

DOING WHAT'S RIGHT FOR AUSTRALIA

The Howard Government



A STRONGER HEALTH SYSTEM

By delivering a stronger economy, the Howard Government has been able to substantially increase the Australian Government's investment in health care. *(see table below)*

The Howard Government has strengthened Medicare, with the addition of: the Medicare Safety Net (to help people with out-of-pocket, out-of-hospital costs, like specialist visits); 100% rebates for GP consultations, and 'Round The Clock' Medicare (delivering better after hours GP services).

The bulk-billing rate for GP and specialist services is now at the highest ever level - 73.4%.

Through a series of measures such as the 30% rebate on premiums and Lifetime cover, the Howard Government has rescued private health insurance, bringing membership levels up to a sustainable 44% of the population (compared to 34% under Labor in 1996). This gives people choice while taking pressure off the public health system.

A re-elected Howard Government will insist upon the establishment of local public hospital boards with real authority in the next 5 year Australia Health Care Agreements. This will improve the management of public hospitals and, in the long term, produce significantly better services for patients. This is an important expression of the Howard Government's philosophy. We don't believe in more bureaucrats, we believe in more local services.

The Howard Government also has ongoing commitments to: address shortages in the medical workforce; a strong Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS); cheaper generic medicines; viable community pharmacies; more medical research; strong preparations for the Avian ("Bird") flu and other potential disasters; the Tough on Drugs campaign; tackling obesity; preventing HIV and sexually transmitted diseases; discouraging smoking; dental care and most recently; the creation of 25 Australian Hospital Nursing Schools.

	Labor	Coalition	Increase	Increase (REAL)
Total Investment in Health	\$19.5 bill (95/96)	\$51.8 bill (07/08)	166%	(88%)
Funding for Medical Research	\$127 mill (95/96)	\$544 mill (07/08)	328%	(204%)
Immunisation Rates	52% (0-6 year olds, as at 1995)	90% (12-15 month olds)	73%	

Real increase = Funding increase AFTER taking into account the cost of living increase over this time.



For more information about our achievements and plans for the future

