Australian Greens have a smart health prevention plan

The Public Health Association of Australia has today welcomed the Australian Greens health policy which commits to abolishing the private health insurance subsidy and place “prevention at the heart of health”.

The PHAA remains concerned that there is too little focus by major political parties on preventing the enormous and anticipated wave of chronic disease that is hitting communities.

“It makes social and economic sense to keep people well throughout their lives rather than only treat illness when Australians get sick,” said Public Health Association of Australia, Chief Executive Officer, Terry Slevin.

“The Greens recognise we must, as a nation, address the alarming rates of obesity, diabetes and heart disease; chronic illnesses that will cost us a lot in the long term.”

The party’s policy released in Tasmania today addresses some of the damage done when the Coalition demolished Labor’s Preventative Health Agency in 2016.

The Greens are promising an independent Preventative Health Commission to roll out evidence-based prevention programs, a single funding agency to end cost-shifting, Medicare funded dental care and reinvesting the private health insurance rebate into public healthcare.

The PHAA’s election appeal is the Commonwealth spend at least 5% of the total national health spend investing in illness prevention.

“Currently less than 2% of health spending is for public and preventive health,” Mr Slevin said.

“All we are after is a commitment of investing one in every 20 dollars being invested in preventing the misery and cost of disease like cancer and heart disease.”

“It seems every major health policy entity in this country can see the logic in and need for prevention. Yet public policy and resource investment is failing to meet that challenge.”

ENDS

For further information/comment:

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