



Response to Diabetes Australia

The Gillard Labor Government has a strong track record of improving the care and practical assistance provided to people with diabetes.

In recent months, Federal Labor has announced \$449 million to introduce a new comprehensive model of care for patients with diabetes through the Coordinated Care for Patients with Diabetes program.

Patients diagnosed with diabetes will have the option of enrolling with a GP practice of their choice to receive high quality coordinated care and help them access a range of additional services such as a dietitian or podiatrist.

This will help patients to maintain and improve their health, with GP practices being rewarded for meeting performance benchmarks. It will also reduce the costs associated with managing complications of diabetes and of unnecessary hospital admissions.

In July the Gillard Labor Government announced it will provide \$6.5 million more to continue research into type 1 diabetes at the Diabetes Vaccine Development Centre (DVDC). This is in addition to the \$5 million provided earlier to fund the DVDC and a further \$5 million provided to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation in June 2010 for the Australian Type 1 Diabetes Clinical Trial Network. This funding takes the total current research funding to investigate the causes, effects, impacts and complications of diabetes to more than \$78 million.

In addition, Federal Labor is providing \$5 million to help provide insulin pumps for children with type 1 diabetes. The National Diabetes Services Scheme (NDSS) and expenditure on medicines for diabetes through the PBS exceeds \$400 million each year.

The former Coalition Government had more than eleven years to improve the assistance given to people with diabetes, and did little. Tony Abbott should be judged on his actions as Health Minister for more than four years – not the last minute promises he makes in the lead up to the election.

General Health and Hospitals

The Gillard Labor Government is committed to building a better health and hospitals system. Since coming to office, we have taken decisive action to take the pressure off our public hospitals. These results will help to repair a decade of neglect by the former Coalition Government and Tony Abbott.

Federal Labor has initiated the biggest reforms to our health system since the introduction of Medicare almost three decades ago. Our reform plan to build the National Health and Hospitals Network (NHNN) sees an additional \$3.5 billion investment to improve access and deliver better care in our public hospitals, including:

- \$750 million to increase services in our Emergency Departments and introduce a Four Hour Target for the process of admission – referral – discharge.
- \$800 million to increase elective surgery procedures and introduce a National Access Target for surgery by 2015.
- \$1.6 billion in funding for 1,316 new sub acute beds, including palliative, rehabilitation and mental health beds.

This funding has already started to flow from 1 July this year.

In contrast, the Coalition has no plans for the long term, sustainable reform of our public hospitals. They are continuing on the same trajectory as they did when Tony Abbott was Health Minister slashing a billion dollars from public hospital funding and not providing any leadership in this important policy area.

Under the NHNN, the Federal Government will become the dominant funder of public hospitals. We will be funding 60 per cent of the efficient price of all public hospital services, capital works, and research and education delivered in our public hospitals.

Local communities and local clinicians will also be empowered by the establishment of Local Hospital Networks, which will be the direct managers of public hospitals and their budgets. They will also be accountable for their performance against new national standards.

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These commitments build on the investments the federal Labor has made over the first two years of government, including:

- Signing a new \$64 billion health care agreement – an increase of 50 per cent on the last agreement signed by the Coalition.
- \$600 million to improve access to elective surgery – more than 76,000 procedures have now been performed, and more than 120 hospitals have received new surgical equipment and theatre upgrades.
- \$3.2 billion to rebuild health infrastructure, with 35 projects across the country on the way.

To find out more about Federal Labor's health reform go to www.yourhealth.gov.au.

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