

NSW Budget Summary

2024-25



ncoss
NSW Council of Social Service

Cost of Living

Challenge

- More than 1 million people in NSW are living in poverty.
- Rising cost-of-living pressures continue to severely impact households across NSW, particularly those living in low-income households and below the poverty line.
- These households are under increasing pressure, forced to go without meals and other essentials, such as prescribed medication or healthcare, and hygiene items.

Key Budget Measures

\$188.8M

Bulk Billing
Support

\$100M

Energy Rebate
Expansion

- **\$188.8M Bulk Billing Support Initiative** to incentivise GPs to increase bulk billing.
- **\$100M to expand existing energy rebates** for low-income households in 2024-25, including:
 - Family Energy Rebate for those receiving Family Tax Benefits – from \$180 to \$250
 - Senior Energy Rebate for those with a Seniors Health Card – from \$200 to \$250
 - Low-Income Household Rebate and Medical Rebate for eligible concession holders – from \$285 to \$350
- **Continuation of existing cost-of-living rebates**, including
 - Gas Rebate for eligible concession card holders – \$110
 - \$60 weekly toll cap for private motorists
 - Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA) for people experiencing financial hardship
 - Learn to Swim program targeted at Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and low socioeconomic communities
 - Water rebates for Seniors

NCOSS Position

- NCOSS welcomes the bulk billing initiative, which should help households retain access to affordable healthcare.
- The existing cost-of-living relief measures are vital to low-income households but remain insufficient to support low-income households that are under immense pressure right now. Those doing it toughest need far greater, targeted support with essential expenditure such as energy, food, healthcare, medication, and telecommunications.
- NCOSS calls on the NSW Government to urgently address food insecurity, ensuring that NSW's food relief system is fit-for-purpose and meets the community's needs.