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31st January 2025

RE: 2025-26 Pre-Budget Submission

Dear Hon. Jim Chalmers MP,

The National Oral Health Alliance (NOHA) welcomes the opportunity to make the 2025-2026 Pre-Budget submission. We urge the Commonwealth Government to fund and support six recommendations, necessary to improve Australia's oral health:

1. Appoint a **Commonwealth Chief Dental Officer**.

Budget estimate ~ \$0.35 million per annum¹

The National Oral Health Plan 2015-2024 stated the national leadership for oral health is urgently needed, to enhance the joint co-ordination and responsibility of the Commonwealth Government with the state and territory jurisdictions, for oral health. Realignment of existing Department personnel under the Commonwealth Chief Dental Officer, with relevant skills and experience in population health, is required to drive meaningful oral health policy and long-term funding reform with the goal for all Australians to have universal access to essential oral healthcare. Examples on activities the Commonwealth Chief Dental Officer can lead are:

2. Implement the **Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety** recommendation to establish a **Senior Dental Benefits Scheme** and other recommendations pertinent to oral health.
3. Establish a **Taskforce into Publicly Funded Essential Oral Healthcare**.
4. Address **rural and remote oral health inequities**, including by integrating essential oral healthcare into primary care.²
5. Fund and implement a codesigned **National Oral Health Plan 2025-2034** which aligns with the social determinants of health and is grounded by the principles and objectives of the World Health Organization's Global Oral Health Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2030.
6. Increase **Commonwealth Government funding for public dental services**.

Budget estimate for Year 1 (2025/26) - \$500 million.³

Thankyou for the opportunity to make a submission to the 2025-26 Pre-Budget Submission.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Tan Nguyen
Spokesperson
National Oral Health Alliance

¹ Senior Executive Service Band 2.

² Veginadu P, Haddock R. 2024. Integrating oral health into primary healthcare for improved access to oral health care for rural and remote populations. Deeble Institute for Health Policy Research. Available from: <https://ahha.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Deeble-Issues-Brief-No.56-Integrating-oral-health-into-primary-healthcare.pdf>

³ Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association. 2021. 2021-22 PRE-BUDGET Submission to Treasury. Available from: https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-05/171663_australian_healthcare_and_hospitals_association.pdf