

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

5 MARCH 2018

RADIOLOGISTS COMMEND GREENS ON MEDICARE



ADIA's flyer being letterboxed in Batman

The Australian Diagnostic Imaging Association (ADIA) has today commended the Australian Greens for the party's commitment to Medicare and to radiology patients.

The Greens have released a statement that outlines a commitment to ending 20 years of frozen Medicare rebates for vital services such as x-rays and scans, vowing to “*return Medicare rebates for radiology to indexation from 1 July this year.*”*

ADIA, which represents radiology practices around the country, has launched a letterbox campaign in the Batman by election to urge voters to send a message to the major parties.

“Patient rebates for life-saving radiology services have remained frozen since 1998 – not even increasing to match the rate of inflation,” said ADIA President **Dr Siavash Es’haghi**.

“That's 20 years of inaction under successive Coalition and Labor governments, and it's patients who are hurting.

“Average gaps for life-saving x-rays and scans are now at \$100. Bulk billing is becoming harder and harder to access. Practices are under enormous pressure, and 300,000 Australians every year are forgoing critical radiology services because of cost.

“The Coalition finally recognised this problem before the last Federal election and promised to end the Medicare freeze, but they haven't kept their promise. They've forgotten about patients.

“Labor promised before the last election to restore indexation of Medicare for all services provided by GPs, allied health and other health practitioners and medical specialists – but their plan did not include ending the freeze on x-rays and scans.

“The Greens have committed to return Medicare rebates for radiology to indexation from 1 July this year when the GP rebate freeze ends and we commend them for doing so.

“The major parties need to be sent a strong message that if they keep ignoring Medicare and hurting patients, there will be consequences.”

ADIA is also running a national [television campaign](#), titled “*Medicare – ignore it and it will go away*”, which highlights the fact that the Coalition has not kept its promise to radiology patients.

“Before the 2016 election, the Coalition collaborated with ADIA on a package of structural reforms and signed an agreement to end the 20-year freeze on Medicare rebates for radiology services when the GP rebate freeze ends,” said Dr Es'haghi.

“We are running this campaign because our politicians have to realise that, if they continue to ignore the problems in Medicare, only patients that can pay large gaps will be able to afford the x-rays and scans they need.

“We are already creating a two-tiered health system between the haves and the have-nots – and that’s not what Medicare is supposed to be.”

**The Australian Greens media release February 2018*

ADIA represents radiology practices throughout Australia, both in the community and in hospitals. It promotes the ongoing development of quality accreditation standards and appropriate funding settings so that Australians can have affordable access to quality radiology services. This supports radiology’s central role in the diagnosis, treatment and management of a broad range of conditions in every branch of medicine.

For interviews, please call Phil Martin, Michels Warren on 0418 817 876