

Election 2013

# Coalition Campaign Headquarters



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4 September 2013

Ms Sally Crossing AM  
Cancer Voices Australia  
Executive Committee  
PO Box 5016  
GREENWICH NSW 2065

Dear Ms Crossing

Thank you for providing the opportunity to outline the views of the Coalition on the important issues and concerns of Cancer Voices Australia

On behalf of all Coalition Members of Parliament and candidates I am pleased to provide the following response to your recent enquiry.

The Coalition appreciates there is concern about the potential implications of permitting the patenting of human genetic material. We will carefully consider the outcome of legal proceedings currently underway.

The Coalition will continue to consult a broad array of stakeholders on the issue and on any response that may be considered by a future Government.

More broadly, the Coalition continues to support cancer research, treatments and clinical services.

Australian patients should have timely access to innovative new treatments that have been independently assessed as safe, effective and cost-effective.

Access to independently assessed and proven new medicines is critical to improving patients' quality of life and health outcomes generally. The associated research, innovation and advanced manufacturing required for the development of new medicines are also important contributors to our economy, and in particular, highly-skilled employment opportunities.

*Choose*

**A stronger Australia A better future**

As Health Minister, Tony Abbott respected the PBAC process and, if elected, the Coalition will do so again. We will restore the PBS process to the stable, apolitical, evidence based approach it was under previous Governments.

To help further streamline the process, the Health Minister will have authority to list lower-cost new treatments that have been recommended by the PBAC without Cabinet approval. Under the Coalition, the Health Minister will be able to list medicines without requiring Cabinet approval for those recommended that do not cost more than \$20 million in any year over the first four years of listing.

By removing the extra layer of bureaucracy associated with Cabinet having to review the listing of every medicine, we will help Australians get quicker access to new treatments. The Coalition will also prioritise and accelerate clinical trial reforms. Clinical trials allow new medicines to be tested. Clinical trials conducted in Australia provide much faster access to new treatments for Australian patients. The number of new clinical trials in Australia has fallen by over 25 per cent since 2007. The Coalition will work with the sector to provide a nationally coordinated approach to clinical trials, reduce complexity of ethics processes and where possible, rationalise the number of ethics committees.

The Coalition's plan will ensure patients have timely access to independently assessed innovative new medicines.

The Coalition will also continue to support evidence-based screening programmes. The National Bowel Cancer Screening Programme is an important initiative, trialled and established by the previous Coalition Government. It currently covers Australians turning 50, 55, 60 and 65 years of age.

The Government's proposed roll-out of biennial bowel cancer screening won't be completed until 2034. The Cancer Council has warned that waiting until 2034 could result in thousands of avoidable Australian deaths.

A Coalition Government will act on the best available evidence and bring forward the full implementation of biennial bowel cancer screening by 14 years. On available estimates, this will save around 875 lives each year.

The Coalition will invest \$46.4 million over the next four years to accelerate the full implementation of biennial bowel cancer screening for people aged 50 to 74 between 2015 and 2020.

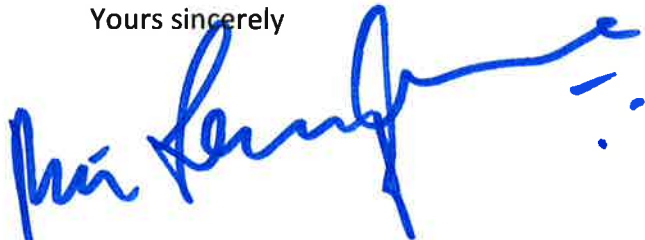
This builds on the Coalition's achievements in Government, which included the \$189 million Strengthening Cancer Care Initiative to support better coordination of services and programs.

In addition, between now and the election, the Coalition will be progressively providing further details of Our Plan to build a strong prosperous economy and a safe and secure Australia.

Once announced, the details of our policies will be available at [www.liberal.org.au](http://www.liberal.org.au) and [www.nationals.org.au](http://www.nationals.org.au).

Thank you for the opportunity to communicate the Coalition's plans and commitments to your members.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Brian Loughnane', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Brian Loughnane  
Federal Campaign Director