



Medicare Safety Net Reform

In November 2024, Cancer Council Australia completed a submission to the Medicare Safety Net Reform Working Group (MSNWG) of the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care. The Medicare Safety Net Reform consultation was launched to review current Medicare Safety Net arrangements and provide advice on possible reform options.

Cancer Council Australia is supportive of the intent of the Medicare Safety Net arrangements to reduce the financial burden associated with accessing health care in Australia. However, there are currently unintended consequences associated with the operation of the arrangements that create inequities, particularly for those from low-income households. Cancer Council provided several recommendations for improvements to the Medicare Safety Net arrangements.

Cancer Council's submission included the following recommendations:

- Implementing less rigid time blocks for the operation of the thresholds, in-line with when people are first accessing care, not based on calendar years.
- Better support, including reduced safety nets, for low-income households who don't meet the concessional requirements.
- Simplifying the Medicare Safety Net procedure so that people can better plan for the costs that they will incur as a part of their health care.
- Education about the Medicare Safety Net for the public so that they are aware of the system before they need it.
- Reducing reporting requirements to ensure people can access the support to which they have a right.

Information about the progress of the consultation can be found on the Department of Health and Aged Care's consultation's webpage: <https://consultations.health.gov.au/medical-benefits-division/medicare-safety-net-reform/>