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LABOR WILL INVEST IN THE HEALTH OF ALL AUSTRALIANS

A Shorten Labor Government will improve the health of all Australians with a \$115.6 million investment to promote health and prevent disease.

This election is a choice between a Shorten Labor Government with a plan for Australia's health care, or more cuts and chaos from the Liberals.

Prevention is better than cure – both for our own health and the country's.

But Australia isn't doing enough to stay well, with:

- Almost two in three adults overweight or obese, and one in four children already following their lead.
- One in eight Australians still smoking, and progress on smoking rates stalled under the Liberals.
- One in six Australians drinking alcohol at levels that place them at risk of disease or injury.
- Even higher rates of these 'modifiable risk factors' among people in regional and rural Australia,
- First Nations peoples, and other vulnerable groups – contributing to significant health inequalities.

These risk factors cause chronic diseases such as cancer, arthritis, asthma, back pain, cardiovascular disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes and mental health conditions.

But almost one-third of this burden of disease is preventable – meaning millions of Australians could live longer, healthier lives with national action to promote health and prevent disease.

Action on these risk factors is also cost-effective, with estimates that every \$1 spent on preventive health has almost \$6 in health and productivity benefits.

Yet the Liberals and Nationals have done nothing but cut from the health of all Australians with:

- \$368 million cut from the National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health and this historic agreement with the states and territories abolished.
- Around \$1 billion cut from the Health Department Flexible Funds, meaning cuts and closures of hundreds of preventive health programs and groups.
- The National Preventive Health Agency abolished.
- The Coalition continuing to accept political donations from Big Tobacco.

Australia can't afford another three years of Liberal cuts and chaos on preventive health.

That's why a Shorten Labor Government will:

Tackle obesity by:

- Implementing Australia's first **National Obesity Strategy**. While all jurisdictions have committed to develop a Strategy, progress has stalled under the Liberals, with the Coalition even mocking overweight people and the obesity crisis at a National Summit. In contrast, Labor will develop and implement the first National Obesity Strategy, including specific plans to increase physical activity and improve nutrition, and consideration of

mandating the Health Star Rating system and food reformulation targets. Because of the urgency of action on overweight and obesity, Labor will also make a number of down-payments on the Strategy, including:

- Investing \$39 million over three years to roll out *LiveLighter* as the **national anti-obesity campaign**. In Western Australia and Victoria, this proven campaign has reduced the consumption of sugary drinks and fast food, as well as purchases of junk food. Labor's investment will roll this campaign out nationally, with four bursts a year to maximise impact.
- Investing \$6 million to restore federal funding to the **Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program**, which teaches kids about food in a fun, hands-on way. Labor's commitment will restore support for around 800 schools that have already implemented the program, and support at least 1,200 additional schools and early learning centres to implement the program.
- Reviewing **junk food advertising** to children. Labor will conduct a comprehensive review of the regulatory framework for food and drink advertising and marketing to children, in conjunction with relevant health, media and advertising bodies, to ensure the framework is fit for purpose in the contemporary media environment.

Reduce smoking, cancer and dust disease rates by:

- Investing \$40 million over four years to reboot Australia's landmark **National Tobacco Campaign**. The Liberals have failed to deliver any public anti-smoking campaigns, which are one of the most effective ways to reduce smoking rates and prevent deaths. Labor will reintroduce the National Tobacco Campaign and aim to drive Australia's smoking rate below 10 per cent, with funding allocated in specific bursts to maximise impact.

- Investing \$8.6 million to launch a renewed **sun protection awareness campaign** – encouraging the next generation of Aussie kids to slip, slop, slap.
- Delivering an extra \$10 million to help more Australians beat **bowel cancer** by driving up screening rates and early detection.
- Establish a **national taskforce and strategy on industrial dust diseases**; and ensure silicosis and other dust diseases are notifiable conditions – ensuring dust diseases are tracked and prevention and treatment are improved. We will ensure these diseases are publicly listed on a National Dust Diseases Register.

Address harmful drinking by:

- Finalising a new **National Alcohol Strategy**. Australia has not had a new Alcohol Strategy since 2005, and the Liberals broke their promise to deliver a new Strategy in the last term of Parliament. Labor will complete this unfinished business and work with the states and territories to agree to a new Strategy.
- Investing \$10 million over four years in **targeted campaigns** to reduce harmful drinking, such as the successful *Pregnant Pause* and *Women Want to Know* campaigns, as well as campaigns targeted at other at-risk groups.
- Delivering **pregnancy warning labels** on alcohol packaging. While all jurisdictions have agreed to this change, the Liberals are yet to implement it, and Labor will finish the job.
- Strengthen work to **limit alcohol advertising** to children and work with state, territory and local government to reduce children's exposure in other settings.

Labor also wants our kids to have the best start in life, and to provide the best health advice to all Australians. Labor will:

- Develop an Australian model of the **First 1,000 Days** program, building on the existing world-leading work among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. The period from preconception to a child's second birthday is critical in shaping their health and wellbeing outcomes for life. Labor will appoint a whole-of-government taskforce, as well as an expert advisory group, and allocate an initial \$2 million for consultations and development of a national First 1,000 Days program. The taskforce will include a new Chief Paediatrician at the Department of Health.
- Work with consumers and experts to develop a **national platform for consumer information** on health and wellbeing, building on existing models such as Victoria's Better Health Channel.

These commitments to preventive health build on Labor's broader commitments that will help to keep all Australians well, such as:

- Labor's \$260 million National Bike Paths Strategy.
- Investments to improve sporting facilities around Australia.
- Labor's commitment to develop the first National Strategy on Climate Change and Health.

Labor's preventive health package also builds on our strong commitments to address the social determinants of health across all portfolios, which are available at www.alp.org.au/policies.

Only Labor will invest in improving the health of all Australians.

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