

## Online assistance for seniors

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National Seniors Australia has suggested the federal government offer a targeted supplement to assist older Australians access the internet.

Australia's peak consumer organisation for seniors has made the proposal in its submission for next month's federal budget.

National Seniors Chief Advocate, Ian Henschke says connecting online has been a lifeline for older Australians during coronavirus lockdowns.

"In so many cases the internet has been their window to the outside world."

"Older Australians have taken to technology such as FaceTime, Skype and Zoom because it was the only option for 'face-to-face' communication with friends and family," Mr Henschke said.

"With social interactions and services increasingly delivered online, it's unfair that many pensioners don't have the skills, confidence or funds to use the technology."

National Seniors has suggested a \$10 per month internet supplement to 1.6 million full-rate pensioners would cost the government only \$192m per year.

It has also provided another option of the NBN offering a 50 mpbs service at a wholesale price for households receiving financial assistance.

Mr Henschke says online technology is helping older Australians in both their physical and mental health.

"Assisting seniors to access this technology is an investment in their health given capabilities that telehealth provides.

"It's an investment in their later lives," he said.

To read our Budget Submission click here: <https://nationalseniors.com.au/uploads/0720203706PAR-FedBudgetSub-20-21-FN.pdf>

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**Mr Henschke is available for comment**

**For media enquiries, [Contact National Seniors Australia](#)**