



## Full, 4-year funding for ABA's Breastfeeding Helpline and LiveChat services.

### What is ABA's position?

ABA strongly supports a return to a 4-year funding model for the National Breastfeeding Helpline and LiveChat services that would fully fund the costs of delivering the service (\$14 million over 4-years) and enable a response to identified unmet need through service development.

### Key messages

- ABA's 24/7 National Breastfeeding Helpline and web-based LiveChat services are a critical part of Australia's health infrastructure, providing high quality support to families across Australia, including on public holidays
- The Australian Federal Government has funded these services since 2008
- The services support close to 60,000 contacts each year
- ABA's volunteer model which trains and supports 400 volunteers to deliver the service each month, ensures exceptional value for government and tax payers.

### High quality services

Findings from the 2024 Independent Review by Healthcare Management Australia:

- **Exceptional value** and **incredible need** for the Helpline services
- The **low cost to Government** per call/chat is \$7.73 compared to at least \$45 for other family health teleservices
- The **huge cost-savings to families** in being supported at a time when they need, from the comfort of their own homes
- A remarkable **93% satisfaction rate** from families using the services.

### Funding model

- The independent review recommended ongoing longer-term funding and a one-off financial commitment to upgrade the current 16-year-old technology to ensure sustainability now and into the future
- The government's current funding commitment is for \$2.6 million for 12-months, to 30 June 2026 only
- Funding uncertainly restricts long-term planning and sustainable service development.

### Additional funding is requested to enable:

- Continued provision of exceptional support to families
- Upgrade of ABA's National Breastfeeding Helpline services system infrastructure to ensure sustainability into the future
- Enhanced service delivery, including warm handover support with other health services and increased awareness to support priority groups (e.g., Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, young families, and culturally diverse parents)
- Ongoing worldclass education for healthcare professionals
- ABA's continued support as a key partner in the Australian National Breastfeeding Strategy (ANBS) to improve breastfeeding rates.