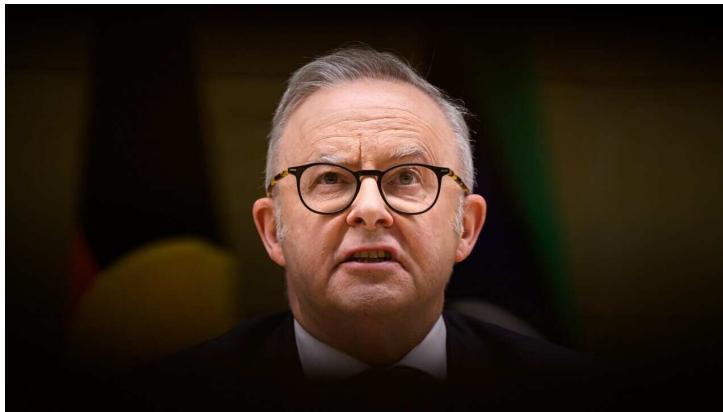

Australia Approves Landmark Five-Year Public Hospital Funding Deal



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Canberra: Australia's federal, state, and territory governments have reached a landmark agreement on a new five-year funding package for the country's public hospitals, ending months of negotiations.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese announced that the federal government will allocate a record 219.6 billion Australian dollars (153.8 billion U.S. dollars) to support public hospitals and health

services under the agreement, which will take effect in July. The package includes an additional 25 billion AUD (17.5 billion USD) compared to the previous five-year arrangement.

Albanese described the agreement as one of the most significant national reforms in recent decades, aimed at ensuring Australians continue to access high-quality healthcare and disability support services. The deal follows extended discussions between federal and regional governments, with a one-year extension of the 2020–2025 agreement set to expire in June. In December, state and territory leaders had rejected an earlier federal offer of 23 billion AUD in additional funding, which included provisions to address growing pressure from elderly patients waiting for aged care placements.

The revised agreement has been welcomed by the Australian Medical Association, which described it as a positive step forward. However, the association cautioned that increased funding alone may not be sufficient to reverse declining hospital performance without broader structural reforms.

The new funding framework is expected to strengthen Australia's healthcare system amid rising demand and population pressures.