



**The Hon. Greg Hunt MP**  
Minister for Health and Aged Care

**The Hon. Dr David Gillespie MP**  
Minister for Regional Health

**JOINT MEDIA RELEASE**

30 November 2021

**\$37.2 million for Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder support and awareness**

The Morrison Government is investing more than \$37 million for Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) diagnostic services to increase access and reduce waiting times, as well as launching a new National Awareness Campaign for Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Women.

FASD is a neurodevelopmental disorder resulting from prenatal exposure to alcohol. It is a preventable disorder which can have a terrible, lifelong impact on mothers, their babies and families.

FASD babies suffer increased risk of premature birth, as well as permanent damage to their brain and other critical organs. More than 2 per cent of Australian babies may be born with some form of FASD.

From November 30, in an Australian first, a new awareness campaign to increase awareness of the risks associated with alcohol consumption during pregnancy and breastfeeding. The campaign aims to support and inform women to make healthy choices while planning and during a pregnancy to reduce the risk and the incidence of FASD.

Minister for Health and Aged Care, Greg Hunt, said the Morrison Government was providing \$27.4 million to the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE), who will deliver the campaign.

“The campaign will feature messages for the general public, priority groups such as women at higher risk of alcohol exposed pregnancies, health professionals, and Indigenous populations,” Minister Hunt said.

“It also builds on our ongoing commitment to support women and families to stop drinking when trying for a baby and during their pregnancy, to prevent babies from being born with FASD, and help babies born with this condition.”

The Morrison Government is also supporting children with FASD and their families by investing \$9 million to expand diagnostic services in New South Wales (including regional locations), regional Victoria and Southern and Central Queensland.

Minister for Regional Health, Dr David Gillespie, said it’s important that all families and children that need these support services can access them when and where they need them, regardless of where they live.

“The University of Sydney will receive more than \$4 million to boost FASD services through the Sydney Children’s Hospital Network in multiple rural and regional communities in NSW, as well as Sydney,” Minister Gillespie said.

“The funding will also support Patches Assessment Services (NSW), the University of Queensland and the Victorian Foetal Alcohol Service (Monash Health) to deliver new services and treatment to Australians who need it.”

This funding brings total Government investment in the fight against FASD to more than \$78 million since 2014.

The funding to expand FASD diagnostic services was announced in the 2020–21 Budget as part of FASD diagnostic and support services to support the National Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Strategic Action Plan 2018–2028.

For more information visit the Department of Health website for the [National Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Strategic Action Plan 2018–2028](#).

### Results of FASD grant opportunity

Grant Recipient	Project Description	Funding Amount (ex GST)
University of Sydney NSW	The FASD diagnostic service will operate as a hub-and-spoke model based out of the Sydney Children’s Hospital Network with sites in multiple rural and regional communities across New South Wales.	\$4,846,976.67
Patches Assessment Services NSW	FASD diagnostic services will be provided within the youth justice system in Newcastle, with outreach services to Port Macquarie, Lismore and Ballina. This project recognises the over-representation of people with FASD in the criminal justice system.	\$2,148,163.44
University of Queensland QLD	Funding will allow for expansion of the existing University of Queensland and Children’s Health Queensland Neurodevelopmental Clinic to reduce the current 3-year waitlist for access to services. Services will be delivered in locations across southern and central Queensland via a tiered model including telehealth support and upskilling of regional practitioners.	\$1,566,640.00
Victorian Fetal Alcohol Service (Monash Health) VIC	Funding will allow expansion of the existing Commonwealth-funded Victorian Fetal Alcohol Service into more regional communities across Victoria. Services will be delivered through a tiered model including upskilling of regional practitioners to diagnose FASD independently.	\$1,249,218.41

[ENDS]