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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media release

Permanent Medicare Funding in Federal Budget Enables Stigma Health to Continue to Bulk-Bill

SYDNEY, Australia, 20 May 2024 - After four long years of waiting, last week's announcement to make sexual health telehealth item numbers permanent as part of the Federal Budget 2024-25 funding is a huge win for the community.

"Stigma Health congratulates the Federal Government for taking routine sexual health accessibility seriously and delivering funding that will help increase STI testing rates across the country -a critical step in addition to their latest awareness campaign." said James Sneddon, co-founder of [Stigma Health](#), Australia's largest online sexual health clinic.

The announcement comes as the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) lobbied hard for the change along with many advocates across the primary care and sexual health industry.

Surprisingly, telehealth MBS numbers for sexual and reproductive health items have been in limbo on a temporary basis, unlike many others that were made permanent in 2022.

"The stigma around requesting an STI test as well as cost are both huge barriers for people and a patient centered approach to how we deliver a sensitive service such as this ultimately benefits the health of the community greatly as we have faced a tsunami of infections." Sneddon continued.

Data from the [National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System \(NNDSS\)](#) shows a significant spike in STI infections between 2021 to 2023, specifically a 48 per cent increase in Victoria and a 33 per cent increase in New South Wales.

Young people in the 15 to 29 age bracket make up the majority of these numbers.

Stigma Health offers comprehensive testing with a bulk-bill option for Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea, Syphilis, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV. Access is available through www.stigmahealth.com or via the Stigma Health app.

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References: <https://nindss.health.gov.au/pbi-dashboard/>

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About Stigma Health

Stigma Health is making sexual health sexy!

Established in 2015 by practitioner Dr Mitchell Tanner and rugby-playing accountant and entrepreneur James Sneddon, these two blokes are on a mission to make STI testing available to every Aussie who's living their best sex positive life. That means removing the need for that awkward face-to-face doctor visit that is just cringe (*dead*). Stigma Health is already Australia's largest sexual health clinic group, delivering STI testing to over 30,000 lovers, through an online, discreet, convenient sexual health service. So, no more excuses honey - download the Stigma Health app or visit www.stigmahealth.com and get tested today!

