



Working towards a cancer free future.

Cancer Council SA priorities
for the 2022 election.

Information and support

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cancersa.org.au



**Cancer
Council**
SA

Each day there are 31 new cases of cancer diagnosed in South Australia.

In South Australia, one in three men and one in four women will receive a cancer diagnosis before the age of 75.

For more than 90 years, Cancer Council SA has been supporting South Australians impacted by cancer.

As the state's leading cancer charity and the only charity that works across every aspect of every cancer, Cancer Council SA's vision is to achieve a cancer free future for every South Australian.

Every day, we support families affected by cancer when they need it most, speak out on behalf of the community on cancer issues, empower people to reduce their cancer risk, and find new ways to better detect and treat cancer.

Through the support of the South Australian community, we're getting closer to achieving a cancer free future—every minute, every hour, every day.

Our Vision

To achieve a cancer free future.

Statement of Purpose

To be an independent voice for cancer control in South Australia.
To empower the community to be advocates for our vision of a cancer free future.

Cancer Council SA asks that the next South Australian Government undertakes the following actions to help lead us closer to a cancer free future for all South Australians through prevention, research and support:

1. Cancer Council Beat Cancer Project funding

Ensure cancer research stays in South Australia by providing a continuity of funding that enables researchers to work towards the next cancer breakthrough.

2. Reducing the financial burden for rural and remote people with cancer

The rebated rates for transport and accommodation have not kept pace with the rate of cost-of-living increases in the state. South Australian rebates also lag behind the rest of the states and territories.

3. Co-fund the Tackling Tobacco Program

Smoking rates in key populations remain stubbornly high and require targeted interventions to drive rates down.

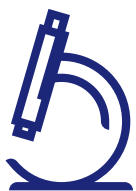


1. Cancer Council Beat Cancer Project funding.

Cancer Council SA has invested \$19 million towards groundbreaking cancer research in the past 10 years through the Cancer Council Beat Cancer Project. This project, which is a collaboration between Cancer Council SA, SA Health, SAHMRI and South Australia's universities, together with support from the Australian Government through the Medical Research Future Fund, has led to more than \$35 million being invested into South Australian research.

The Cancer Council Beat Cancer Project has one goal—to bring a cancer free future closer. The research funded under the project covers cancer-related topics from science and biomedical research through to clinical, population health and health service research.

The Cancer Council Beat Cancer Project ensures life-saving cancer research is undertaken in South Australia in a focused, strategic and collaborative way.



Thanks to cancer research, over the last 20 years in Australia, cancer mortality rates declined by 18 per cent and cancer survival rates for some common cancers increased by as much as 36 per cent¹.

Current research funded through the Cancer Council Beat Cancer Project includes an Australian-first project investigating personalised treatments for cancer patients through understanding why patients react differently to different cancer medications.

Another project, funded this year, looks at how cerebrospinal fluid can impact the success of chemotherapy and radiotherapy treatment for patients with brain cancer.

Research such as this is ensuring we can better understand different cancers, improve treatments and ultimately save more South Australian lives.

We are asking the South Australian Government to invest \$2 million in the Cancer Council Beat Cancer Project every year, for the next three years, to ensure continuity in funding for the researchers that will lead us closer to a cancer free future.

For every Cancer Council Beat Cancer Project dollar, over six dollars of research initiatives are undertaken.



INVEST \$2 MILLION INTO THE CANCER COUNCIL BEAT CANCER PROJECT EVERY YEAR, FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS.

¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Cancer in Australia 2019. Cancer series no. 119. Cat no. CAN 123. 2019, AIHW: Canberra.

Researcher profile.

Dr Madelé van Dyk, Cancer Council SA funded researcher



Dr Madelé van Dyk is leading an Australian-first research project aimed at 'perfecting personalised treatments for cancer patients'.

Madelé, together with her team at the Flinders Centre for Cancer Innovation, are working every day to find ways to use cancer medicines in a more efficient and safe way, and understand why people react differently to cancer medicines.

Her particular focus is to move away from the 'one-size-fits-all' approach, to a more personalised approach, that considers every person's individual characteristics.

"Every person is different in so many ways, so it makes sense that each person reacts differently when undergoing cancer treatment."

"'Selecting the right drug' and 'selecting the right amount of drug' is the ultimate goal in Precision Medicine. We're selecting the right type of drug really well, but are only half-way there, because we're still using a 'one-size-fits-all' dose. I believe we can do better."

Working with oncologists and cancer patients, Madelé and her team have set up Australia's first Therapeutic Drug Monitoring Program, ensuring that every eligible patient in South Australia can have their drug levels tested through their oncologist, at any hospital, public or private, including those in remote areas.

Currently, the team are able to test the levels for six cancer drugs used to treat multiple types of advanced cancers of the lung, stomach, liver, kidney and blood. By the end of her research project, her aim is to increase the list to as many drugs as possible and offer the service Australia wide.

By monitoring drug levels throughout treatment, Madelé and her team can ensure that patients are receiving the right dose to make the biggest impact.

For Madelé, her inspiration to make a difference comes from the incredible patients she meets every day.

"I've been privileged to work with a number of patients throughout my career. All of them are inspiring, but two patients, Ryan and Peter, had particular cases that scientifically stood out to me. Both were in their 30s, fit and healthy with one having a young family. At the peak of their lives, Ryan and Peter received a life changing cancer diagnosis, terminal cancer with a short life expectancy. Since those moments, my research interests and career were no longer just a job."

"I saw what both Peter and Ryan went through, the challenges they faced and thought that patients like them, and all patients, deserve better. It's their stories, and the hope that we can do better, that motivates me every day."

"It's only through the incredible support of Cancer Council SA that this research is even possible."

Through government support, South Australian researchers like Dr van Dyk can make a real difference to the future of cancer treatment and give more Australians diagnosed with cancer the precious gift of time.

2. Reducing the financial burden for rural and remote people with cancer.

Eight years ago, Dr David Filby undertook a wide-ranging review of the Patient Assistance Transport Scheme (PATs) and made 15 recommendations to improve it.

Nearly a decade later, while many process improvements have been made to the Scheme, the rebated rates for transport and accommodation have not kept pace with the rate of cost-of-living increases in the state, or the cost of commercial accommodation in Adelaide².

PATs rates have remained unchanged since the last increase committed to in 2014, despite continued annual increases in CPI across this period averaging around 1.8 per cent for Adelaide. In addition, two of the major contributors to CPI increases each year are transport (predominantly increased fuel prices) and health (medical and hospital services), both factors that relate directly to increasing costs incurred by country people travelling to Adelaide for health treatment.

Our state lags behind the other states and territories in the provision of financial support to rural and remote people who face long and extended trips to Adelaide for appointments and/or treatment.

South Australia sits at the bottom of the table of rebates. In addition, our Scheme does not recognise people who live under 100 km but are forced to travel hundreds of kilometres each week for radiotherapy, unlike other states such as New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland.

These states acknowledge that some people who live within 100 km of their treatment centres still face extended travel and are compensated for the associated costs.

Enquiries with providers across Adelaide show the cheapest available commercial accommodation ranges in price between \$50 and \$75 for shared dormitory accommodation with bunk beds and shared bathroom facilities³. These options are not appropriate or safe for people who may have reduced immunity while undergoing cancer treatment. The minimum appropriate level of accommodation for regional and remote patients would be midscale-economy class, which in 2020/21 had an average daily rate in South Australia of \$114⁴.

PATs plays an important role in assisting low-income earners in regional and remote South Australia receive life-saving treatment which is unavailable close to their homes. It plays an important role in ensuring that all South Australians have equitable access to treatment, no matter where they live.

**INCREASE THE PATS
REBATE TO \$100 FOR AN
INDIVIDUAL PER NIGHT
AND \$115 FOR A COUPLE.**

² Australian Bureau of Statistics, Consumer Price Index, Australia June 2021. www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/price-indexes-and-inflation/consumer-price-index-australia/jun-2021#data-download

³ Wotif, Expedia and Trivago single night room options sourced, 25 August 2021

⁴ STR 2021. Australian Accommodation Monitor Summary – Financial-year performance: 2020–2021. Accessed 22 September 2021 <https://str.com/whitepaper/australian-accommodation-monitor-summary-financial-year-performance-2020-2021>

PATS rates across Australia (as of September 2021)

State	Single rate	Couple rate	Qualifying criteria
WA	\$100	\$115	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel more than 100 km to access nearest eligible specialist medical services.⁵
Tas	\$60	\$120	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel more than 50 km (one way) to the nearest oncology or dialysis treatment centre. Travel more than 75 km (one way) to the nearest appropriate specialist medical service. Travel more than 75 km (one way) to access lymphoedema treatment.⁶
Qld	\$60	\$120	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel more than 50 km (one way) from public hospital or public health facility, closest to permanent address, to attend nearest eligible specialist health service.⁷
NT	\$60	\$120	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanent address more than 200 km away from nearest approved specialist. Travel more than 400 km in one week for renal or oncology treatment.⁸
ACT	\$50	\$100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel unreasonable from permanent address to health service and in one day.⁹
NSW	\$43 per night, first 7 nights \$65 per night, 8+ nights	\$60 per night, first 7 nights \$85 per night, 8+ nights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel from permanent address for treatment at least 100 km (one way), or at least 200 km in a week by making multiple trips to and from treatment.¹⁰
Vic	\$45	\$90	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel more than 100 km one way or an average of 500 kms a week for one or more weeks.¹¹
SA	\$40	\$80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel more than 100 km from permanent address to appointment or treatment location.¹²

* GST exclusive

⁵ WA Health, PATS overview, www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au/Our-patients/Patient-Assisted-Travel-Scheme-PATS/PATS-subsidies

⁶ Tasmania Department of Health, Patient Travel Assistance Scheme, www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/hospital/ptas

⁷ Queensland Health, PTSS Overview, www.qld.gov.au/health/services/travel/subsidies/ptss-subsidies#about-accommodation

⁸ NT Health, NT PATS overview, <https://nt.gov.au/wellbeing/health-subsidies-support-and-home-visits/patient-assistance-travel-scheme>

⁹ ACT Health, IPTAS Guidelines, www.health.act.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-centres/canberra-hospital/your-time-hospital/interstate-patient-travel

¹⁰ NSW Health, IPTASS FAQs, www.iptaas.health.nsw.gov.au/faq#Am-I-eligible-to-apply-for-assistance-from-IPTAAS

¹¹ Vic Health, Victorian Patient Transport Assistance Scheme (VPTAS), www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/rural-health/vptas-how-to-apply

¹² SA Health, the Patient Assistance Transport Scheme (PATS), www.pats.sa.gov.au/about/

A photograph of a green rectangular road sign with white text, mounted on two metal poles. The sign is positioned on a dirt road. In the background, there are trees and a cloudy sky. The text on the sign is a statement about distance and disadvantage.

**Distance
Should Not Equal
Disadvantage**

PATS case study.

Letchemi's story

Letchemi Pillai and her husband Swee Poh, from Waikerie, have been staying at Cancer Council SA's Lodges on and off for the past 12 years.

In 2009, Letchemi was diagnosed with breast cancer. Eighteen months later, she was diagnosed with stomach cancer. Recently, Swee Poh also underwent treatment for prostate cancer, with Letchemi continuing to travel to and from Adelaide for ongoing treatment.



Letchemi and her husband Swee Poh regularly stay at Cancer Council SA's Lodges when travelling to Adelaide for cancer treatment.

Letchemi knows that she and Swee Poh are fortunate that they are eligible for the PATS subsidy and says any increase in the rate would be a fantastic help to her and her family when finding appropriate accommodation.

"We know that we will need to continue to travel to Adelaide for treatment for the foreseeable future and will always stay at the Lodges when we come to visit. They truly are a home away from home, a place of comfort. We're all going through the same experience together. I like to say we're all in the same storm, all trying to get to the same port."



"Any increase in the PATS subsidy would mean that regional people like me have additional financial security when we travel, so we only have to worry about getting better."

3. Co-fund the Tackling Tobacco Program.

Smoking remains South Australia's leading cause of preventable death and disease¹³. While smoking rates across the South Australian population have reduced to record low levels, rates in key populations remain stubbornly high and require targeted interventions to drive smoking rates down.

The SA Tobacco Control Strategy 2017-2020 recognised that more needed to be done to reduce the rate of smoking amongst priority populations, including people with mental illness, socio-economically disadvantaged people, rural South Australians, and prisoners¹⁴. These groups continue to have higher than average smoking rates and their health is disproportionately impacted.

The Strategy made a commitment to reduce inequalities and minimise the gap in smoking rates between these groups and the general South Australian population.

However, this commitment has not been supported with localised programs for smoking cessation and the smoking rate in these populations remains high. Research shows a clear gap in services, with few health professionals providing brief smoking interventions to clients¹⁵.

This discrepancy in smoking rates was recognised by community groups and the State Government, and for many years South Australia had a proud history of funding quit smoking interventions for high smoking populations who required additional support.

Over time, these programs and the face-to-face interventions attached to them have ended, and there is now no local program available for services whose clients are smokers from priority populations.

Currently there is no standardised intensive, face-to-face training in place to empower people working with these priority populations to ask about smoking status, provide brief interventions to clients and assist with the provision of nicotine replacement therapy where applicable.

Tackling Tobacco is a step-by-step program that aims to reduce smoking related harm amongst priority populations that experience high levels of social and economic disadvantage.

A Tackling Tobacco pilot is currently being rolled out in South Australia, with a view to making this a permanent option for people working in community services to access evidence-based information and training.

CANCER COUNCIL SA CALLS ON THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO CONTRIBUTE \$400,000 OVER FOUR YEARS, TO ASSIST WITH A ROLL OUT OF THE TACKLING TOBACCO PROGRAM ACROSS COMMUNITY SERVICES IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

¹³ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2021. Tobacco smoking. Canberra: AIHW. Viewed 16 July 2021, www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-health/tobacco-smoking

¹⁴ South Australian Tobacco Control Strategy 2017-2020, available at www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/Public+Content/SA+Health+Internet/Services/Mental+Health+and+Drug+and+Alcohol+Services/Drug+and+Alcohol+Services/About+DASSA/SA+Tobacco+Control+Strategy+2017-2020

¹⁵ White SL, McCaffrey N, Scollo MM. Tobacco dependence treatment in Australia – an untapped opportunity for reducing the smoking burden. Public Health Res Pract. 2020;30(3)



Cancer Council

Information Support



to find out how we can help you
3 11 20



VOLUNTEER



We're here for all South Australians.

People with cancer

We provide practical and emotional support, financial and legal assistance, information services and more.

Regional groups

We provide resources and support to help build regional and rural community engagement.

Future generations

We work to create a future where cancer is no longer feared but seen as a preventable and manageable disease.

Cancer researchers

We raise the funds that make research breakthroughs possible.

Health professionals

We have information and support services where health professionals can refer those on a cancer journey.

Carers and families

We have a wide range of information and support programs, including the **13 11 20** phone and webchat service.

Government

We help advance policy and legislation by being a source of expert information and the voice of the community.

For confidential information and support about cancer, Monday to Friday 9.00 am – 5.00 pm:

- call Cancer Council **13 11 20***
- chat online at cancersa.org.au
- email askanurse@cancersa.org.au

Interpreting service available **131 450***

*Cost of a local call