



PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICE

NSW Parliament • Parliament House, Macquarie Street Sydney 2000

Referred by: Coalition **Proposal No:** C1487
Date Referred: 01/03/2023 **Date Published:** 20/03/2023
Proposal Title: Women's Health Package
Cluster: Health

General Government Sector Impacts

	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	4 year Total \$'000
Expenses (ex. depreciation)		9,492	10,336	13,180	33,008
Depreciation			260	347	607
Less: Offsets					-
Revenue					-
Net Operating Balance:	-	(9,492)	(10,596)	(13,527)	(33,615)

Capital Expenditure	-	3,900	1,300		5,200
Capital Offsets					
Net Capital Expenditure:	-	3,900	1,300	-	5,200

Net Lending/(Borrowing):	-	(13,392)	(11,636)	(13,180)	(38,208)
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Total State Sector Impacts

Net Lending/(Borrowing):	-	(13,392)	(11,636)	(13,180)	(38,208)
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Notes and costing assumptions:

The policy proposes to provide funding of \$50 million to support women's health through:

1. Establishing two endometriosis and pelvic pain hubs
2. A \$2 million Miscarriage Support Fund
3. Four new Breast Screen NSW mobile vans, operational in 2023-24
4. Grants to support research and fellowships into Ovarian and Gynaecological cancers
5. \$4m to assist women with the cost of egg freezing

The Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) consulted NSW Health to prepare this costing and the PBO estimates the total cost of the five initiatives at \$52.6 million over the four years to 2026-27.

The cost is \$38.2 million over the forward estimates. An additional \$13.8 million is incurred in 2026-27 (see Table 1 below).

Notes and costing assumptions continued:

Key assumptions

- All employee costs are escalated for a 3 per cent rise from 2023-24 and then 2.5 per cent in 2024-25 in accordance with the NSW Government Wages Policy. Not all on-costs are indexed at the same ratio.

1. *Two endometriosis and pelvic pain hubs, and support services across NSW*

- The hubs will be located at two sites:
 - one in metropolitan Sydney
 - one in regional NSW
- Both sites will be operated by NSW Health and will be located at existing NSW health facilities.
- The recurrent cost of this policy is \$11.4 million over the forward estimates and an additional \$4.9 million in 2026-27.
- The cost per employee includes on-costs related to monitoring, reporting and evaluation of program; education training and capacity building; and scoping, planning and development.
- Each hub will staff 6.6 full-time equivalents (FTEs) (total 13.2 FTE), with the staffing profile to consist of:
 - 1 FTE medical per hub (total 2 FTE)
 - 1 FTE nursing per hub (total 2 FTE)
 - 2.6 FTE allied health (total 5.2 FTE)
 - 2 FTE administration and project support (total 4 FTE)

2. *Miscarriage Support Fund*

- A \$2 million Miscarriage Support Fund would be established in 2023-24, to provide miscarriage, pregnancy loss and stillbirth support. These services will be provided through non-government organisations (NGOs) funded by a grant from NSW Health.
- NSW Health advises its preferred implementation option is for the funding to be provided by grant to an NGO or NGOs via a competitive or targeted tender process. NGOs would be asked to develop and deliver clinician information and education and training programs. The available budget may be used to develop information and education resources, deliver and facilitate training across all areas of NSW, and cover regional and rural travel.
- The PBO assumes the full grant is made in 2023-24. NSW Health advises that while the policy proposes the fund be established 2023-24 a two-year timeframe is likely required to go to market, undertake planning and consultation with stakeholders and deliver the proposed objectives.

3. *Four new Breast Screen NSW vans*

- NSW Health advises it would not be possible to have all four vans in operation by 1 July 2023 and they would be phased in across 2023-24 and 2024-25.
- NSW Health advises the new vans will be purchased at a cost of \$1.3 million each. The agency would follow a recent QLD Health model and procure a fleet of breast screening mobile vans with similar specifications and requirements. It says this likely is the most

Notes and costing assumptions continued:

efficient option for this policy. The PBO has used NSW Health cost estimates based on the current QLD Health actual build costs, with some required variations in building specifications.

- NSW Health would deploy the vans to meet the needs of women in Aboriginal and regional communities to more easily access life-saving cancer screening and early detection services.
- Employee-related costs relate to 27 FTE recruited by 2026-27 at an average unit cost of \$152,000 per FTE including on-costs.
- Operating costs are modelled on actual costs in Cancer Institute mobile screening operations since 2017 in similar regional and rural areas.

4. Grants for fellowships into researching cancer

- A grant program will be established and capped at a cost of \$1.8 million per year to support grants for fellowships and research into ovarian and gynaecological cancer. Grants will be treated as recurrent expenditure at a cost of \$5.4 million over the forward estimates and an additional \$1.8 million in 2026-27.
- NSW Health advises the grant program would fund:
 - Targeted Translational Program Grant payments for ovarian and gynaecological cancers, as part of the Translational Research Grant Program (administered over 4 years).
 - Two early career fellowships (over 3 years).
 - Two Career development fellowships (over 3 years).
- The program will be administered by NSW Health with the administration costs to be absorbed with its existing budget allocation. The PBO notes that absorbing the admin costs could be difficult in practice and may affect the delivery of some existing health services.

5. Rebates for egg freezing

- The policy proposes to offer \$2,000 rebates to assist women with the cost of egg freezing. These rebates will be offered for the first 2,000 applicants from 1 July 2023 and only for treatments on advice and undertaken from an approved, accredited assisted reproductive technology (ART) provider. 500 applicants will be rebated each year over four years at a total rebate cost of \$4 million.
- NSW Health advises that actual uptake of this initiative may differ from the demand modelling used to develop this proposal upon which the 2,000 applicant estimate is based (which is observed demand of the current IVF Fertility Treatment Rebate). NSW Health notes there is little reliable data available to accurately estimate the number of women who will want to undergo egg freezing for non-medical reasons. The rapidly increasing number of women undergoing egg freezing makes it difficult to predict future demand. Application rates for the rebates may exceed 500 per year in the first two years. The policy costing may require review and potential re-profiling during the forward estimates period.
- NSW Health advises a further \$1 million in establishment costs and \$100,000 per annum in operational costs is required for total project costs of \$1.4 million over four years. Project costs include IT build, operational costs for ServiceNSW, security and fraud controls costs and project management costs. These costs estimates are based on the project costs incurred in setting up the Affordable IVF program currently in place in NSW.

Notes and costing assumptions continued:

Table 1: Total cost of Women’s Health Package

Total cost of Women’s Health Package	2023/24 \$’000	2024/25 \$’000	2025/26 \$’000	2026/27 \$’000	Total \$’000
Endometriosis and pelvic pain hubs and services	3,248	3,342	4,795	4,919	16,304
Miscarriage Support Fund	2,000	0	-	-	2,000
Four new BreastScreen NSW vans	4,234	5,644	5,822	5,990	21,690
Grants for fellowships into researching cancer	1,810	1,810	1,810	1,810	7,240
Rebates for egg freezing	2,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	5,400
Total	13,392	11,896	13,527	13,819	52,634

(Table 1 includes depreciation cost)