



19 June 2016

Ms Kelly Banister
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Women's Health Network
Via email: ceo@awhn.org.au

Dear Ms Banister

Thank you for your letter inviting endorsement of and commitment to the Australian Women's Health Charter, and thank you also for attending the Women's Policy Launch in Sydney on 11 June 2016.

Labor acknowledges the work of Australian Women's Health Network (AWHN) to provide a national voice on women's health and a women-centred analysis of models of health care and research. In government, Labor funded AWHN and a Shorten Labor Government will continue to support organisations that advocate for and represent the interests of women in Australia.

A Shorten Labor Government will make women's health a national priority by committing to the Australian Women's Health Charter as proposed by AWHN.

A Shorten Labor Government will:

- Develop a National Women's Health Policy. This will ensure there is a whole-of-government approach to women's health and it is taken into consideration in all areas of government policy.
- Provide funding to the AWHN to continue their important work and assist in the development of the National Women's Health Policy. This will involve funding of \$225,000 a year for four years.
- Labor will contribute to developing a national conversation about women's health by providing \$100,000 to develop a national conference through the Office for Women in conjunction with women's peak health organisations to identify priorities, new policy ideas and research areas.

Labor believes that all women should have access to high quality and affordable health care.

We created Medicare because we believe Australian women should get the health care they need, not the health care they can afford.

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A Shorten Labor Government will:

- Restore indexation of the Medicare Benefits Schedule from 1 January 2017.
- Reverse the Abbott-Turnbull Government's increases to Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme co-payments and thresholds.
- Reverse Malcolm Turnbull's cuts to bulk billing incentives for pathology and diagnostic imaging.
- Reduce waiting times for elective surgery and emergency departments and invest in hospitals.
- Legislate to ensure Medicare remains in public hands.

Labor's policies to reverse the Abbott-Turnbull Government's cuts to Medicare and the PBS will save an average couple with children more than \$400 a year in healthcare costs.

Further specific policy initiatives that Labor has announced during the election campaign include investing:

- \$100 million over two years to develop, pilot and roll out new models of primary care around Australia.
- \$20 million to establish a national universal perinatal depression screening program for every expectant woman and new mother across Australia.
- \$8 million over the next four years to make Australia a world leader in life-saving ovarian cancer research.
- \$1.1 million to better manage allergic diseases and their associated health risks.
- \$7 million to support women with breast cancer in rural Australia and women all around Australia with secondary breast cancer.
- \$300 million to prevent chronic disease by
 - Investing in 50 Healthy Communities nationwide, to help communities at the greatest risk of chronic disease to stay well.
 - Tackling obesity through Australia's first National Physical Activity Strategy and a National Nutrition Framework.
 - Expanding the successful Better Health Channel into a nationwide platform for health information.
 - Continuing the push to reduce smoking rates, particularly in at-risk communities.

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- Addressing harmful use of alcohol through a National Alcohol Strategy.
- \$35 million over four years to roll out new models of palliative care.
- \$16 million to boost stroke awareness and follow up care.
- \$5 million to improve care and research for motor neurone disease.
- \$84 million to improve access to life-saving technologies for Australians with Type 1 diabetes.

Thank you again for the opportunity to commit to the Australian Women's Health Charter.

Yours sincerely,

ALP Information Services Unit

Australian Labor Campaign Headquarters

www.alp.org.au

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