Working with Women Alliance

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs

Via submission portal and email: community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au

30.01.2026

Health Legislation Amendment (Prescribing of Pharmaceutical Benefits) Bill 2025

Dear Committee Secretary,

The Working with Women Alliance (WwWA) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Health Legislation Amendment (Prescribing of Pharmaceutical Benefits) Bill 2025 (the Bill). The insights provided are informed by our work on gender equality, with particular focus on both women's health and occupational gender segregation within the healthcare sector.

The WwWA endorses the Bill to extend additional prescribing rights to nurse practitioners (NPs) and recognises the initiative as crucial in meeting Australia's healthcare demands. With an ageing population and an undersupply of affordable, timely, and accessible healthcare, this initiative will not only alleviate pressure on the healthcare system, but will support patients to receive critical healthcare.

NPs can prescribe non- Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medications that are not PBS-subsidised, but may be subsidised under state and territory-specific schemes. Expanding PBS prescribing rights will ensure better equity between states and territories, as most PBS-listed medications and prescribing rights are nationally applicable under the National Health Act 1953.

The Bill aligns with the Nurse Practitioner Workforce Plan and promotes utilisation of NPs to their full capabilities. It will play a significant role in ensuring medication is affordable and will reduce accessibility challenges particularly in rural, remote and regional areas and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. Expanding NP's prescribing rights is also a key component of addressing specific access barriers for women seeking contraception.

We thank the Committee for the opportunity to provide input and look forward to continued engagement with the Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs.

Yours sincerely,

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