

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BENNELONG BY-ELECTION: NO MORE BROKEN PROMISES!

WHO GETS HURT WHEN A PROMISE GETS BROKEN? YOU DO.

FACT: YOU'RE PAYING MORE AND MORE OUT OF YOUR OWN POCKET FOR X-RAYS AND SCANS – \$100 ON AVERAGE PER SERVICE AND MORE IF YOU'RE SICK.

FACT: IF YOU'RE PREGNANT, YOU'RE PAYING \$142 ON AVERAGE FOR AN ULTRASOUND – MOST ARE NOT BULK BILLED.

FACT: IF YOU HAVE CANCER, YOU COULD BE PAYING THOUSANDS UPFRONT AND HUNDREDS IN GAPS FOR THE SCANS YOU NEED.

The Coalition **promised** prior to the last election to increase your rebates for all 889 x-rays and scans on Medicare.

Then they broke that promise by increasing just 7% of them – and not until 2020.

Labor **promised** prior to the last election to increase your rebates for "all services provided by GPs, allied health and other practitioners and medical specialists".

Then they admitted this would not include x-rays and scans.

TELL YOUR CANDIDATE – MAKE GOOD ON MEDICARE!

Visit our website www.adia.asn.au or our Facebook page facebook.com/AustDIAssoc/

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ADIA
australian diagnostic imaging association

The flyer being sent to 66,000 homes in Bennelong

Australian radiologists are using the Bennelong by-election to demand that the major parties make good on their promises to fix Medicare.

The Australian Diagnostic Imaging Association (ADIA) is letter-boxing 66,000 homes in the electorate to draw attention to the promises broken by both the Coalition and Labor to fix almost two decades of hurt for radiology patients.

"Patient rebates for radiology services such as x-rays and scans have not been indexed since 1998. That's effectively two decades of Medicare cuts in real terms for Australian patients, making potentially life-saving diagnosis and treatment increasingly expensive," said ADIA President **Dr Siavash Es'haghi**.

"In fact, we know that 300,000 people forego being diagnosed in Australia every year because of cost – that's three times the number of people in Bennelong. It's a huge and embarrassing statistic.

“Both the Coalition and Labor have made promises to fix Medicare for the nine million Australians who need access to life-saving x-rays and scans every year, and then they’ve both broken those promises.

“The people of Bennelong have every right to ask the candidates – particularly John Alexander and Kristina Keneally – when are you going to make good on your promises to Australians who rely on Medicare to get the x-rays and scans they need?”

ADIA is utilising direct mail, digital media and information booths in high-profile locations to call on the candidates to commit to fixing Medicare for their constituents. The organisation has been campaigning for an end to the freeze on Medicare rebates, which has seen average out-of-pocket costs for x-rays and scans hit \$100 – and over \$150 for services used by cancer patients like CT and MRI.

“We need a solution to a problem that has been caused by the inaction of Federal governments of both persuasions,” said Dr Es'haghi.

“This is not about finger-pointing at Liberal or Labor. This is about reminding the candidates to talk about the issues and then back it up with a commitment to actually fixing this problem for their constituents.”

A recent ReachTEL poll found health was the number one concern of voters in Bennelong, followed by cost of living, education and immigration.

Notes:

- \$100 average out of pocket costs for radiology patients: Medicare statistics published by Department of Health
- Pregnancy ultrasound, cost of cancer scans: ADIA analysis of deidentified Medicare statistics published by Department of Health
- Coalition promise: <https://www.liberal.org.au/latest-news/2016/06/05/coalition-plan-access-affordable-diagnostic-imaging-all-australians>
- Labor promise: http://www.billshorten.com.au/labor_will_always_fight_for_medicare

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.

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