

**Tuesday 4 February 2025**

**Cancer Council urges the Australian Government to strengthen Australia's legacy in cancer control and care this World Cancer Day**

With February 4 marking the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of [World Cancer Day](#), Cancer Council Australia is calling on the Australian Government to strengthen Australia's legacy of global leadership in cancer control and care with ongoing support and investment into cancer research, prevention measures and care.

Mark Nevin, Cancer Council Australia CEO says Australia has some of the best cancer outcomes and survival rates in the world thanks to the continued prioritisation of cancer research, support and policy.

“Over the last 25 years, progress in cancer control and care has been achieved through the work of the cancer care and public health sectors, health professionals, and community, all underpinned by innovative research. Working together with the Australian government, policies have been put into practice that have contributed to [saving more than 107,000 lives.](#)”

**Key achievements:**

- **Early adoption of screening programs:** Thousands of cancers have been detected earlier and successfully treated due to screening and related campaign work. In 2021 to 2022, an additional 240,000 National Bowel Cancer Screening Program test kits were returned and estimated to have saved more than 850 lives from bowel cancer alone.
- **Leading the world in tobacco control:** Australia's world-first tobacco control initiatives have reduced smoking rates and saved lives. Plain packaging saw an estimated 100,000 fewer Australians smoking just three years after it was implemented in 2012.
- **On track to eliminate cervical cancer:** After decades of prioritising screening and immunisation, Australia is slated to be one of the first countries to eliminate cervical cancer as a public health issue by 2035.
- **Tackling our national cancer:** Through prevention such as the iconic ‘Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek and Slide’ campaigns, we have seen a reduction in melanoma rates in Australians under 40. Australia was also one of the first countries to ban the commercial use of solariums in 2015.

Mr Nevin says, “While Australia has made tremendous strides towards reducing the impact of cancer, there's so much more work to be done to meet new challenges. As new research and evidence emerges, so does new methods of prevention, detection and treatment, as well as improved ways to support those affected. The Australian Government can support the adoption of these advances now, to continue to improve cancer survival rates.”

According to [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare \(AIHW\)](#), in 2034, there will be an estimated 209,000 Australians diagnosed that year with cancer, a 23% increase on 2024. [Data](#) also shows overweight and obesity has overtaken tobacco smoking as the leading risk factor contributing to disease burden in Australia, which can increase the risk of 13 types of cancer.

**Ahead of next Federal Election, Cancer Council Australia is calling for ongoing support to:**

- Increase participation in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program to save more lives from bowel cancer.
- Provide equitable access to cancer care by reducing the financial burden of cancer through improved services and support.
- Invest in skin cancer prevention campaigns towards a future free from skin cancer.
- Tackle the rise of obesity to reduce the incidence of 13 types of cancer.

[With almost two in three Australians experiencing chronic disease](#), investing in prevention measures will help save more lives. Australia's survival rates have significantly improved, from fewer than half (49%) of people diagnosed with cancer in the 1980s to over 70% today, and these rates will continue to improve with ongoing support to prevent more cancers.

For those affected by cancer, equitable access to cancer care and support is essential to improve outcomes, particularly when it comes to the cost of cancer.

"Australians are looking to governments to safeguard their health and continue improving cancer outcomes now and into the future. Cancer Council Australia is urging the current and incoming Government to prioritise ongoing support for four key policies where we can significantly reduce the impact of cancer now: skin cancer prevention, early detection of bowel cancer, support to tackle obesity and the financial burden of cancer," reminds Mr Nevin.

**-ENDS-**

#### **Contact details**

For all media enquiries and interview opportunities, please contact:

Cancer Council Australia, [media@cancer.org.au](mailto:media@cancer.org.au)

02 8256 4109 (redirects to mobile outside of business hours)

#### **About Cancer Council Australia**

Cancer Council Australia is Australia's leading cancer charity, working to reduce the impact of cancer for all Australians. Cancer Council Australia works with its members, the eight state and territory Cancer Councils to:

- Undertake and fund cancer research
- Prevent and control cancer
- Provide information and support for people affected by cancer
- Shape and influence policy and practice

Find out more at [cancer.org.au](http://cancer.org.au), or visit our [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#)