

# CCHQ 2022

**STRONG ECONOMY. STRONGER FUTURE.**

14 May 2022

Ms Elizabeth de Somer  
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*Liz,*  
Dear Ms ~~de~~ Somer,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the views of the Coalition on important issues facing your members. A response to your questions is attached.

The last two years have been tough for our country.

Despite the setbacks, Australia's economic recovery is leading the world.

Unemployment is at 4%, the equal lowest in 48 years. And the recent Budget included the biggest turnaround in our finances in over 70 years.

There's much more to be done. To build a stronger future, our plan will:

1. Deliver more jobs and working towards unemployment below 4%.
2. Deliver tax relief for workers and small businesses.
3. Invest in roads, rail, water infrastructure and renewable energy technology.
4. Make record investments in health and other essential services.
5. Invest in stronger defence, security and borders.

This election provides a clear choice, with real consequences for Australia.

The alternative at this election is Anthony Albanese and Labor. Labor would weaken our economy and put Australia's recovery at risk. Now is not the time to change course.

Thank you for communicating our response to your members.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Hirst  
**Federal Director**

## **MORRISON GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO MEDICINES AUSTRALIA**

The Morrison Government believes nothing is more important than the health of all Australians. That is why the Morrison Government has invested in our health system at record levels, making Australia one of the top three health systems in the world – saving and protecting lives through the global pandemic.

The Morrison Government's \$132 billion investment in the health portfolio in 2022-23 will grow to \$140 billion in 2025-26. It guarantees record funding for Medicare so there will be more support available via general practitioners and more support for mental health services. Record funding in the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) means more and cheaper medicines. Our Government will deliver record funding for hospitals, and more funding for medical research.

One of the big lessons of the COVID pandemic is that Australia must be prepared for future health shocks. The Morrison Government's Long Term National Health Plan builds on our strong pandemic response. Over the next decade, a re-elected Morrison Government will continue to invest in telehealth and onshore pandemic vaccine manufacturing.

The Morrison Government recognises the essential role of affordable medicines and vaccines in delivering quality health outcomes for Australian patients. Since 2013, the Coalition Government has approved more than 2,900 new or amended listings on the PBS at an overall investment by the Government of approximately \$16.5 billion. The Morrison Government has a policy to list all medicines on the PBS recommended by the independent Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC). Since 2013, the average time taken to list new molecular entities on the PBS has been halved from 312 to 141 days following a positive PBAC recommendation.

From 1 January 2023, a re-elected Morrison Government will reduce the price of medicines listed on the PBS. This will be the first reduction in the price of Government-subsidised medication co-payments in Australian history. Millions of Australians taking common medications for conditions including blood pressure, high cholesterol, pain relief, depression and diabetes will save \$10 on scripts.

The \$10 reduction per script means the maximum price Australians will pay for PBS medicines drops from \$42.50 down to \$32.50, a 24 per cent saving. This will be the first time the PBS General Co-payment has been reduced by any Government and could benefit the more than 19 million Australians without a concession card each year.

### **1. Deliver on the commitments made in the Strategic Agreement**

The Morrison Government is committed to the landmark Strategic Agreement with Medicines Australia in relation to reimbursed access to medicines for patients, health technology assessment and other matters, which runs for five-years from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2027.

Our Government will continue to work with Medicines Australia to support and promote timely reimbursed access to new medicines for Australian patients through this agreement.

The New Medicines Funding Guarantee is continuing to meet the cost of subsidising new and breakthrough medicines and expanded access for patients through the PBS.

The Morrison Government is committed to elevating the patient voice and enhancing consumer engagement through the PBAC assessment process. Our Government is focussed on continually improving Australia's world leading health technology assessment processes, which are essential to

delivering safe, effective and efficient health care. The Morrison Government is committed to implementing the health technology assessment policy and methods review, consistent with the terms of the Strategic Agreement and supporting the opportunities that it provides for patients and investments in new technology.

The Morrison Government commits to consider at the earliest opportunity changes to medicines listings eligible for Ministerial discretion, consistent with the Strategic Agreement and published guidance material. Advice on the alignment of the base case discount rate with international best practice will also be considered as a priority following the PBAC's upcoming meeting.

## **2. Accept the recommendations from the House of Representatives Inquiry**

The Morrison Government welcomes the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport's Inquiry into approval processes for new drugs and novel medical technologies in Australia, chaired by a Member of the Morrison Government, Trent Zimmerman MP.

The Morrison Government supports the intent of the findings of the inquiry and consistent with the usual parliamentary processes, the Government will respond to the report as a priority, including recommendations relating to clinical trials, the patient voice and improving the health technology assessment process.

## **3. Finalise the National Medicines Policy Review and commit to its vision and purpose**

The National Medicines Policy is a well-established and endorsed framework, built on a broad partnership between the Commonwealth, states and territories, health educators and other healthcare providers, the medicines industry and consumers.

The Morrison Government is committed to continuing the collaborative review process in the next term to ensure national medicines policy remains fit-for-purpose for Australia's health system and all stakeholder perspectives are appropriately captured.

## **4. Establish a high-level, Government-Industry, life sciences roundtable forum**

The life sciences, medicines and vaccines sectors have demonstrated how critical they are to the health of our Nation and to the strength of our economy through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Morrison Government is strongly committed to encouraging companies to bring to Australia innovative health technologies that build partnerships with Australian researchers, and invest in local clinical trials, research and development, manufacturing, and Australian jobs.

A re-elected Morrison Government commits to the establishment of a high-level life sciences roundtable forum and will work with Medicines Australia and the life sciences sector to tailor the work of this forum to focus on medical technology investment and manufacturing, research, clinical trials and other relevant policies and strategies.

A re-elected Morrison Government will continue to work with Medicines Australia to build on these initiatives. Further information on our Plan to Strengthen Australia's World Class Healthcare system is available via <https://www.liberal.org.au/strengthening-australias-world-class-health-system>