



MEDIA RELEASE

Federal Government commits \$14.6 million to combat allergy crisis

Release tags: Human | Allergy | Funding announcement

At a Glance:

- The Federal Government has announced a further \$14.6 million over two years to help support the eight million people living with allergic disease
- This second round of Department of Health, Disability and Ageing funding will boost National Allergy Centre of Excellence and National Allergy Council programs until June 2028
- Without a cure, and with the rate and cost of allergies in Australia rising, the need for life-changing national research infrastructure and public health programs is more important than ever
- Families access allergy services, but look for greater community support and evidence-based information on best-practice management and emerging treatments like oral immunotherapy

The Federal Government has announced a further \$14.6 million to accelerate national allergy research and public health programs that support millions of Australians living with allergic disease.

The funding until June 2028 for the [National Allergy Council \(NAC\)](#), a partnership between the [Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy \(ASCIa\)](#) and [Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia](#), and the [National Allergy Centre of Excellence \(NACE\)](#) was detailed in the 2025-2026 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO).

[Professor Kirsten Perrett](#), Director of the NACE hosted at Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI), said the federal commitment meant the peak allergy bodies could continue fast-tracking Australia's evidence-based response to the widespread chronic condition.

"There is no cure and no time to waste when it comes to allergies, which touch almost every family, school and healthcare service," she said. "Our focus is to address complex clinical challenges through embedded allergy research, rigorous evaluation and the rapid translation of emerging evidence into clinical care. We are ensuring Australia remains at the forefront of allergy research."

Allergic disease is one of Australia's most urgent public health challenges, now affecting 8.2 million people and costing the Australian economy \$18.9 billion a year, according to a Deloitte Access Economic report. [Costly Reactions: The economic and social cost of allergic disease in Australia](#) was developed for ASCIA and the NAC.

[Dr Sandra Vale](#), CEO of the NAC, also welcomed the government's support for programs designed to improve health, save lives and reduce the burden of allergic disease.

"Allergies can take a huge physical and emotional toll on people with allergic reactions, anaphylaxis and while rare, deaths are increasing and present an everyday risk for many families," she said. "This funding will directly support our work in delivering accessible, nationally standardised and evidence-based public health initiatives, education, training and everyday support for people living with allergic disease and those who care for them."

Established in August 2022 with an initial \$26.9 million in federal funding, the NAC and NACE have:

- Trained 233,000 school, children's education and care, and healthcare professionals in life-saving anaphylaxis skills
- Trained 207,982 food service staff to provide safe food for people with food allergies
- Supported 5801 people through the National Allergy Helpline



- Provided 513,522 parents and healthcare professionals with evidence-based resources and advice through the Nip allergies in the Bub website
- Developed the NAC allergy assist[®] education and specialist advice platform to support rural doctors to improve access to allergy care. More than 800 doctors currently access the platform, which was recently expanded to metropolitan GPs
- Enrolled 2269 people with allergies in five NACE embedded research programs, including the world-first, national, standardised peanut oral immunotherapy program (ADAPT), which was introduced at 10 paediatric hospitals across Australia in 2024
- Designed the NACE Allergy BioRepository (ALBI) to accelerate discoveries and improve health outcomes
- Analysed 768,118 people's data from existing research to generate new knowledge, including the latest allergy prevalence rates
- Synthesised 5010 academic articles in Australia's first drug and food allergy living evidence collection, underpinning clinical guidelines and public health programs
- Trained the next generation of allergy experts to drive critical research forward.

The peak bodies were established following a 2019 bipartisan [Parliamentary Inquiry into Allergies and Anaphylaxis](#) and subsequent [Walking the Allergy Tightrope report](#), which recognised the critical need for a national plan of action.

[Dr Melanie Wong](#), ASCIA nominated Director of the NAC, said: "The NAC and the NACE collaboration has already made significant inroads, and we now have an unprecedented opportunity to develop more targeted, effective public health responses to allergic disease in this country."

For Edward, a nine-year-old from NSW, being allergic to milk, tree nuts and shellfish since he was a baby has re-shaped his family's life.

"From the first reaction when he was six months old, I've planned every meal, birthday party, family holiday – always wondering if he'll be ok," Natalie, Edward's mother, said. "The hardest part is the uncertainty because symptoms can be hidden, delayed and unpredictable."

"I would like to see stronger public education, better support for children's mental wellbeing, and continued research into prevention and treatments like oral immunotherapy – so that families like mine can spend less time fearing food, and more time letting kids be kids."

"We've recently ventured overseas which was terrifying, and preparing for being in countries with different languages was a major step in our allergy journey. We used the Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia chef cards translated in different languages, and have found helpful resources on the NAC website. I also joined the NACE Consumer Engagement Register and would like to see more research because it feels like allergies are still a big unknown."

Rhiannon, 28, of Victoria, is a NAC Allergy 250K youth program peer mentor and MCRI early-career allergy researcher, who has lived with severe food allergies, eczema and asthma since childhood.

"As someone who's grown up with severe allergies, I know the challenges young people face and love supporting others through the NAC Allergy 250K Camps and online services," she said. "My family's strong history of allergic diseases inspired me to pursue a career in allergy research to understand what factors shape allergy development, and to ultimately improve prevention strategies and treatment options."

Available for interview:

- Professor Kirsten Perrett, National Allergy Centre of Excellence Director; Paediatric Allergist; MCRI Group Leader, Population Allergy
- Dr Sandra Vale, National Allergy Council Chief Executive Officer
- Dr Melanie Wong, ASCIA nominated Director of the National Allergy Council and Clinical Immunologist/Allergy Specialist
- Maria Said, Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia nominated Director and Co-chair of the National Allergy Council and A&AA Health Strategy and Advocacy Manager



- Natalie, mother of nine-year-old Edward of NSW, who has multiple food allergies
- Rhiannon, 28, Victoria, a NAC peer mentor and MCRI early-career allergy researcher, who has food allergies, eczema and asthma

Media contacts on behalf of NACE and NAC:

Harriet Edmund
NACE Communications Manager
Ph: 0400 009 563
E: harriet.edmund@mcri.edu.au

Fleur Townley
Lanham Media
Ph: 0405 278 758
E: fleur@lanhammedia.com.au

About the national allergy council (NAC):

The National Allergy Council is a partnership between the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCI) and Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia (A&AA), Australia's peak medical and patient support organisations for allergic disease. The National Allergy Council delivers evidence-based public health initiatives, education, training and support in consultation with key stakeholders, to improve the health and wellbeing of people with allergic disease. nationalallergycouncil.org.au

About the national allergy centre of excellence (NACE):

The National Allergy Centre of Excellence, hosted at Murdoch Children's Research Institute, is Australia's peak allergy research body. Backed by a national network of 500 experts in drug, food, insect, and respiratory allergies, it is recognised as a European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI) Advanced Research Centre. The NACE builds critical national research infrastructure and collaboration that transforms consumer-centred allergy care. nace.org.au

Funding:

The National Allergy Centre of Excellence and National Allergy Council are supported by funding from the Australian Government, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

Allergy facts:

- An estimated [8.2 million people live with allergic disease, costing Australia \\$18.9 billion a year](#) in financial losses, and a further \$44.6 billion in wellbeing losses.
- [One in 10 babies](#) have a confirmed food allergy. [One in 20 adults](#) report a medication allergy. [One in 4](#) Australians have hay fever – up from one in seven in 2008. [Twelve people](#) die from bee or wasp stings each year.
- First Nations people are twice as likely to present at hospital with asthma and other allergy related illnesses, with [emergency department presentations significantly increasing between 2018 to 2023](#).
- The Australian Capital Territory and Victoria have some of the [highest rates](#) of allergic disease.
- Conditions often co-occur, meaning many people – and households – manage more than one allergic disease at the same time.
- Each year, [more than 2400 people are hospitalised with anaphylaxis \(a severe allergic reaction\), and 20 Australians lose their lives](#).
- [Anaphylaxis deaths increased by seven per cent](#) annually in Australia between 1997 and 2013 – mostly triggered by foods, insect stings or medications.
- Living with the risk of anaphylaxis has a [significant impact on health and wellbeing](#) of both the individuals and their families due to anxiety, isolation, and poor mental health.
- Allergic disease is complex, often people have more than one type, and multiple family members can be affected, requiring support and a coordinated approach to care, evidence-based education and research into prevention, diagnosis and management.