

2018 BUDGET LOOKAHEAD

FOR TUESDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2018

[\\*ATTENTION RADIO EDITORS – INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE THIS EVENING FOR NEWS GRABS\\*](#)

## MEDICARE – BUDGET VERDICT



**Nine million Australian patients will be worse off following tonight's Federal budget.**

That's the analysis of pre-budget Medicare leaks by the Australian Diagnostic Imaging Association (ADIA) which shows the Government has failed in its promise to guarantee the essential healthcare services Australians need.

**THE BUDGET WILL SAY** – Nothing about ending 20 years of frozen Medicare rebates for vital x-rays and scans required every year by nine million patients.

**VERDICT: UNDELIVERED** – This is a broken promise worth \$550 million over four years made before the last Federal election.

**THE BUDGET WILL SAY** – If you're over 50, your GP will no longer be able to refer you for an MRI of the knee from 1 November, affecting around 80,000 patients a year.

**VERDICT: FAIL** – Patients will have a choice – pay up to \$500 out of pocket to get the MRI they need, or pay to see a specialist just to get a referral under Medicare. Either way, the patient pays.

**THE BUDGET WILL SAY** – Funding for subsidised 3D breast cancer screenings from November for more than 200,000 women.

**VERDICT: SPIN** – This is just red tape; a new number for a Medicare item that's already available!

**THE BUDGET WILL SAY** – A new \$400 Medicare rebate for MRI scans for prostate cancer.

**VERDICT: FALLS SHORT** – This is welcome news radiologists have been arguing for, but what about the same treatment for women with breast cancer who are paying \$600+ for this service?

ADIA President **Dr Siavash Es'haghi** said:

“This Government is failing Medicare and it is failing patients – period.

“The Treasurer has made a big show over the past few days of saying that this budget will “*guarantee the essential services Australians need*”.

“Tell that to patients who are dealing with record gaps for the vital x-rays and scans they need for the diagnosis and treatment of critical illnesses like cancer.

“Tell that to the 300,000 Australians who are ripping up their radiology referrals every year because they can’t afford it.

“The verdict is damning – this budget will be a fail for the nine million Australians who need radiology every year and who are now bearing the burden of a Medicare system that’s become a case of the haves versus the have nots.”

*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 with Dr Es’haghi, please call Phil Martin, Michels Warren on 0418 817 876**