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MEDIA RELEASE

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\$19.7 million National Men's Health Strategy

The Liberal National Government will today launch the National Men's Health Strategy 2020-2030 with more than \$19 million to guide action over the decade to improve the health and wellbeing of every Australian man and boy.

We will release the National Men's Health Strategy, which sets out a national approach to improving health outcomes for all men and boys in Australia, particularly those at greatest risk of poor health.

On the whole, Australian men and boys enjoy long, healthy lives, with a current average life expectancy of more than 80 years, the eighth highest in the developed world.

Despite this, Australian men and boys face challenges in their health and wellbeing. They die earlier than women, and more often from diseases that can be prevented. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men live significantly shorter lives than other men.

The Strategy is forward looking with a clear blueprint for actions on the five priority health issues affecting men's health:

- sexual and reproductive health and conditions
- mental health
- chronic conditions
- injuries and risk taking
- healthy ageing.

Important health issues for men include infertility, coronary heart disease, prostate cancer, overweight and obesity, diabetes, bowel cancer, lung cancer, injuries, mental health and suicide.

We are pleased to announce \$3.8 million for research into the causes and prevention of male infertility, a disease recognised by the World Health Organisation. It is estimated to affect one in six couples, causing significant suffering to thousands of Australians.

Authorised by Greg Hunt MP, Liberal Party of Australia, Somerville, Victoria.

To date the vast majority of resources expended in research and treatment have been focussed on female infertility yet in couples seeking infertility treatment in Australia, male infertility is recognised by clinicians as being an equal contributor to couples being unable to achieve parenthood.

We are also pleased to announce \$3 million in funding to Andrology Australia, through to June 2021. This will allow them to continue to deliver high quality education and training programs for health professionals and information for men on a range of reproductive health issues.

In addition, the Liberal National Government is providing continued and expanded funding to support the Men's Shed movement (\$11.2 million over 4 years). The funding consists of the following:

- Funding to men's sheds through the National Shed Development Programme will be continued, and increased to \$1 million per year for years (\$4 million over 4 years). These grants enable sheds to apply for funding twice a year to assist with health and wellbeing activities and events, shed improvements and tools and equipment
- \$1.5 million to fund regional coordinators at the grassroots level in each state and territory which aims to provide direct assistance in men's shed
- \$3.6 million to the Australian Men's Shed Association in supporting to support Sheds at a national level
- \$2 million to equip every Men's Shed in Australia with a portable defibrillator
- \$100,000 to establish a web based platform 'Men's Shed Exchange'. This platform aims to encourage the broader shed community to contribute ideas on how to attract and retain membership and participation and how to stage regional events. Andrology Australia will host the portal.

Health and medical research is one of the four pillars of the Government's Long-Term National Health Plan.

Our Government's strong economic management ensures the continued record investment into vital health initiatives.

\$1.5 million over three years will be available to implement various key actions from the Strategy to support health promotion initiatives and health literacy, improve health professionals' knowledge and a literature review and development of strategies to increase men's and boys' engagement with the health system.

Further research investment includes:

- The Australian Prostate Centre, Victoria, is receiving \$600,000 to support prostate cancer research
- The Australian Prostate Cancer Research Centre – NSW, at the Garvan Institute, is receiving to \$437,535 to support prostate cancer research through safeguarding their biobank and databank
- The Australian Longitudinal Study on Male Health (Ten to Men Study) which examines social, environmental and behavioral factors of males aged 10-55 years. One of the themes the study is investigating is barriers to accessing healthcare and men's attitudes to their own health, which may identify cultural or social barriers. The next stage of this research will be undertaken by the Australian Institute of Family Studies in 2019/20.

Today's announcements add to the Liberal National Government's strong record on men's health.

Authorised by Greg Hunt MP, Liberal Party of Australia, Somerville, Victoria.

In last week's budget, our Government invested an additional \$31 million to more than double the number of Commonwealth funded Prostate Cancer Nurses from 28 to 62 by 2022-23.

Earlier this year we announced \$10 million in an advertising blitz to boost participation in the free and life-saving National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. By the end of 2019 all Australians aged 50 to 74 will be invited to screen.

Bowel cancer is the second most common cause of cancer-related death in Australia with 17,000 people diagnosed each year. Bowel cancer is the second most common cause of cancer-related death in Australia with 17,000 people diagnosed each year and is more common in men, with one in 11 developing bowel cancer before the age of 85.

Participation in the screening program is also lower for males (39.4% compared to 43.2% for females)

Tragically, deaths by suicide in Australia occur among males at a rate three times greater than that for females and that is why we are providing \$114.5 million for a trial of walk-in integrated Adult Community Mental Health Centres at eight locations nationally; and \$11.5 million for the National Mental Health Workplace Initiative to assist businesses to create mentally health workplaces.

On the PBS, the following medicines specific to male patients have been listed since 2013:

- Xtandi for prostate cancer. Treating over 900 patients and saving them over \$9500 per year.
- Lucrun for prostate cancer. Treating over 2500 patients and saving them over \$4200 per year.
- Testogel for male androgen deficiency saving patients over \$700 dollar a year.

Since 2013, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) has provided over \$102 million in funding for Men's health research. This includes nearly \$14 million for clinical trials for Men's health.

Through the Medical Research Future Fund's (MRFF) Accelerated Research Initiative, the Movember Foundation is being funded up to \$6 million over three years (2018/19 – 2020/21) to support the Australian Prostate Cancer Research Centres development of prostate cancer research.

We would like to thank Andrology Australia, the Expert Advisory Group, participants in the forum and those who provided online feedback in helping to shape this important piece of work.

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