

# Closing the Medicare Gap

22 February 2011

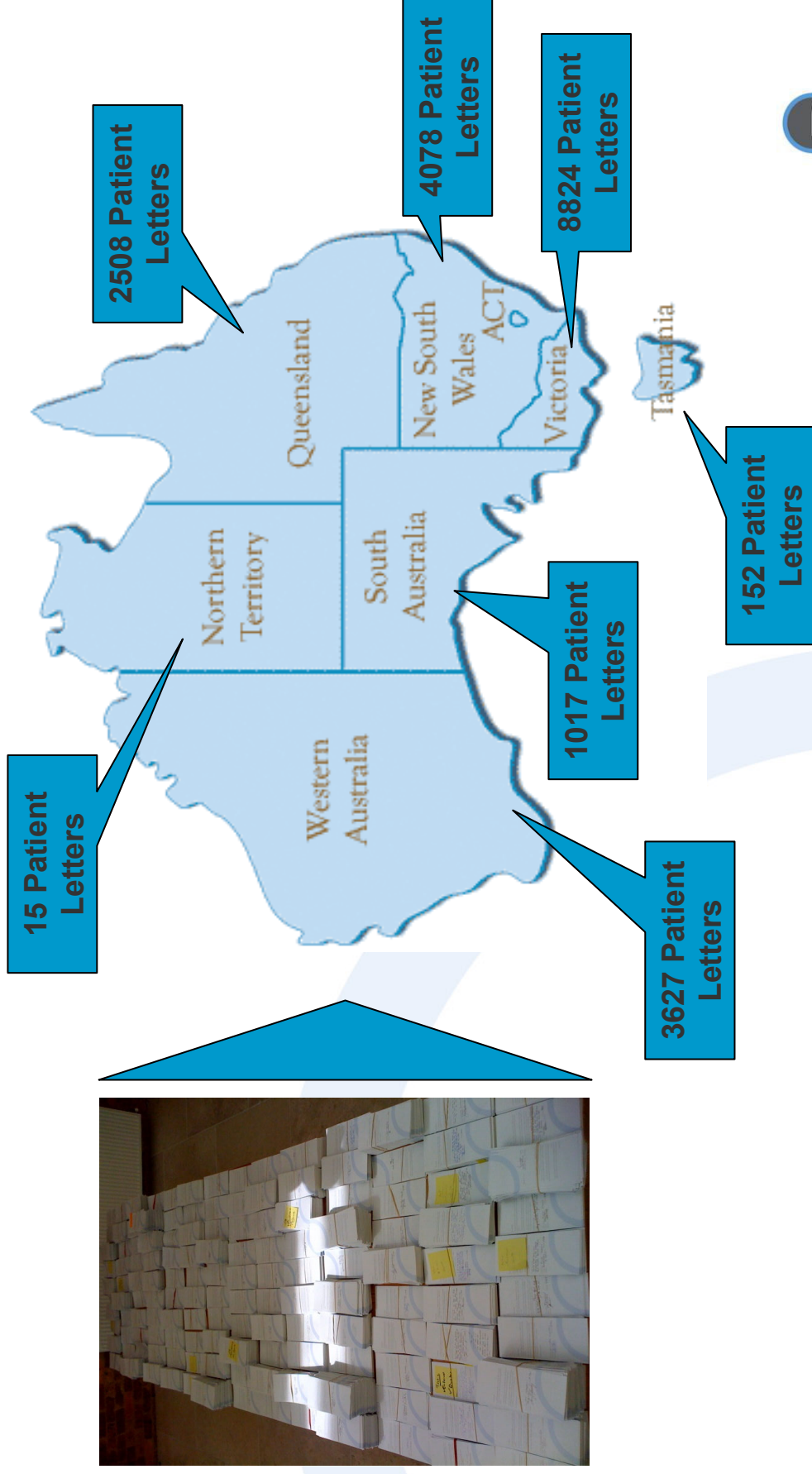
With support from Cancer Voices Australia, a national network providing a forum for people in Australia affected by cancer.



## **ADIA's Position**

- Patients lives are at risk due to underfunding
- Without indexation and new funding for practices with radiologists on-site, patients will continue to struggle to access quality services
- This is impacting people now... this is not something that can be deferred

**We have gathered over 20,000 letters of support since January**



Source: "Closing the Gap" Campaign, as of 20 Feb '11 (see [www.adia.asn.au](http://www.adia.asn.au))

# We have received hundreds of individual messages to the Minister for Health

## Selected

*"Waiting and rang around for 10 days to find a place that would bulk-bill and in pain."*  
- Brian, Drouin VIC 3818

*"People will say 'no' to the scans. Will not be able to afford. Can be deadly"*  
- Jenny, Ross Creek QLD 4570

*"Left treatment too long because of the cost of the scan"*  
- Jenny, Halls Head WA 6210

*"I need to consider how ill I think I am, because x-ray, medical costs have to come from my food budget. It is too expensive!"*  
- Wendy, Cannons Creek VIC 3979

*"A lot of people put these services off because the out of pocket expenses are too high. It really does need addressing"*  
- Pamela, Kingston Beach TAS 7050

*"With the costs going up each year, money is tight and the rebate may be the difference between getting a life saving x-ray done or NOT"*  
- Scott, Calboolture QLD 4510

*"As an average working couple we live from pay to pay and struggle when having to pay big amounts in one hit. Because of the costs we tend to put medical procedures off, which in the long run causes more costs to the community"*  
- Judy, Brukunga SA 5252

*"As a single mum on a health care card holder, I am at a loss why diagnostic services cannot be bulk billed. Today I could not afford my son's ultrasound (\$180 with ONLY \$80 gap paid from Medicare). This means families have to choose between food and health care"*  
- Jenny, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650

*"I had heart surgery a couple of years ago and the costs of these services were very expensive. It was a matter of life and death. What is my life worth as a citizen of Australia? I am about to go on to the pension and I am quite fearful of any increasing costs"*  
- Jan, Moonta SA 5558

*"I need to be able to afford these services. At the moment I and many others cannot. With changes I could get appropriate care"*  
- Scott, Griffith ACT 2603

*"Almost an act of human cruelty. The amount of people I see suffer because they cannot afford, yet they work full time – with no help"*  
- Kellie, Ferndale WA 6148

*"You cannot afford to be sick because you cannot afford the test so therefore some people don't go and end up dying"*  
- Sally, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650

*"Please ensure that rural and remote Australia still have access to imaging services in the future"*  
- Michael, Alice Springs NT 0870



# Consensus



**We call on the Australian Government to take immediate action and introduce indexation of diagnostic imaging rebates to ensure that patients can access quality and affordable diagnostic imaging services.**

