations, pathology and diagnostic imaging services would be payable by concessional patients (including children under 16), where the provider charges a patient contribution. After 10 patient contributions have been paid, the Medicare benefit for concessional patients for these services will revert to the full amount. All patient contribution amounts charged will be excluded from the Medicare Safety Net.

Where patients assign their Medicare benefit directly to a provider, changes will be made to legislation to allow providers to charge the patient a \$7 patient contribution.

A Low Gap Incentive will also be introduced and paid to providers that accept a concessional patient's (including children under 16) assignment of Medicare benefit and charge a patient contribution of \$7 only. The bulk bill incentive will stop for non-referred GP consultations in groups A1, A2, A11, A22 and A23, pathology and diagnostic imaging services for general and concessional patients. The bulk bill incentive will continue to be paid for other GP services (not in groups A1, A2, A11, A22 and A23) that do not attract a patient contribution.

A training package will be developed for providers and this will be available on the Department of Human Services website closer to implementation. Providers are encouraged to review this material before 1 July 2015.

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

MESSAGE TO BE PLAYED ON THE MEDICARE PROVIDERS LINE AND MEDICARE PUBLIC LINE.

From the first of July 2015 the Medicare benefit will be reduced by \$5 for all patients for:

- non-referred general practitioner consultations
- out-of-hospital pathology episodes
- out-of-hospital diagnostic imaging services.

A patient contribution of \$7 will be introduced and this may be charged by the provider. For more information, please go to humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: HEALTH MATTERS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Simplifying Medicare safety net arrangements

Description of the measure

From 1 January 2016 a Single Medicare Safety Net (SMSN) for out-of-hospital services will replace the Extended Medicare Safety Net (EMSN), the Original Medicare Safety Net (OMSN) and the Greatest Permissible Gap (GPG).

The Single Medicare Safety Net (SMSN) will have three thresholds:

- (1) \$400 – for singles with a concession card or families with a concession card
- (2) \$700 – for singles with no concession card or families receiving Family Tax Benefits Part A with no concession card
- (3) \$1000 – for families with no concession card.

The definition of 'family' will also be broadened to include those under 22 years of age that are financially dependent on their parents, as well as couples living apart, due to ill health or injury.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Patients that previously qualified for the EMSN, OMSN and GPG may be affected by this measure.

A limit will be introduced on the amount of out-of-pocket costs for each service received which accumulates towards a patient's safety net threshold. The amount of additional Medicare benefit payable once they reach the safety net threshold will also be reduced. Providers that bill patients directly for their services will also need to be aware of these changes.

Providers that bill patients directly for their services will also need to be aware of these changes.

Am I eligible for this measure?

People eligible for Medicare benefits will be eligible for additional benefits under the Single Medicare Safety Net, once they have reached their threshold.

The measure will change the way people qualify for benefits under the Medicare Safety Net. There will be a limit on how much of their out-of-pocket costs can accumulate towards their safety net threshold, and how much additional benefit is payable once they have crossed the safety net threshold.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 January 2016 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET**Questions and answers****What training and support can I expect to receive?**

Training will be provided to affected staff and information will be available on eReference, online and through an eLearning package closer to the measure starting.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

From 1 January 2016, the Extended Medicare Safety Net (EMSN), the original Medicare Safety Net (OMSN) and the Greatest Permissible Gap (GPG) will be replaced by a Single Medicare Safety Net (SMSN) for all out-of-hospital services.

More information will be available for providers through Forum and industry newsletters closer to 1 January 2016. No action is required by providers for this measure.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: HEALTH MATTERS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Medicare Benefits Schedule – reduced optometry rebates and removal of charging cap

Description of the measure

From 1 January 2015, the Medicare benefit will be reduced by 5 per cent for all optometry services on the Medicare Benefits Schedule, and allow optometrists providing Medicare eligible services to determine their own fees.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect optometrists and patients receiving Medicare eligible optometry services.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This measure will not change the way people access optometry services under the Medicare Benefits Schedule. However, the benefit patients receive will be reduced by 5 per cent and optometrists will not be restricted to charging the Medicare Benefits Schedule fee.

Optometrists will be free to determine the cost of their service. This includes the option to continue to bulk-bill patients.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 January 2015 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Training will be provided to staff in the Medicare Providers Branch handling enquiries from providers.

Information about the change will be available on eReference for all staff.

Training and information will be available for staff closer to the measure starting.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

This measure will affect optometrists that have previously signed the Common Form of Undertaking that allows them to provide optometry services and access Medicare benefits available under the Medicare Benefits Schedule. Optometrists will be allowed to determine their own fees.

No action is required. The 5 per cent benefit reduction will be automatically applied by the department during the assessment and processing of their claims. Optometrists may continue to bulk bill their patients.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: HEALTH MATTERS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Medicare Benefits Schedule – comprehensive eye examinations

Description of the measure

From 1 January 2015, this measure will:

- extend the period a higher Medicare benefit will be paid for comprehensive eye examinations from two years to three years for patients aged under 65 years
- reduce the period a higher Medicare benefit will be paid for comprehensive eye examinations for patients aged 65 years and over, from once every two years to annual examinations.

This policy applies only to patients not showing any symptoms of an eye condition. These patients can still receive comprehensive eye examinations at any time, but will receive a lower Medicare benefit.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect patients that are not showing any signs of an eye condition receiving Medicare funded comprehensive eye examinations.

Whilst patients without symptoms, aged 65 years and over will be able to access Medicare-funded services more regularly, those under 65 years will need to wait longer.

A lower Medicare benefit will be payable for patients without symptoms who desire more frequent eye examinations.

Am I eligible for this measure?

All patients entitled to Medicare will remain eligible. This measure will not change the way people qualify for Medicare benefits. It changes the period in which comprehensive eye examinations for patients without symptoms of an eye condition, will be funded and the Medicare benefit payable.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 January 2015 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

An Assessing Bulletin will be developed and published on eReference for staff closer to the measure starting.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

This measure will introduce an age criterion on Medicare funded comprehensive eye examinations.

From 1 January 2015, this measure will:

- extend the period a higher Medicare benefit will be paid for comprehensive eye examinations from two years to three years for patients aged under 65 years
- reduce the period a higher Medicare benefit will be paid for comprehensive eye examinations for patients aged 65 years and over, from once every two years to annual examinations.

A lower Medicare benefit will be payable for patients without symptoms who desire more frequent eye examinations.

Patients with symptoms or conditions which indicate they need more frequent eye examinations will still be eligible for the higher Medicare benefit payable for the comprehensive eye examination service, whenever clinically appropriate.

Providers can continue to phone the Medicare Optometric line on 1300 652 752 to check a patient's eligibility for a Medicare funded comprehensive eye examination.

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

Medicare Optometric line

The 2014-15 Budget introduced changes to the period in which Medicare benefits will be payable for comprehensive eye examinations.

From the first of January 2015, a Medicare benefit will only be payable for a comprehensive eye examination for patients without symptoms of an eye condition, aged under 65, once every three years. Benefits for patients without symptoms aged 65 years and over will be payable annually.

For a complete list of Budget measures for the Medicare Programme, including those impacting optometrists, visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: HEALTH MATTERS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Medicare Benefits Schedule – Revised Capital Sensitivity Provisions for Diagnostic Imaging Equipment

Description of the measure

From 1 January 2015, the maximum extended life age will be increased by five years on equipment that has been upgraded, for computed tomography (CT) and angiography services.

The maximum extended life age for Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) equipment will also be increased for an additional five years for equipment that has previously been upgraded.

A higher Medicare benefit will be available for services provided on upgraded equipment. Changes will be made to the Medicare Benefits Schedule to allow providers to claim the item that reflects the age of the equipment and whether or not an upgrade has occurred.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect diagnostic imaging providers and patients receiving an eligible diagnostic imaging service for CT, some angiography, and MRI services.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This Budget measure will not change the diagnostic imaging services eligible for Medicare benefits but will provide higher Medicare benefits for CT and some angiography services performed on upgraded equipment. For MRI equipment, the maximum extended life age will be increased for an additional five years for equipment that has been upgraded.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 January 2015.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Training will be provided to staff involved in the processing of diagnostic imaging equipment and the management of enquiries from providers.

An Assessing Bulletin will also be developed and published on eReference for all staff.

Training and further information will be available for staff closer to the measure starting.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

This measure will start on 1 January 2015 and allows providers and patients to claim higher Medicare benefits for services provided on upgraded equipment for an additional five years.

New items will be created in the Medicare Benefits Schedule for angiography services to reflect these changes, and providers will need to ensure that they use the correct item when claiming these services.

Items for CT and MRI are already available on the Medicare Benefits Schedule for providers to use.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: HEALTH MATTERS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Pausing indexation of some Medicare Benefits Schedule fees and the Medicare Levy Surcharge and Private Health Insurance Rebate thresholds

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2014, indexation of all Medicare Benefits Schedule fees will be suspended, excluding General Practitioner attendance items and associated bulk billing incentives, for a further 24 months.

Indexation of the fees in the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Schedule of Benefits will also be suspended from 1 July 2014 for 24 months.

These changes will not affect the fees for pathology and diagnostic imaging services which are not indexed annually.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect specialists, allied health professionals, nurse practitioners, midwives and dental surgeons who provide Medicare or Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) eligible consultations and procedures.

Patients that are not bulk billed may also experience higher out-of-pocket costs for these services if their provider decides to increase their fees.

Am I eligible for this measure?

All patients entitled to Medicare or treatment under the DVA Schedule of Benefits will remain eligible. This measure will not change the way people qualify for treatment, but rather the amount of out-of-pocket costs they may experience for these services, if they are not bulk billed.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 July 2014 and finish on 30 June 2016.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

An Assessing Bulletin will be developed and published on eReference for staff closer to implementation.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

From 1 July 2014, indexation of all Medicare Benefits Schedule fees will be suspended, excluding General Practitioner attendance items and associated bulk billing incentives, for a further 24 months.

Indexation of the fees in the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Schedule of Benefits will also be suspended from 1 July 2014 for 24 months.

These changes will not affect the fees for pathology and diagnostic imaging services which are not indexed annually.

No action is required by providers.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: HEALTH MATTERS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Medicare Benefits Schedule – new and amended listings

Description of the measure

This measure will restrict the payment of Medicare benefits for services provided by general practitioners, sports physicians and other specialists (including radiologists), for 'autologous blood' injection services.

Changes will be made to a combination of blood administration, ultrasound and consultation items on the Medicare Benefits Schedule.

This measure will be implemented on 1 January 2015.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect general practitioners, sports physicians and other specialists (including radiologists), as they are the main providers of autologous blood injection services.

Patients who receive autologous blood injection services will no longer have access to the Medicare benefit and will have to fund this treatment privately.

Am I eligible for this measure?

Medicare benefits will no longer be paid for autologous blood injection services.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will begin on 1 January 2015 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

An Assessing Bulletin will be developed and published on eReference for staff, closer to implementation.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

General Practitioners, sports physicians, and other specialists (including radiologists) who provide autologous blood injection services will no longer be able to claim a Medicare benefit for this service. Changes will be made to associated blood administration, ultrasound and consultation items on the MBS.

Providers that wish to continue to provide autologous blood injection services should ensure that patients are aware that these services will need to be funded privately. Prior to submitting a claim to DHS for the amended items, providers need to ensure that the services provided comply with the amended item descriptions.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: HEALTH MATTERS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme – increase in co-payments and safety net thresholds

Description of the measure

From 1 January 2015 the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) co-payment and Safety Net threshold amounts will increase:

- patient contributions for PBS subsidised prescriptions will increase by \$0.80 for concessional and \$5.00 for general patients above the annual indexation
- PBS general and concessional safety net thresholds will increase by 10 per cent and two additional prescriptions respectively for each of the next four years. This is additional to the annual indexation.

The PBS subsidises the cost of a wide range of prescription medicines.

The PBS Safety Net reduces the costs of PBS medicines to individuals and families once they have reached a particular cost threshold during a calendar year. There are currently two tiers—general and concessional.

All Australian residents and eligible overseas visitors are provided with access to affordable medicines through the PBS. Each year the government sets a patient co-payment for general patients and concession patients, the amount of the co-payment is adjusted on 1 January each year, in line with the Consumer Price Index. The co-payment is the amount a patient pays towards the cost of their PBS medicine, and the government pays the remaining cost.

The changes under this measure are in addition to annual indexation.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect all Australian residents or eligible overseas visitors who receive subsidised medicine under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

Am I eligible for this measure?

If you are an Australian resident or a visitor from a country with a [Reciprocal Healthcare Agreement](#) with Australia, you may be eligible to receive medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) at a lower cost.

Eligible veterans, war widow/ers and their dependents receive PBS medicines plus some other medicines at a lower cost under the Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS).

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 January 2015.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Updated materials will be published on eReference.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

Calls from health professionals will be managed through the current PBS provider lines.

Information for health professionals on changes to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme can be found on the [Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme](#) website or [Department of Human Services'](#) website.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: HEALTH MATTERS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme – new and amended listings

Description of the measure

This measure has amended some existing listings for the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and added some new items to the listings from 1 April 2014. The PBS gives Australian residents and eligible overseas visitors access to affordable medicines. The changes include:

- tapentadol hydrochloride – new listing for chronic, severe disabling pain not responding to non-narcotic analgesics
- clobetasol propionate – new listing for the treatment of moderate to severe scalp psoriasis
- plerixafor – new listing for the treatment of certain types of cancer (multiple myeloma or lymphoma)
- betamethasone (as dipropionate) and calcipotriol – amended listing enabling patients to access a greater amount of the gel during an episode or flare up of chronic psoriasis
- panitumumab – amended listing for the treatment of K-RAS wild-type (WT) metastatic colorectal cancer (mCRC) in patients who have failed first-line chemotherapy
- tocilizumab – amended listing for the treatment of active polyarticular course juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA) as a single-agent or in combination with methotrexate.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Eligible Australian residents and overseas visitors will be able to access these medicines under the PBS if prescribed by their health professional. Health professionals including pharmacists, general practitioners, specialists and nurse practitioners will need to be aware of these changes.

Am I eligible for this measure?

The Schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits has been updated to show the new and amended listings. Health professionals will decide if their patient is eligible. Some of these medicines will require patients to meet particular restriction criteria listed in the Schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits.

When will this measure start and finish?

The new and amended listings on the Schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits started on 1 April 2014. This is an ongoing measure.

INTRANET

Questions and answers**What training and support can I expect to receive?**

Updated materials have been published to eReference. New and amended patient application forms, systems training and guidelines have been provided to relevant staff.

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

Calls from health professionals will be managed through the current PBS provider lines. Information for health professionals on changes to the PBS will also be available on pbs.gov.au

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: HEALTH MATTERS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme – medication charts for public and private hospitals

Description of the measure

This measure will enable the supply and claiming of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS) prescriptions directly from a patient's hospital medication chart in public and private hospitals.

It also broadens the opportunity for supplying and claiming PBS medicines dispensed from medication charts currently occurring in residential aged care facilities.

This measure will reduce the regulatory burden currently placed on prescribers, pharmacists, and nurses in public and private hospitals. It will remove the need for duplication of prescription information and improve health outcomes through a reduction in the risk of transcription errors.

Phase 1—introduces a national standardised paper-based hospital medication chart. This chart will be trialled in a small number of private hospitals from March 2015 and public hospitals from May 2015.

Phase 2—allows fully electronic prescribing and claiming in public and private hospitals. Phase 2 will enable implementation of national standardised electronic medication charts in public and private hospitals from 1 April 2016.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Prescribers, pharmacists and nurses working in public and private hospitals and residential aged care facilities will benefit from reduced regulatory burden.

Am I eligible for this measure?

Public and private hospitals and residential aged care facilities are eligible for this measure.

When will this measure start and finish?

Phase 1 will be trialled in a small number of private hospitals from March 2015 and public hospitals from May 2015.

Phase 2 will allow from 1 April 2016, fully integrated electronic prescribing and claiming of PBS medicines in the hospital setting.

INTRANET**Questions and answers****What training and support can I expect to receive?**

Staff working on the PBS general line and the PBS authorities line will receive face-to-face training. This will help them to answer queries from prescribers, approved suppliers and the general public. Relevant staff will also receive additional training in the processing of paperless claims

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

The purpose of this initiative is to reduce regulatory burden for prescribers, pharmacists and nurses in public and private hospitals and residential aged care facilities.

Standardised medication charts will be developed as part of this initiative.

Further details on the initiative will be provided throughout the implementation phases of the project via the department's website and communication products sent directly to hospitals and residential aged care facilities.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: HEALTH MATTERS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme – new and amended listings

Medicare Benefits Schedule – new and amended listings

Description of the measure

This measure has amended some existing listings for the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and added one new item. The PBS gives Australian residents and eligible overseas visitors access to affordable medicines. The changes include:

- ferric carboxymaltose – new listing from 1 June 2014 for the treatment of iron deficiency anaemia
- everolimus – amended listing from 1 June 2014 for the treatment of HER2 negative advanced breast cancer after failure of treatment with letrozole or anastrozole
- botulinum toxin type A – amended listing for the treatment of Urinary Incontinence Idiopathic Overactive Bladder.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Eligible Australian residents and overseas visitors will be able to access these medicines under the PBS if prescribed by their health professional. Health professionals including pharmacists, general practitioners, specialists and nurse practitioners will need to be aware of these changes.

Am I eligible for this measure?

The Schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits has been updated to show the new and amended listings. Health professionals will decide if their patient is eligible. Some of these medicines will require patients to meet particular restriction criteria listed in the Schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits.

When will this measure start and finish?

Ferric carboxymaltose and everolimus will be listed from 1 June 2014. This is an ongoing measure.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Updated materials will be published to eReference. New and amended patient application forms, systems training and guidelines will be provided to relevant staff.

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

Calls from health professionals will be managed through the current PBS provider lines. Information for health professionals on changes to the PBS will also be available on pbs.gov.au

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: HEALTH MATTERS, OLDER AUSTRALIANS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

General Practice Rural Incentives Programme – additional funding

Description of the measure

Additional funding will enable the General Practice Rural Incentives Program (GPRIP) to continue its support of rural doctors in 2014-15.

GPRIP aims to encourage GPs, GP Registrars and some specialists to work and live in remote Australia through the provision of retention and relocation payments.

This measure will support new and existing participants by maintaining annual retention payments.

From 1 July 2014, more streamlined program delivery systems will see GP Registrars assessed in accordance with Medicare billing records, consistent with other GPRIP participants. GP Registrars who are not billing sufficiently to generate a payment may be assessed manually. Other elements of the program remain unchanged.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Rural doctors and the communities they live and work in will continue to be supported by GPRIP.

What affect will this measure have on GP Registrars

GP Registrars who are billing Medicare will receive a payment automatically. Those who are not billing Medicare can seek an assessment of their training period through a third party provider.

Am I eligible for this measure?

Information about GPRIP and other rural workforce incentives is available on the [Rural and Regional Health Australian website](#).

When will this measure start?

This measure will start from 1 July 2014.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?
[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

The department will send information about the changes to GPRIP to GP Registrars who are currently registered. The Department of Health will have information on its [website](#) about the changes.

[Information redacted for privacy reasons]

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: HEALTH MATTERS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Doubling the Practice Incentives Programme Teaching Payment

Description of the measure

From 1 January 2015, the Practice Incentives Program (PIP) teaching payment will double from \$100 to \$200. The payment will be for each three hour teaching session to undergraduate and graduate medical students who are preparing for entry into the Australian medical profession.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect providers who currently claim the PIP teaching payment and new providers wanting to join the program.

Am I eligible for this measure?

Information on eligibility is available in the PIP Teaching Payments guidelines. The guidelines will be updated to include the changes announced in this measure.

You can also email pip@humanservices.gov.au or call the PIP enquiry line on 1800 222 032 (call charges apply from mobile phones) Monday to Friday, between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm, Australian Central Standard Time.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure is expected to start on 1 January 2015 (date to be confirmed) and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Not applicable.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

From 1 January 2015, the PIP teaching payment will double from \$100 to \$200. The payment is for each three hour teaching session to undergraduate and graduate medical students who are preparing for entry into the Australian medical profession.

Teaching sessions that are completed before 1 January 2015 will receive \$100 for each three hour session regardless of when the claim form is submitted.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: HEALTH MATTERS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Mental Health Nurse Incentive Programme – continuation

Description of the measure

This measure will provide an additional \$22 million in funding to the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program (MHNIP) to maintain services and incentives at the 2013-14 level. Total funding in 2014-15 will remain at \$41.7 million, similar to funding levels in 2013-14.

The measure starts on 1 July 2014 and will end on 30 June 2015.

Existing MHNIP organisations will be advised of their session allocation for 2014-15 by the Department of Human Services.

People with a severe mental disorder will be able to continue to receive services from mental health nurses. These services will provide patients with support during periods of significant disability and assist in maintaining long-term health and longevity.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Mental health nurses will continue to work in collaboration with psychiatrists and general practitioners to provide services to people with a severe mental disorder such as monitoring a patient's mental state, medication management and improving patient pathways to other service providers both clinical and non-clinical.

Am I eligible for this measure?

Payments are made to eligible organisations that engage a credentialed mental health nurse to provide services to people with a severe mental disorder.

When will this measure start and finish?

The measure will start on 1 July 2014 and end on 30 June 2015.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

There is no training as this is a continuation of an existing program.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

We can advise that the 2014-15 Budget continues the provision of additional funding to the MHNIP to ensure existing service levels can be maintained.

In 2014-15 an additional \$22 million will be provided to maintain MHNIP services at 2013–14 levels. Future arrangements will be considered in the context of the final report of the National Mental Health Commission's review of mental health programs, which is due in November 2014.

We will write to eligible organisations in June 2014 to provide 2014-15 session allocation levels and more information on the review process.

2014-15 Budget measure

HEALTH MATTERS, OLDER AUSTRALIANS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Full implementation of National Bowel Cancer Screening Programme

Description of the measure

This measure is the full implementation of the two year screening of bowel cancer under the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program.

All Australians aged 50 to 74 years will be invited to participate in bowel cancer screening every two years by 2020. Screening under the program is free.

Early detection of cancer will significantly reduce the burden of bowel cancer on Australians and their families.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect:

- Australians aged 50 to 74 years who hold a Medicare or Department of Veterans' Affairs card
- medical practitioners and specialists.

Am I eligible for this measure?

The program will progressively be extended to cover those aged 50 to 74 years to screen for bowel cancer at two yearly intervals.

The program currently invites 50, 55, 60 and 65 year olds to screen for bowel cancer at five yearly intervals.

When will this measure start and finish?

The phased introduction of the two year screening will start in 2015 and will be fully implemented by 2020. It is an ongoing program.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Existing procedures and training material will be updated to reflect any new or changed procedures resulting from the introduction of the two year screening.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

The Full implementation of National Bowel Cancer Screening measure will provide funding for the accelerated introduction of two year screening for the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program for eligible Australians aged 50 to 74.

Eligible people will be sent an invitation to participate in the program.

More information about the program is available on the Department of Health's cancer screening website cancerscreening.gov.au

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: HEALTH MATTERS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record System – continuation

Description of the measure

The government has provided funding to continue the personally controlled electronic (eHealth) record (PCEHR) system for 2014-15.

An eHealth record system is a secure online summary of your health information.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

You will be affected by this measure if you are a consumer, healthcare provider organisation or healthcare provider individual.

Am I eligible for this measure?

All people seeking healthcare in Australia are eligible for an eHealth record.

All healthcare provider organisations and healthcare provider individuals (as defined in the *Healthcare Identifiers Act 2010*) are also eligible to participate in the eHealth record system.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure is a continuation of the eHealth record system for a further year from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

There are no new training requirements, as the measure is a continuation of the existing eHealth record system. The existing suite of training services will be maintained.

This includes:

- eLearning – New Starter
- Refresher and Overview and Children packages for consumer registration and support services
- eReference material, communications and on the job or face-to-face training as required for consumer and provider registration and support services.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: BUSINESS

Tasmanian Wheat Freight Scheme – cessation

Description of the measure

This measure will terminate the Tasmanian Wheat Freight Scheme from 1 July 2014.

Wheat is currently shipped to Tasmania in containers and claimed under the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

The termination of the Tasmanian Wheat Freight Scheme will have no impact on services.

Am I eligible for this measure?

If you ship wheat to Tasmania in containers, you can claim under the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will end from 1 July 2014.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Not applicable.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: FAMILIES, YOUNG PEOPLE AND STUDENTS

Maintain eligibility thresholds for Australian Government payments for three years

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2014 indexation of the income free area and asset test limit will be fixed for three years for all working age allowance payments, student payments and parenting payment. Indexation of student income bank limits for student payments and indexation of Child Care Benefit income thresholds will also be fixed from 1 July 2014 for the next three financial years.

Payments will be affected at different times due to different indexation dates.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This will affect Parenting Payment Single, Youth Allowance (student), Austudy, ABSTUDY, Newstart Allowance, Widow Allowance, Sickness Allowance, Partner Allowance, Parenting Payment Partnered and Child Care Benefit.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This will automatically impact all affected payments.

When will this measure start and finish?

The indexation under this measure will be fixed from 1 July 2014 for three years.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

A network update will be published.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From the first of July 2014 indexation of the income free area and asset test limit will be fixed for three years for all working age allowance payments, student payments and parenting payment. Indexation of student income bank limits for student payments and Child Care Benefit income thresholds will also be fixed from the first of July 2014 for three years.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: FAMILIES

Family Payment Reform – maintain Family Tax Benefit payment rates for two years

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2014 the indexation of the maximum rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A and Part B will be fixed for two years.

The maximum rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A will remain for two years at:

- \$5,215.85 per year for each child aged under 13 years
- \$6,566.35 per year for each child aged 13-15 years (or 16-19 years if the child is in secondary school).

The maximum rate of Family Tax Benefit Part B will remain for two years at:

- \$4,171.95 per year for families where the youngest child is under five years
- \$3,018.55 per year where the youngest child is aged five-18 years.

This change applies automatically for new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A and/or Family Tax Benefit Part B. There are no changes to when or how payments are made.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A and/or Family Tax Benefit Part B.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This change applies automatically to new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A and/or Family Tax Benefit Part B. There are no changes to when or how payments are made.

When will this measure start and finish?

Indexation under this measure will be fixed from 1 July 2014 for two years.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Operational Blueprint will be updated to reflect these changes and other training materials will be provided.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From 1 July 2014, the indexation of the maximum rates of Family Tax Benefit Part A and Part B will be fixed for two years.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: FAMILIES

Family Payment Reform – maintain Family Tax Benefit payment rates for two years

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2014 the indexation of the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A will be fixed for two years.

The base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A will remain at \$1,438.10 for each child per year (or \$53.31 per fortnight) from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016.

This change applies automatically for new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A. There are no changes to when or how payments are made.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This change applies automatically for new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A. There are no changes to when or how payments are made.

When will this measure start and finish?

Indexation under this measure will be fixed from 1 July 2014 for two years.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Operational Blueprint will be updated to reflect these changes and other training materials will be provided.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From 1 July 2014, the indexation of the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A will be fixed for two years. The base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A will remain at \$1438.10 for each child per year (or \$53.31 per fortnight).

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: FAMILIES

Family Payment Reform – revise Family Tax Benefit end-of-year supplements

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2015, the Family Tax Benefit Part A and Part B end of year supplements will be returned to \$600 and \$300 respectively, and remain at that level.

This change applies automatically for new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A and/or Family Tax Benefit Part B. There are no changes to when or how payments are made.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A and/or Family Tax Benefit Part B.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This change applies automatically to new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A and/or Family Tax Benefit Part B. There are no changes to when or how payments are made.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 July 2015 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Operational Blueprint will be updated to reflect these changes and other training materials will be provided.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From 1 July 2015, the Family Tax Benefit Part A and Part B supplements will be returned to their original values of \$600 and \$300 respectively, and stay the same every year.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: FAMILIES

Family Payment Reform – Maintain eligibility thresholds for Australian Government payments for three years

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2014, the indexation of three income free area thresholds will be fixed for three years. This means the following thresholds will remain the same for three years:

- Family Tax Benefit Part A (FTB-A) – income free area (otherwise known as the lower income free area) of \$48,837
- FTB-A – maintenance income free area of:
 - \$1 478.25 for a single parent, or one person of a couple receiving child support for a child, or
 - \$2 956.50 for a couple, each receiving child support for a child
 - \$492.75 for each additional child.
- Family Tax Benefit Part B (FTB-B) – the secondary earner income free area of \$5 183.

This change will happen automatically for new and existing customers who receive FTB-A and/or FTB-B. There are no changes to when or how payments are made.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect new and existing customers who receive FTB-A and/or FTB-B.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This change will automatically happen for new and existing customers who receive FTB-A and/or FTB-B. There are no changes to when or how payments are made.

When will this measure start and finish?

Indexation under this measure will be fixed from 1 July 2014 for three years.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Operational Blueprint will be updated to reflect these changes and other training materials will be provided.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From the first of July 2014, the indexation of three income free area thresholds will be fixed for three years. These thresholds are the Family Tax Benefit Part A income free area, the Family Tax Benefit Part A maintenance income free area and the Family Tax Benefit Part B secondary earner income free area.

For more information, please go to humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: FAMILIES

Index non-Pension and Pension Equivalent Payments by the Consumer Price Index

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2014 all non-pension payments, including Parenting Payment Single, will be indexed by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) only, which will make indexation arrangements consistent across all social security payments.

There will be no change for most non-pension payments such as student payments, Newstart Allowance, Parenting Payment Partnered, Widow Allowance, Sickness Allowance and Partner Allowance as they are already indexed to the CPI.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This change will mainly impact Parenting Payment Single recipients.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This will automatically impact all affected payments. It will take effect from the first scheduled indexation date of 20 September 2014.

When will this measure start and finish?

This change will start on 1 July 2014 and be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

A network news update will be published on eReference and the Operational Blueprint.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From 1 July 2014 all non-pension payments, including Parenting Payment Single, will be indexed by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) only, which will make indexation arrangements consistent across all social security payments.

For more information, please visit humanservices.gov.au/budget

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: OLDER AUSTRALIANS, DISABILITY AND CARERS

Index Pension and Pension Equivalent Payments by the Consumer Price Index

Description of the measure

From 1 September 2017 all pension payments and pension equivalent payments will be indexed by the Consumer Price Index only, which will make indexation arrangements consistent across all social security payments.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

The proposal will impact recipients of Age Pension, Disability Support Pension, Carer Payment, Wife Pension, Widow B Pension and Bereavement Allowance.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This will automatically impact all affected payments.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 September 2017 and be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

A network update will be published on eReference and Operational Blueprint.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From 1 September 2017 all pension payments and pension equivalent payments will be indexed by the Consumer Price Index only, which will make indexation arrangements consistent across all social security payments.

For more information, please visit humanservices.gov.au/budget

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: OLDER AUSTRALIANS, YOUNG PEOPLE AND STUDENTS, DISABILITY AND CARERS, FAMILIES

Reset the Assets Test Deeming Rate Thresholds

Description of the measure

From 20 September 2017 the deeming provision thresholds for payments which are means tested will be reset to \$30 000 for singles and \$50 000 for couples (for both pensioners and allowees). The current thresholds are \$46 600 for singles, \$77 400 for pensioner couples and \$38 700 for members of allowee couples.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will impact recipients of Age Pension, Disability Support Pension, Carer Payment, Wife Pension, Widow B Pension and Bereavement Allowance and equivalent Veterans' Affairs pension payments as well Parenting Payment Single, Youth Allowance, Austudy, Newstart Allowance, Parenting Payment Partnered, Widow Allowance, Sickness Allowance and Partner Allowance.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This will automatically impact all affected payments.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 20 September 2017 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

A network update will be published on eReference or Operational Blueprint.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From the twentieth of September 2017 the deeming provision thresholds for payments which are means tested will be reset to \$30 000 for singles and \$50 000 for couples (for both pensioners and allowees). The current thresholds are \$46 600 for singles, \$77 400 for pensioner couples and \$38 700 for members of allowee couples.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: OLDER AUSTRALIANS

Commonwealth Seniors Health Card – annual indexation of income thresholds

Description of the measure

From September 2014, the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card (CSHC) income threshold rates will be indexed annually by movements in the Consumer Price Index.

Currently, to qualify for a CSHC a person must have adjusted taxable income below the relevant annual income thresholds. These are \$50,000 for singles, \$80,000 for couples, combined, or \$100,000 for a couple separated by respite care, illness, or when one member of the couple is in prison. These thresholds will increase with indexation.

The additional dependent child amount will not be indexed.

The higher income threshold rates will allow more people to qualify for a CSHC.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Australian residents who are over age pension age and who are not receiving a Social Security pension or benefit.

Am I eligible for this measure?

To be eligible for a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card a person must meet the following criteria:

- not be receiving a Social Security pension or Social Security benefit
- not receiving a Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Service pension, DVA Age Pension or an Income Support Supplement or hold a DVA CSHC
- be an Australian resident, residing in Australia at the time of claim or re-claim
- be age pension age
- have an annual income less than the CSHC income threshold limit.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start from September 2014 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Information will be made available via intranet, internet and eReference.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From September 2014, more people will be eligible for the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card because the income threshold will be indexed annually in line with the Consumer Price Index.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: OLDER AUSTRALIANS

Commonwealth Seniors Health Card – include untaxed superannuation income in the eligibility assessment

Description of the measure

From 1 January 2015, non-taxable superannuation income will be included in the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card (CSHC) income test. This means that from 1 January 2015, superannuation account based income streams will be deemed under the existing deeming rules for the Age Pension.

From 1 January 2015 this will affect all new CSHC holders.

This is subject to a grandfathering provision. This means that there will be no change for customers who are existing CSHC holders as at 1 January 2015 and who have existing superannuation account based income streams. However any new superannuation account based income streams purchased by these customers after 1 January 2015 will be subject to the new deeming rules.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect new CSHC holders who are granted on or after 1 January 2015. Customers who are existing CSHC holders as at 1 January 2015 will not be subject to deeming of existing superannuation account based income streams. However, existing CSHC holders who purchase a new product on or after 1 January 2015 will be subject to superannuation deeming arrangements on that product.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 January 2015 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Information will be made available on the intranet, internet and eReference.

For more information on training email concessions@humanservices.gov.au

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From the first of January 2015, non-taxable superannuation income will be included in the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card income test. This will mean that from the first of January 2015, superannuation account based income streams will be deemed under the existing deeming rules for Age Pension. This will affect all new Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders granted on or after the first of January 2015.

Customers who are existing card holders as at the first of January 2015 will not be subject to the new deeming rules in relation to existing superannuation account based income streams. However any new superannuation account based income streams purchased by these customers after the first of January 2015 will be subject to the new deeming rules.

For more information, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: OLDER AUSTRALIANS

Maintain eligibility thresholds for Australian Government payments for three years

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2017 the indexation of some of the social security means test settings will be fixed for a period of three years.

These settings are the pension income and assets test free areas for social security pension payments and equivalent Veterans' Affairs pension payments.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

The measure will impact recipients of Age Pension, Disability Support Pension, Carer Payment, Wife Pension, Widow B Pension and Bereavement Allowance. The proposal also impacts equivalent Veterans' Affairs pension payments.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This will automatically impact all affected payments.

When will this measure start and finish?

Indexation under this measure will be fixed from 1 July 2017 for three years.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

A network update will be published on eReference and the Operational Blueprint.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

The income and assets free areas will be fixed for a period of three years from 1 July 2017 for recipients of Age Pension, Disability Support Pension, Carer Payment, Wife Pension, Widow B Pension and Bereavement Allowance. The proposal also impacts equivalent Veterans' Affairs pension payments.

For more information, please visit humanservices.gov.au/budget

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: FAMILIES, OLDER AUSTRALIANS, JOB SEEKERS

Cease indexation of the Clean Energy Supplement

Description of the measure

Aged pensioners and Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders will continue to receive the Energy Supplement (formerly the Clean Energy Supplement), with the rate of payment as of 30 June 2014 fixed for future payments.

The Energy Supplement is automatically paid to pensioners, other income support payment recipients and Family Tax Benefit recipients.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect all people who currently receive the Clean Energy Supplement.

Am I eligible for this measure?

You will be paid the new supplement automatically if you receive one of the following eligible payments and benefits:

- ABSTUDY Living Allowance
- Age Pension
- Austudy
- Carer Payment
- Disability Support Pension
- Exceptional Circumstance Relief Payment
- Family Tax Benefit
- Newstart Allowance
- Parenting Payment
- Partner Allowance
- Seniors Supplement
- Sickness Allowance
- Special Benefit
- Farm Household Allowance
- Bereavement Allowance
- Widow B Pension
- Widow Allowance
- Wife Pension
- Youth Allowance

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure starts from 1 July 2014 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

All affected staff will be given details of the change as part of the Families Changes June 2014 Learning Package. All reference materials will be updated to reflect these changes.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

Aged Pensions and Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders will continue to receive the Energy Supplement, with the rate of payment as of 30 June 2014 fixed for future payments. This Supplement was formally known as the Clean Energy Supplement.

For more information go to humanservices.gov.au/budget

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: FAMILIES

Family Payment Reform – remove the Family Tax Benefit Part A per child add-on

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2015, a per-child add-on amount will no longer be used to calculate a family's higher income-free area for Family Tax Benefit (FTB) Part A. The higher income-free area of \$94 316 will remain, without the add-on amount of \$3796 for the second FTB child and subsequent FTB children.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This change applies automatically to new and existing Family Tax Benefit Part A customers. There are no changes to when or how payments are made.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 July 2015 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

eReference and Operational Blueprint will be updated to reflect these changes and other training materials will be provided.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

The Family Tax Benefit Part A income limit will be the same for all families regardless of the number of children in your care. The income limit is \$94,316.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: FAMILIES

Family Payment Reform – limit Family Tax Benefit Part B to families with children under six years of age

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2015, families whose youngest child is aged six or over will no longer be entitled to Family Tax Benefit Part B. However, existing arrangements will continue until 30 June 2017 for families with a youngest child aged six years and over and already receiving Family Tax Benefit Part B.

There are no changes to how Family Tax Benefit Part B payments are made.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part B.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This change applies automatically to:

- new Family Tax Benefit Part B customers who become eligible from 1 July 2015.
- existing Family Tax Benefit Part B customers (that is, those already in receipt of payments prior to 1 July 2015) from 1 July 2017.

There are no changes to how payments are made.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 July 2015 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Operational Blueprint will be updated to reflect these changes and other training materials will be provided.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From 1 July 2015, new customers will only be eligible for Family Tax Benefit Part B if their youngest child is under six years of age. However, existing arrangements will continue until 30 June 2017 for families with a youngest child aged six years and over and already receiving Family Tax Benefit Part B.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: FAMILIES

Family Payment Reform – better targeting of Family Tax Benefit Part B

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2015, the primary earner income limit for Family Tax Benefit Part B will be \$100,000 instead of \$150,000.

This means that Family Tax Benefit Part B will only be payable if the income of the primary earner in a family is \$100,000 or less. Families with primary earner income of more than \$100,000 will no longer be eligible to receive Family Tax Benefit Part B.

This change applies automatically for new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part B. There are no changes to when or how payments are made.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part B.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This change applies automatically to new and existing Family Tax Benefit Part B customers from 1 July 2015.

There are no changes to when or how payments are made.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 July 2015 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Operational Blueprint will be updated to reflect these changes and other training materials will be provided.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

The primary earner income limit for Family Tax Benefit Part B will be \$100,000 instead of \$150,000.

This means that Family Tax Benefit Part B will only be payable if the income of the primary earner in a family is \$100,000 or less.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: FAMILIES

Family Payment Reform – new Family Tax Benefit allowance

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2015, a new \$750 yearly allowance will be available to single parent families in receipt of Family Tax Benefit Part A. It will be paid as an additional component of Family Tax Benefit Part A and will be paid for each child in the family aged between six and 12 years of age.

The allowance will be paid automatically to customers who are eligible for Family Tax Benefit Part A from 1 July 2015 and who:

- are single, and
- are in receipt of Family Tax Benefit Part A at the maximum rate, and
- are not in receipt of Family Tax Benefit Part B, and
- have a Family Tax Benefit child(ren) aged between six–12 years.

There will be no need to lodge a separate claim. The allowance will be paid fortnightly to eligible customers and also to customers who lodge a lump sum claim for the 2015-16 financial year onwards.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This change applies automatically to eligible Family Tax Benefit Part A customers from 1 July 2015 who:

- are single, and
- are in receipt of Family Tax Benefit Part A at the maximum rate, and
- not in receipt of Family Tax Benefit Part B, and
- have a Family Tax Benefit child(ren) aged between six–12 years.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 July 2015 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Operational Blueprint will be updated to reflect these changes and other training materials will be provided.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

A new \$750 annual allowance will be available to single parent families in receipt of Family Tax Benefit Part A. The allowance will be paid automatically to customers who are eligible for Family Tax Benefit Part A, and who also meet additional eligibility criteria.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: FAMILIES

Child Care: Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance – reforms

Description of the measure

Changes have been made to Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance (JETCCFA).

From 5 January 2015:

- JETCCFA will be capped to a maximum amount of \$8.00 per hour per child
- JETCCFA will be paid up to a maximum of 36 hours per week per child for parents doing approved study activities.

These changes will ensure disadvantaged families who need support the most, will have access to JETCCFA.

These changes will not stop families from using child care. Families will have until the end of 2014 to make new care arrangements if necessary.

For information on childcare vacancies and fees visit mychild.gov.au

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect parents who are receiving Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance from 5 January 2015.

The JETCCFA maximum \$8 per hour per child limit applies to all claimants, regardless of the approved activity undertaken.

The 36 hours per week per child limit applies to claimants doing approved study activities. The limits which apply to other approved activities, for example work, are not changing.

Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate payments are available for families to help with child care costs outside of the JETCCFA payment.

Am I eligible for this measure?

The eligibility criteria for JETCCFA has not changed.

You must be receiving an eligible income support payment and the maximum rate of Child Care Benefit, be the principal carer of children, and using child care to meet your mandatory participation requirements or voluntarily participate in work, study or job search activities. JETCCFA is paid directly to your child care service.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start from 5 January 2015 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers**What training and support can I expect to receive?**

An overview of the changes will be given to all affected staff by online newsletters and eReference. More information will be provided to the JETCCFA National Processing Team and Business Integrity teams.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From 5 January 2015, there are changes to the Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance program. The payment will be capped to a maximum amount of \$8.00 per hour per child, and for those parents doing approved study activities, will be limited to 36 hours per week per child.

For more information go to www.humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: FAMILIES

Family Payment Reform – limit the Large Family Supplement to families with four or more children

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2015 the Large Family Supplement will only be paid to families with four or more children. Large Family Supplement is paid as a component of Family Tax Benefit Part A. Large Family Supplement will no longer be paid to families with three children from 1 July 2015. Families with four or more children would continue to receive the Large Family Supplement for the fourth and subsequent child.

This change applies automatically for new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A. There are no changes to how payments are made.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect new and existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A and who currently have three or more children.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This change applies automatically to:

- existing customers who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A for three children. These customers will no longer receive the Large Family Supplement.
- existing and new families with four or more children would receive the Large Family Supplement for the fourth and subsequent child.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 July 2015 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Operational Blueprint will be updated to reflect these changes and other training materials will be provided.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

Families with four or more children will continue to receive the Large Family Supplement for the fourth and subsequent child. Large Family Supplement will no longer be paid to families with three children. Large Family Supplement is paid as a component of Family Tax Benefit Part A.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: JOB SEEKERS, YOUNG PEOPLE AND STUDENTS

Stronger participation incentives for job seekers under 30

Description of the measure

From 1 January 2015, this measure will change the eligibility criteria for all new applicants for Newstart Allowance (NSA) and Youth Allowance (other) (YA(o)) who are under 30 years of age. This will also affect some Special Benefit recipients who are under 30 years of age.

New applicants, including people transferring from other payments, and existing recipients who, on 1 January 2015, are serving a serious non-compliance penalty, will serve a waiting period during which they will receive support from an employment services provider.

The maximum waiting period is six months in duration and the minimum is one month. The maximum waiting period can be reduced by one month for each year the young person has been in full-time paid employment, until the one month minimum waiting period is reached. Part-time and casual employment would be pro-rated accordingly. Job seekers will be required to provide evidence of their previous paid work to allow the Department of Human Services (department) to determine the duration of the initial working period.

Following the waiting period, income support will be available for six months in a 12 month period, dependent on the recipient participating in Work for the Dole for at least 25 hours per week.

Job seekers will still have access to employment services to help them find a job and gain work-related skills.

Job seekers will be expected to take up any available work, will be supported to relocate to where jobs are and be self-supporting wherever possible.

Further cycles of payment and non-payment will occur if a job seeker retains their eligibility for income support.

Customers between 18 and 30 years of age are encouraged to take up learning activities which qualify them for student payments including, Youth Allowance (Students), Austudy and ABSTUDY. Recipients of those payments are unaffected by these changes. This measure also takes into account the changed maximum age of YA(o) which is separately described.

From 1 July 2015, people who are under 30 years of age and who are current NSA, YA(o) and certain Special Benefit customers will complete a period of Work for the Dole and then transition to these criteria. People over 30 years of age, or who meet a defined set of circumstances, will not be impacted by the changes.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Customers who are under 30 years of age and applying for, or in receipt of NSA or (YA(o)) will be affected. Some Special Benefit customers who are under 30 years of age will also be affected.

Am I eligible for this measure?

The measure will apply to all people between 18 and 30 years of age who apply for or receive NSA, (YA(o)) and some people receiving Special Benefit of the same age.

The measure does not apply to people receiving Student payments.

Job seekers who have been assessed as having a partial capacity to work, or are a principal carer parent, or are participating in Disability Employment Programs or are assessed as Stream 3 or 4 in the Employment Services Model will be exempt from the measure. If you are receiving NSA or (YA(o)) and are the single parent of a Family Tax Benefit child you will also be exempt from the measure.

As a new applicant you will be advised how the measure affects you. If you are already in receipt of the payment you will be advised when it will impact you.

You will have the opportunity to provide evidence of your previous work history which may reduce your payment waiting period.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 January 2015. From this date all new applicants who are between 18 and 30 years of age are impacted. From 1 July 2015, the measure impacts current recipients. The measure is ongoing from that time.

What additional support can I access?

Job seekers will continue to receive support from employment services in their efforts to find appropriate work. If a job seeker experiences hardship as a result of the measure they can approach the department to seek emergency assistance.

Can I access other payments?

Eligibility for other payments is not impacted. Youth allowance age eligibility and payment rates will be aligned from 1 January 2015.

How will my waiting period be calculated?

All impacted job seekers will serve a waiting period. Existing waiting periods will still apply to new claimants, and be served consecutively with the new payment waiting period.

The maximum waiting period is six months in duration and the minimum is one month. The maximum waiting period can be reduced by one month for each year the young person has been in full-time paid employment until the one month minimum waiting period is reached. Part-time and casual employment would be pro-rated accordingly. Job seekers will be required to provide evidence of their previous paid work to allow the department to determine the duration of the initial working period.

Where do I go for more information?

A fact sheet detailing more information can be found on the Department of Social Services website.

INTRANET**Questions and answers****Who is eligible for this measure?**

The measure will apply to all people between 18 and 30 years of age who apply for or receive NSA, (YA(o)) and some people receiving Special Benefit of the same age.

The measure does not apply to people receiving Student payments.

Job seekers who have been assessed as having a partial capacity to work, or are a principal carer parent, or are participating in Disability Employment Programs or are assessed as Stream 3 or 4 in the Employment Services Model will be exempt from the measure. If you are receiving NSA or (YA(o)) and are the single parent of a Family Tax Benefit child you will also be exempt from the measure.

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Online and face-to-face training will be provided to all impacted staff.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

The 2014-15 Budget announced changes to the eligibility of Newstart Allowance and Youth Allowance (other) for people aged 18 to 30 years of age including a waiting period of up to six months before gaining access to payments unless they are exempt. Some Special Benefit recipients aged 18 to 30 years old will also be impacted. The changes take effect for new claimants from the first of January 2015. If you are claiming these payments, we will tell you if this impacts you at the time of making your claim.

These changes take effect for existing recipients of these payments from 1 July 2015. We will contact existing customers before that date to advise how the changes affect them. If you lose payment and reclaim after the first of January 2015 you may be immediately impacted. For further information please refer to the Humanservices.com.au website. Further information will be available closer to the initiative's start date.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: YOUNG PEOPLE AND STUDENTS

Increasing the age of eligibility for Newstart Allowance and Sickness Allowance

Description of measure

The age of eligibility for Newstart Allowance and Sickness Allowance will increase to 25 years of age for new applicants. Young job seekers aged 22 to 24 years who become unemployed will receive Youth Allowance (other) until they turn 25 years. They will not be eligible for Newstart Allowance. There is a higher income-free threshold for Youth Allowance, so this change will strengthen the incentive for young unemployed people to work or pursue education and training opportunities.

Details of the measure include:

- the maximum age for Youth Allowance (other) and Youth Disability Supplement will be increased to 24 years of age (previously 21 years of age)
- the minimum age for Newstart Allowance and Sickness Allowance will increase to 25 years of age
- the minimum age at which a Youth Allowance (student) or Austudy recipient can access the Long Term Income Support student rate will increase to 25 years
- the rate at which Special Benefit is paid will change to align with the changes to eligibility criteria for Newstart Allowance and Youth Allowance (other).

Existing recipients of Newstart Allowance and Sickness Allowance and Long Term Income Support student rate who are aged 22 to 24 years of age on 31 December 2014 will be 'grandfathered' and continue to receive payments until they lose qualification.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

A person who is aged between 22 and 24 years of age will only be able to apply for Youth Allowance (other).

A person who is aged 25 years or over will be able to apply for Newstart Allowance or Sickness Allowance.

For new claimants of Special Benefit, a person who is over 25 years of age will be paid at a rate that is equivalent to Newstart Allowance. Where a person is aged between 22 and 24 years of age, they will be paid a rate that is equivalent to Youth Allowance (other).

There will be no change to the age at which a person will be considered independent. If you are 22 years or over you are automatically considered independent.

Am I eligible for this measure?

People who claim one of the affected payments on or after 1 January 2015 will be impacted by this measure.

Existing recipients aged 22 to 24 years of age on 31 December 2014 will continue to receive payments under 'grandfathering' arrangements until they lose qualification.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 January 2015 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Scenario and reference based learning products will be developed to support staff. Existing learning products will also be updated to reflect the changes under this measure.

Where do I go for more information?
[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

The 2014-15 Budget announced changes to increase the age of eligibility for Newstart Allowance and Sickness Allowance. Some Special Benefit claimants will also be impacted. The changes take effect for new claimants from 1 January 2015.

If you are aged between 22 and 24 years of age you will only be able to apply for Youth Allowance (other).

If you are aged 25 years or over you will be able to apply for Newstart Allowance or Sickness Allowance.

If you are currently receiving these payments and are aged 22 to 24 years of age on 31 December 2014, you will continue to receive payments unless you lose qualification.

For more information, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: JOB SEEKERS

Stronger compliance arrangements for job seekers who refuse or persistently fail to meet requirements

Description of the measure

From 15 September 2014, serious failure waiver arrangements will be tightened for job seekers on Newstart Allowance, Youth Allowance (other), Parenting Payment Single and Special Benefit.

A serious failure occurs when:

- a job seeker receiving a participation payment refuses or fails to accept an offer of a suitable job
- the job seeker is assessed as having no barriers that have significantly impacted on their participation requirements and is found to be persistently non-compliant.

The penalty for a serious failure is eight weeks non-payment.

Job seekers:

- will have a serious failure penalty period applied which will result in loss of access to income support, for refusing or not starting a suitable job.
- will no longer be able to access serious failure penalty waiver provisions and will be required to serve the serious failure penalty period.
- who incur a serious failure for persistent non-compliance will only have access to waiver provisions for this serious failure penalty type once for each continuous period while on income support payment.

Job seekers who experience a serious failure for refusing or not starting work, or a second or subsequent serious failure for persistent non-compliance, will no longer be able to request a waiver due to hardship or by starting a Compliance Activity. They will be required to serve the serious failure penalty period.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

From 15 September 2014, job seekers who are in receipt of a participation payment and who incur a serious failure for refusing or not commencing work or for persistent non-compliance will be affected by this measure.

Participation payments include:

- Newstart Allowance
- Youth Allowance – job seeker
- Parenting Payment Single – who have compulsory participation requirements, and
- Special Benefit Nominated Visa Holders.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 15 September 2014 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

This initiative will mainly impact Participation Solutions Teams (PSTs). A learning product will be developed for an anticipated 30 minute training session for PST staff. This training session will be accompanied by coaching and further implementation support with learners, which is expected to equate to up to an hour of training time.

For other network staff, overview training will be supplied and supported by an immediate update and newsletter articles.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: JOB SEEKERS

Apply the One-Week Ordinary Waiting Period to all Working Age Payments

Description of the measure

The Ordinary Waiting Period is a one week non-payment period. New claimants of Newstart Allowance and Sickness Allowance will undergo the Ordinary Waiting Period before they start to receive the payment, unless the claimant is exempt or the waiting period is waived.

From 1 October 2014, the Ordinary Waiting Period will be extended to all working age payments to include:

- new claimants of Youth Allowance (other), Parenting Payment (Single and Partnered), Widow Allowance
- tightening the current rule which allows the Ordinary Waiting Period to be waived due to severe financial hardship
- removing the current rule which allows the Ordinary Waiting Period to be served alongside other waiting or non-payment periods.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect new claimants of:

- Newstart Allowance
- Sickness Allowance
- Youth Allowance (other)
- Parenting Payment (single and partnered)
- Widow Allowance.

Am I eligible for this measure?

People who claim one of the affected payments on or after 1 October 2014 will be impacted by this measure.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 October 2014 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Scenario and reference based learning products will be developed for support staff. Existing learning products will be updated with the new changes.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: JOB SEEKERS

Industry Skills Fund – establishment

Description of the measure

Referrals to the Australian Apprenticeships Access Program will end 30 June 2014.

There will be no new entrants to the program from 1 July 2014. Existing participants can remain in the program until 30 June 2015.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Job seekers will no longer be referred to the Australian Apprenticeships Access Program after 30 June 2014.

Am I eligible for this measure?

Eligible participants can be referred until 30 June 2014 and can participate until 30 June 2015.

When will this measure start and finish?

Referrals to Australian Apprenticeship Access Program will end 30 June 2014. Job seekers who commence in the program prior to 1 July 2014, can participate in the program until 30 June 2015.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Service centre and call centre staff will be told by Network News Update (NNU) and eReference will be updated with the changes.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: JOB SEEKERS

Connection Interviews and Job Seeker Workshops – cessation

Description of the measure

This measure will cease the trials of Job Seeker Workshops and Connections Interviews on 30 June 2014, one year earlier than scheduled.

From 1 July 2014 Job Seeker Workshops and Connections Interviews will no longer be offered as an additional service to certain job seekers. Affected job seekers will be required to meet their ongoing participation requirements and will continue to be subject to the participation compliance regime.

Job seekers who previously undertook Job Seeker Workshops will continue to be connected to their Job Services Australia provider.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Job Seeker Workshops will no longer be offered. Job seekers who may have previously undertaken a workshop will instead be subject to standard national servicing arrangements, including compliance arrangements.

Connections Interviews will no longer be offered. Job seekers who may have previously undertaken a Connections Interview will return to normal servicing arrangements with Job Services Australia, including compliance arrangements.

Am I eligible for this measure?

No. These trials are ceasing on 30 June 2014.

When will this measure start and finish?

This termination is effective from 1 July 2014.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

A question and answer document will be distributed to all affected staff. Zone Participation Region Managers will be briefed about the changes and any actions that need to be taken locally.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: OLDER AUSTRALIANS

Increase the Age Pension qualifying age to 70 years

Description of the measure

The current qualification age for the Age Pension is 65 years, increasing to 67 years by 1 July 2023. This measure increases the qualifying age from 67 to 70 years. On 1 July 2025 the qualifying age will increase from 67 years by six months every two years until 1 July 2035 when the Age Pension qualifying age will reach 70.

This change applies to people born after 30 June 1958 who claim Age Pension from 1 July 2025.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

The measure will affect people born after 30 June 1958 who claim Age Pension from 1 July 2025.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This change will apply to all people born after 30 June 1958 who claim Age Pension from 1 July 2025.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 July 2025 and finish on 1 July 2035.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

A network news update will be published.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

The current qualification age for the Age Pension is 65 years, increasing to 67 years by 1 July 2023. On 1 July 2025 the qualifying age will increase from 67 years by six months every two years until 1 July 2035 when the Age Pension qualifying age will reach 70. This change applies to people born after 30 June 1958 who claim Age Pension from 1 July 2025.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: OLDER AUSTRALIANS

Cessation of the Seniors Supplement – Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders

Description of the measure

The Seniors Supplement for Commonwealth Seniors Health Card (CSHC) holders will no longer be paid beyond the June 2014 quarterly payment. From this date CSHC holders will continue to receive only the Energy Supplement each quarter.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

CSHC holders who have elected to receive the Seniors Supplement will be affected by this measure.

When will this measure start and finish?

The Seniors Supplement for CSHC holders will no longer be paid beyond the June 2014 quarterly payment.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Information will be made available via intranet, internet and eReference.

For more information on training email concessions@humanservices.gov.au

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

The Seniors Supplement for Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders will no longer be paid beyond the June 2014 quarterly payment. From this date CSHC holders will continue to receive only the Energy Supplement each quarter.

For more information, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: OLDER AUSTRALIANS

Social Security Agreement with India

Description of the measure

The social security agreement between Australia and India will help people to claim a pension from both countries. The agreement will exempt workers temporarily seconded to either country from having to pay into both countries' superannuation/pension schemes.

The agreement is limited to Australian age pension and to Indian old-age, survivor and Permanent Total Disability pension for employed persons.

The agreement is expected to start from 1 July 2015.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will help people to access retirement benefits if they live in Australia or India and have lived and/or worked in both countries.

Am I eligible for this measure?

Under this agreement some periods of residence in Australia and some periods of employment in India, where contributions were made to the Indian Employees' Pension Scheme, may be combined to allow a person to meet basic eligibility requirements for the Australian or Indian pension. Claims for an Australian or Indian pension can be lodged by a resident of either country.

When will this measure start and finish?

This is an ongoing measure scheduled to start on 1 July 2015, subject to completion of legal and treaty processes in both countries.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Staff in International Services will get specialised training before the start of the agreement. All other staff will be informed by Operational Blueprint updates.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: OLDER AUSTRALIANS

Housing Help for Seniors – pilot – reversal

Description of the measure

The Housing Help for Seniors pilot will not proceed.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

As the pilot has not commenced, pension payments will not be affected by the pilot not proceeding.

Am I eligible for this measure?

Not applicable.

When will this measure start and finish?

Not applicable.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

A Network News Update will be published confirming the pilot will not go ahead.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: DISABILITY AND CARERS

Disability Support Pension – review recipients aged under 35 years

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2014 the eligibility of current Disability Support Pension recipients aged under 35 years who were granted Disability Support Pension (DSP) between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2011 prior to the introduction of the revised impairment tables, will be reviewed.

Those DSP recipients who were granted on manifest grounds would be excluded as would those already assessed as having a work capacity of less than eight hours a week.

Under this measure, DSP recipients would have a comprehensive review of their qualification for DSP. This would involve a review against the revised impairment tables and an assessment of their work capacity. Eligible DSP recipients will be supported to help maximise their work capacity.

DSP recipients would also be assessed as to whether they have evidence of having actively participated in a Program of Support. Depending on their circumstances, if they have not participated in a Program of Support they would be required to do so. DSP payment would continue contingent on their participation in a Program of Support.

Reviews would be carried out over 18 months from 1 July 2014. The Department of Human Services will contact recipients who are affected by this measure. Recipients will be asked to provide current medical evidence and may need to attend a Job Capacity Assessment scheduled by the department.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect DSP recipients under 35 years, who were granted between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2011.

DSP recipients who were granted on manifest grounds, or already assessed as having a work capacity of less than eight hours per week are excluded.

Am I eligible for this measure?

You are eligible for this measure if you are under 35 years and were granted DSP between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2011.

Disability Support Pension recipients who were granted on manifest grounds, or already assessed as having a work capacity of less than eight hours per week are excluded.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 July 2014 and the reviews will be completed by 31 December 2015.

INTRANET**Questions and answers****What training and support can I expect to receive?**

A training package will be developed for staff who will undertake reviews and assessments of the customers affected by this measure.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell health providers if I receive a call from them?

It is not expected that queries will be received from health providers for this measure because the measure will require no change to current practice.

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From the first of July 2014, Disability Support Pension recipients under age 35 who were granted Disability Support Pension between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2011 will have their Disability Support Pension reviewed under the revised impairment tables and will have their work capacity assessed.

This does not apply to Disability Support Pension recipients who were granted on manifest grounds, or who are assessed as having a work capacity of less than eight hours per week.

Customers eligible for this measure will be contacted by the department in the period between 1 July 2014 and 1 December 2015. Customers will be asked to provide medical evidence of their condition and may need to undergo a Job Capacity Assessment.

For more information on this measure, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: DISABILITY AND CARERS

Disability Support Pension – compulsory participation requirements for recipients aged under 35 years

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2014 Disability Support Pension (DSP) recipients under 35 years of age with an assessed work capacity of eight or more hours a week, will be required to participate in activities that will help them find and keep a job.

Eligible DSP recipients will be required to have a participation plan which includes compulsory activities with a focus on employment.

Compulsory activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Work for the Dole
- job search
- work experience
- education or training
- connection with a Disability Employment Service or Job Services Australia.

Under existing rules, DSP recipients under the age of 35 are required to have a participation plan and to attend regular interviews with the department. This measure will strengthen these requirements by making activities compulsory and focusing on improving a customer's ability to find and maintain work.

The new requirements will commence for eligible customers at their next DSP participation interview.

DSP recipients who were granted on manifest grounds, or who are assessed as having a work capacity of less than eight hours per week, are excluded.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect DSP recipients under age 35 with an assessed work capacity of eight or more hours per week.

DSP recipients who were granted on manifest grounds, or who are assessed as having a work capacity of less than eight hours per week, are excluded.

Am I eligible for this measure?

You are eligible for this measure if you are under 35 years of age and have an assessed work capacity of eight or more hours per week.

Disability Support Pension recipients who were granted on manifest grounds, or who are assessed as having a work capacity of less than eight hours per week, are excluded.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 July 2014 and is ongoing.

INTRANET**Questions and answers****What training and support can I expect to receive?**

A training package will be developed for staff who will undertake participation interviews for the customers affected by this measure.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From the first of July 2014, Disability Support Pension recipients under age 35 with an assessed work capacity of eight or more hours per week will be required to have a participation plan which includes compulsory activities which will help them find and maintain employment.

This does not apply to Disability Support Pension recipients who were granted on manifest grounds, or who are assessed as having a work capacity of less than eight hours per week.

For more information on this measure, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: DISABILITY AND CARERS

Disability Support Pension – reduced portability

Description of the measure

From 1 January 2015, Disability Support Pension recipients who travel overseas can only continue to receive their payments for a maximum of four weeks overseas in any 52 week period.

Disability Support Pension recipients will have their payment cancelled if they are overseas for longer than four weeks and will need to reclaim and have their medical condition(s) and work capacity reassessed against current impairment tables.

Currently Disability Support Pension recipients can be paid for up to six weeks for each trip taken outside Australia.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect Disability Support Pension recipients who travel overseas for more than four weeks in every 52 weeks on or after 1 January 2015.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 January 2015 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

The current portability procedures will be updated for this change. Staff responsibilities do not change.

Access Support and Smart Centre staff will be given information to help them answer customer queries and will be able to contact Technical Support Officers to help them with complex queries.

Smart Centre staff will have access to Senior Practitioners to help them in dealing with complex cases.

Staff will also be able to contact the Level 2 and Level 3 Helpdesks for more support in dealing with complex queries.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

The rules for being paid Disability Support Pension while overseas are changing. This change will affect you if you intend to travel outside Australia on or after the first of January 2015 for more than four weeks in every 52 weeks.

For more information visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: YOUNG PEOPLE AND STUDENTS, OLDER AUSTRALIANS

Pensioner Education Supplement – cessation

Description of the measure

From 1 January 2015 the Pensioner Education Supplement for eligible income support recipients will no longer be available.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect existing Pensioner Education Supplement recipients and those who may have intended to apply on or after 1 January 2015.

This measure does not affect customers' primary income support payments.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This measure will stop an existing payment.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure is effective from 1 January 2015.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Access and Smart Centre staff will receive information to assist them in answering customer queries.

Information about the end of Pensioner Education Supplement will be available in student payment training and Operational Blueprint material.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From the first of January 2015, the Pensioner Education Supplement for eligible income support recipients will no longer be available. Eligible students will still be able to access employment services and targeted study assistance.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: YOUNG PEOPLE AND STUDENTS

Remove Relocation Scholarship Assistance for Students Relocating Within and Between Major Cities

Description of the measure

From 1 January 2015, access to Relocation Scholarships will be restricted to students relocating to or from regional areas to undertake study. The Relocation Scholarship is an annual lump sum payment. Eligible students may receive a Relocation Scholarship for each year of their course as long as they meet the eligibility rules each year.

Under this measure, students from cities will no longer be eligible for a Relocation Scholarship unless they relocate to a regional area to undertake study.

Regional areas are defined by the Australian Standard Geographical Classification.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure will affect recipients of Youth Allowance or ABSTUDY Living Allowance who are:

- from a city area, and
- undertaking full-time study at a higher education institution in a different city area.

Students who are from a regional area, or those who study in a regional area, will retain eligibility for the Relocation Scholarship.

Am I eligible for this measure?

From 1 January 2015, recipients of Youth Allowance or ABSTUDY Living Allowance who are from a city area and are undertaking full-time study at a higher education institution in a city area, will no longer receive the Relocation Scholarship. In the majority of cases, this includes where they move from one city to another.

Students who are from a regional area, or those who study in a regional area, will retain eligibility for the Relocation Scholarship.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure starts on 1 January 2015 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Access and Smart Centre staff will receive information to assist them in answering customer queries.

Student network staff will receive training to assist them in relation to this measure.

Access Support and Smart Centre staff will be able to contact Technical Support Officers to assist them with complex queries.

Student network staff will have access to Senior Practitioners to assist them in dealing with complex cases.

Information about this measure will be available in student payment training and Operational Blueprint material.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From 1 January 2015, recipients of Youth Allowance or ABSTUDY Living Allowance who are from a city area and are undertaking full-time study at a higher education institution in a city area, will no longer receive the Relocation Scholarship. In the majority of cases, this includes where they move from one city to another.

Students who are from a regional area, or those who study in a regional area, will retain eligibility for the Relocation Scholarship.

For more information go to humanservices.gov.au forward slash budget.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: YOUNG PEOPLE AND STUDENTS

Education Entry Payment – cessation

Description of the measure

From 1 January 2015 the Education Entry Payment for eligible income support recipients will no longer be available. Eligible students will still be able to access employment services and targeted study assistance.

This measure does not affect a customer's main income support payment.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

This measure may affect people receiving any of the following income support payments who are studying or intending to study on or after 1 January 2015.

- Newstart Allowance
- Parenting Payment Partnered
- Parenting Payment Single
- Partner Allowance
- Widow Allowance
- Disability Support Pension
- Widow B Pension
- Carer Payment
- Special Benefit if the customer is a sole parent and not residentially qualified for Parenting Payment Single.
- Wife Pension

When will this measure start and finish?

Education Entry Payment will cease from 1 January 2015.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Access and Smart Centre staff will receive information to assist them in answering customer queries.

Student network staff will receive training to assist them in this measure.

Access Support and Smart Centre staff will be able to contact Technical Support Officers to assist them with complex queries.

Student network staff will have access to Senior Practitioners to assist them in dealing with complex cases.

Staff will also be able to contact the Level 2 Helpdesk for additional support in dealing with complex queries.

Information about this measure will be available in student payment training and Operational Blueprint material.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

The Education Entry Payment will no longer be available from 1 January 2015. Eligible students will still be able to access employment services and targeted study assistance.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: YOUNG PEOPLE AND STUDENTS

Remove Grandfathering of Student Start-Up Scholarship Recipients

Description of the Measure

From 1 January 2015, students will be able to access the Student Start-up Loan, which replaces the Student Start-up Scholarship at the same rate of payment.

Student Start-up Loans must be repaid via the tax system once the recipient's taxable income reaches a certain threshold. This is similar to the arrangements currently applied to the repayment of Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) debts. Students who receive a Student Start-up Scholarship prior to 1 January 2015 will not be required to repay it.

The amount of the loan is a lump sum of \$1,025 payable for each six month qualifying period. The qualifying periods are 1 January to 30 June and 1 July to 31 December each year.

Eligible students will be able to claim a loan when they make a claim for a student payment (Youth Allowance (student), Austudy, ABSTUDY Living Allowance), or any time up until the end of the relevant six month loan period.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

If you are a student in receipt of an eligible income support payment, you will be able to apply for a Student Start-up Loan which replaces the Student Start-up Scholarship.

Students who receive a Student Start-up Scholarship prior to 1 January 2015 will not be required to repay it.

Am I eligible for this measure?

If you are a student in receipt of an eligible income support payment, you will be able to apply for a Student Start-up Loan which replaces the Student Start-up Scholarship.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure starts on 1 January 2015 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Access and Smart Centre staff will receive information to assist them in answering customer queries.

Student network staff will receive training to assist them in this measure.

Access Support and Smart Centre staff will be able to contact Technical Support Officers to assist them with complex queries.

Student network staff will have access to Senior Practitioners to assist them in dealing with complex cases.

Information about this measure will be available in student payment training and Operational Blueprint material.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From the first of January 2015, students will be able to access a Student Start-up Loan, which replaces the Student Start-up Scholarship at the same rate of payment.

For more information, please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: YOUNG PEOPLE AND STUDENTS

Limit the Six-Week Portability Period for Student Payments

Description of the measure

Students who travel overseas from 1 October 2014 will only be eligible to continue to receive student payments (Youth Allowance (student), Austudy and ABSTUDY) where they are:

- undertaking approved overseas study that is part of their full-time Australian course, including for up to 10 days travelling to and from their eligible course
- attending an acute family crisis
- receiving eligible medical treatment not available in Australia
- attending a training camp with the Australian Armed Forces Reserves.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

People being paid Youth Allowance (student), Austudy or ABSTUDY who are planning to travel overseas on, or after 1 October 2014.

How will I be affected by this measure?

From 1 October 2014, payment of Youth Allowance (student), Austudy and ABSTUDY while you are overseas will only be possible where you are travelling to:

- undertake approved study outside Australia as part of your full-time Australian course
- deal with an acute family crisis such as the death of a family member, or a family member who has been hospitalised due to a serious illness
- receive eligible medical treatment of a kind not available in Australia
- undertake Australian Armed Forces Reserve service in attending overseas training camps.

If you leave Australia before 1 October 2014 you will be paid under the existing rules affecting payment overseas.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start on 1 October 2014 and will be ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

The current portability procedures will be updated for this change. There are no new 'reasons for portability' being introduced. Staff responsibilities do not change.

Access Support and Smart Centre staff will be given information to help them in answering customer queries and will be able to contact Technical Support Officers to help them with complex queries.

Student network and International Services staff will have access to Senior Practitioners to help them in dealing with complex cases.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

From the first of October 2014, the rules for being paid student payments whilst overseas are changing. This change may affect you if you intend to travel outside of Australia on or after the first of October 2014. For more information visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash Budget.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: RURAL AND REMOTE

Support to Drought Affected Farmers

Description of the measure

On 26 February 2014, the Australian Government announced a package to support farm families in financial hardship.

This measure includes two parts:

- **Part A** which introduced the Interim Farm Household Allowance from 1 March 2014. The Interim Farm Household Allowance replaced the Transitional Farm Family Payment.
- **Part B** which introduces the Farm Household Allowance from 1 July 2014. The Farm Household Allowance will replace the Interim Farm Household Allowance.

The policy settings for the Interim Farm Household Allowance and the Farm Household Allowance are broadly aligned and include the following:

- an assets threshold of \$2.55 million (excluding the family home)
- payment rates aligned to Newstart Allowance, or Youth Allowance for those under 22 years of age, and
- access to a Health Care Card.

Farm Household Allowance also includes the following:

- payable for a maximum of three cumulative years, and
- reciprocal obligations to work with a Farm Household Case Officer to develop a financial improvement plan with approved activities they are required to undertake.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Farming families in financial hardship will be affected by this measure.

Am I eligible for this measure?

To be eligible for the Interim Farm Household Allowance (until 30 June 2014) or the Farm Household Allowance (from 1 July 2014) you must meet the following criteria:

- be assessed as a qualifying farmer
- be an Australian resident
- be currently in Australia
- be 16 years of age or over
- contribute a significant part of your capital and labour to the farm enterprise
- the farm enterprise must be of a significant commercial purpose or character.

When will this measure start and finish?

Interim Farm Household Allowance started on 1 March 2014 and will end on 30 June 2014. Interim Farm Household Allowance can still be paid until 30 September 2014 if a farmer indicates they wish to claim Farm Household Allowance from 1 July 2014 and their claim is being assessed.

Farm Household Allowance will commence on 1 July 2014 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Training will be provided to the Rural Processing team, the Farm Household Case Officers and the Technical Support staff in Rural Call. An online overview training package will be available to all staff in the Learning Management System.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

The Interim Farm Household Allowance has been available since 1 March 2014 to provide farm families with support.

The Farm Household Allowance commences on 1 July 2014 for farmers in financial hardship. It is paid at the same rate as Newstart Allowance and is payable for a maximum of three cumulative years. Recipients will work with a Farm Household Case Officer to meet their reciprocal obligations, which will be outlined in a written plan.

For more information on eligibility please visit humanservices.gov.au forward slash farm house hold allowance.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: RURAL AND REMOTE

Support to Drought Affected Farmers

Description of the measure

On 26 February 2014, the Australian Government announced a drought assistance package to support farm businesses, farming families and rural communities facing hardship.

From 1 April 2014, four drought coordinators from the Department of Human Services were based in drought affected areas of Queensland and New South Wales to:

- ensure social support for farm families and communities is coordinated and accessible
- link Commonwealth, State and other social services in drought affected areas and make it easier for communities to access support services; and
- travel to drought affected areas to meet with service providers, attend community events and link-up services to farmers and farming families.

Drought coordinators will be in place in drought affected areas until 31 December 2014.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Farmers and farming communities from drought affected areas of Queensland and New South Wales.

Am I eligible for this measure?

This measure only applies to farmers and farming communities who live in drought declared areas of Queensland and New South Wales.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure started on 1 April 2014 and will end on 31 December 2014.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Training has been provided to drought coordinators who started on 1 April 2014. There will be training for staff succession and turnover. Information sessions have occurred in Service Centres in the drought affected locations where drought coordinators are located.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: OLDER AUSTRALIANS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Aged Care Payroll Tax Supplement - cessation

Description of the measure

From 1 January 2015 the Payroll Tax Supplement paid to some residential aged care providers will no longer be paid. However, the extra \$1.1 billion being directed into the general funding pool, red tape reduction plan and reforms to the aged care system will deliver benefits that will help providers run their businesses more efficiently and make the most of their funding.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

Some Residential Care Aged Care Providers (those who are eligible for the Payroll Tax Supplement) will be affected by this measure.

Am I eligible for this measure?

Not applicable.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure will start 1 January 2015.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

No training is needed as part of this measure.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell Aged Care providers if I receive a call from them?

Aged care providers should contact the Department of Social Services if they wish to discuss the policy further.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: OLDER AUSTRALIANS, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Reprioritising the Aged Care Workforce Supplement

Description of the measure

From 1 July 2014, Residential, home care and flexible care providers will receive an increase in funding of 2.4 per cent of their basic subsidy.

Payments through the Viability Supplement will also increase by 20 per cent from 1 July 2014.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

All eligible residential and home care providers.

Am I eligible for this measure?

Any residential or home care providers eligible to receive basic subsidy will automatically receive the increased subsidy amounts from 1 July 2014. There are no changes to the existing eligibility rules for Viability Supplement.

When will this measure start and finish?

Basic Subsidy rates for home and residential care providers will increase from 1 July 2014.

The Viability Supplement will increase on 1 July 2014.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

No specific training is required as part of this measure.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

What do I tell Aged Care providers if I receive a call from them?

Aged care providers should contact the Department of Social Services if they wish to discuss the policy further.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: PARTICIPATION

Community Innovation through Collaboration Programme – cessation

Description of the measure

The Community Innovation through Collaboration Programme will close on 30 June 2014, including the following elements:

- uncommitted grants funds for 2013-14 and 2014-15, and
- ongoing costs associated with the role of the Government Action Leaders and Community Action Leaders.

Local Solutions Fund projects which are already contractually committed for the 2014-15 financial year will continue to June 2015 in line with agreed funding arrangements.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

There will be no new projects funded under this program. However, projects that already have contracts in place will continue until 30 June 2015, in line with agreed funding arrangements.

The 20 Community and Government Action Leader positions will no longer be funded.

When will this measure start and finish?

The program will stop on 30 June 2014.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

Government Action Leaders and Service Zone leaders will be briefed by the Community Innovation Branch.

The program's intranet page will be updated to reflect the measure.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: WELFARE PAYMENT REFORM

Income Management – one year extension and expansion to Ceduna, South Australia

Description of the measure

Income Management is a way to help customers manage their money to meet essential household needs and expenses. Under Income Management, part of a person's income support payment is allocated for priority items such as food, housing, clothing, utilities, education and medical care.

Income Management will continue until 30 June 2015 in:

- the Northern Territory
- Perth, Peel District, Kimberley areas, Ngaanyatjarra Lands and Laverton Shire (including Kiwirrkurra) in Western Australia
- Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunyathatjara Lands in South Australia.

Income Management will be rolled out from 1 July 2014 until 30 June 2015 in:

- South Australia to the Ceduna Local Government Area, and
- locations surrounding Ceduna, including: Oak Valley, Yalata, Scotdesco, Bookabie, Penong, Fowlers Bay, Coorabie, Nundroo, Nullarbor.

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

People who live in:

- the Northern Territory
- Ngaanyatjarra Lands and Laverton Shire (including Kiwirrkurra) in Western Australia
- Perth, Peel District and Kimberley areas of Western Australia
- Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunyathatjara Lands and Ceduna in South Australia.

Income Management in Cape York, Bankstown, Logan, Playford, Rockhampton and Livingstone and Shepparton is not affected by this announcement.

Am I eligible for this measure?

People who live in the Northern Territory can:

- volunteer for Income Management
- be placed on the Child Protection measure of Income Management by a Child Protection Worker
- be placed on the Supporting People at Risk measure of Income Management by the Alcohol Mandatory Treatment Tribunal
- be placed on the Vulnerable Welfare Payment Recipient measure of Income Management by a Department of Human Services Social Worker
- be automatically included under the Vulnerable Welfare Payment Recipient measure of Income Management
- be automatically included under the Long Term Welfare Payment Recipient or Disengaged Youth measure of Income Management.

People who live in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands and Laverton Shire (including Kiwirrkurra) in Western Australia or Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunyathatjara Lands and the Ceduna region in South Australia can:

- volunteer for Income Management
- be placed on the Child Protection measure of Income Management by a Child Protection Worker
- be placed on the Vulnerable Welfare Payment Recipient measure of Income Management by a Department of Human Services Social Worker
- be automatically included under the Vulnerable Welfare Payment Recipient measure of Income Management.

People who live in the Perth, Peel District and Kimberley areas of Western Australia can:

- volunteer for Income Management
- be placed on the Child Protection measure of Income Management by a Child Protection Worker.

When will this measure start and finish?

Income Management will continue until 30 June 2015 in:

- the Northern Territory
- Perth, Peel District, Kimberley areas, Ngaanyatjarra Lands and Laverton Shire (including Kiwirrkurra) in Western Australia
- Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunyathatjara Lands in South Australia.

Income Management will be rolled out from 1 July 2014 until 30 June 2015 in:

- South Australia to the Ceduna Local Government Area, and
- locations surrounding Ceduna, including: Oak Valley, Yalata, Scotdesco, Bookabie, Penong, Fowlers Bay, Coorabie, Nundroo, Nullarbor.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

All relevant staff will receive ongoing learning and development support in Income Management.

Relevant staff will be provided with training to support the rollout of Income Management in the Ceduna region of South Australia.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) SCRIPT

Income Management will continue until the 30th of June 2015 in current Income Management locations. Arrangements for people already on Income Management will not change. Income management will also be extended to the Ceduna region of South Australia from July 2014 for one year.

A full list of current and extended regions can be found by visiting humanservices.gov.au and searching for Income Management.

2014-15 Budget measure

THEME: MIGRANTS, REFUGEES AND VISITORS

Support Services and Mutual Obligations Arrangements for Illegal Maritime Arrivals

Description of the measure

From 1 May 2014, individuals who are granted a substantive temporary visa may have access to some basic support payments such as Special Benefit, Family Tax Benefit and Rent Assistance, depending on their individual circumstances.

Individuals who are granted a substantive temporary visa will have access to Medicare as well as a range of employment services support through the Job Services Australia (JSA).

INTERNET

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by this measure?

You are affected by this measure if you have been found to engage Australia's protection obligations and granted a substantive temporary visa (subclass 449 (pending regulatory change), 785 and 786) by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

Am I eligible for this measure?

If you have been found to engage Australia's protection obligations and are granted a substantive temporary visa, you may have access to some basic support payments depending on your individual circumstances. You will have access to Medicare and support through Job Services Australia.

You can apply for Special Benefit through the Department of Human Services.

Under this measure, to qualify for Special Benefit a person must:

- hold a valid substantive temporary visa
- prove they are in financial hardship
- be unable to earn a sufficient livelihood for themselves and their dependents.

In return for this support, you will be required to engage in mutual obligations arrangements. To help you meet your obligations, you will be able to access employment services through a referral to Job Services Australia providers.

When will this measure start and finish?

This measure started on 1 May 2014 and is ongoing.

INTRANET

Questions and answers

What training and support can I expect to receive?

As a substantive temporary visa holder (subclass 449, 785 and 786) is currently able to apply for Special Benefit and ancillary payments, no specific training package is required.

Staff will be informed of any further changes to eligible visa types by Immediate Updates and updates to Operational Blueprint and eReference as required.

Under this measure, a substantive temporary subclass visa is currently a subclass 449, 785 or 786 visa.

Access to Special Benefit and ancillary payments for holders of any other temporary subclass visa will be dependent on a Ministerial Determination being made to give the same access that 449, 785 and 786 visa subclass holders currently have.

Where do I go for more information?

[Staff details – redacted for privacy reasons]

