



## **The Hon. Greg Hunt MP**

Minister for Health

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

5 April 2019

#### **\$2.3 million to improve safety of pelvic floor surgery**

The Liberal National Government will invest \$2.3 million over three years to improve health outcomes for the more than 20,000 women who undergo pelvic floor surgical procedures each year.

Government funding will support the establishment of a Pelvic Floor Surgery Clinical Quality Registry to collect information about the safety of medical procedures and transvaginal surgical mesh devices which are used in the treatment of pelvic organ prolapse and stress urinary incontinence.

In time, the registry will be able to provide benchmarked, risk-adjusted feedback to drive continuous improvement.

The registry will also be used to ensure all patients and surgeons can be contacted as quickly as possible in the event of an identified risk or issue with a particular device.

An estimated 150,000 Australian women have had mesh devices implanted since 1998, when they were first approved for supply in Australia.

For many women, procedures involving mesh devices have been beneficial. However over the past decade there has been an increase in the number of patients reporting complications.

The establishment of the registry follows a Senate inquiry that reported its findings in March 2018.

The Senate inquiry provided a number of recommendations including the enhancement of post-market surveillance and the preparation of material to guide an effective informed consent process.

I acknowledge the strength of the women who spoke at the public hearings, recounting deeply private and often traumatic experiences.

All Australians expect and deserve a high quality healthcare system. The Australian Government is committed to ensuring the safety of all patients and restoring the confidence of affected women in our healthcare system, now and into the future.

The proposal for the registry was developed in close consultation with prominent clinicians, the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, and Monash University.

Authorised by Greg Hunt MP, Liberal Party of Australia, Somerville, Victoria.

In particular I would like to thank Professor Helen O'Connell, Director of Surgery and Head of Urology at Western Health in Victoria, and Dr Oliver Daly, the clinical lead for Urogynaecology at Western Health, for their efforts.

The registry has received in-principle support from the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, UroGynaecological Society of Australia, Urological Society of Australia, Colorectal Surgical Society of Australia and Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.

Australians deserve and expect a high quality healthcare system.

The Liberal National Government is committed to a system that is professional, that ensures informed consent by patients and delivers better health outcomes.

The Australian Government's full response to the Inquiry is on the Health Department's website at [www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/government-responses](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/government-responses)

(ENDS)