

AstraZeneca 2023-24 Pre-Budget Submission

27 January 2023

Transforming the future of healthcare together by unlocking the power of what science can do for people, society and planet.

AstraZeneca advocates to prioritise budgets for strategic health investments and patient access to healthcare.

AstraZeneca recommends health budget measures that invest in:

1. **Equitable funding and patient access initiatives for therapies**
2. **Optimisation of healthcare through effective screening and diagnosis**
3. **A sustainable planet and future Australia to support everyone's best health**

AstraZeneca is a science-led and patient-focused company devoted to excellence in the research, development and delivery of medicines and vaccines. With a diverse innovative portfolio, AstraZeneca brings medicines to Australia that improve patient lives and those impacted by it, while unlocking societal and economic benefit vital for future sustainable health of the Australian people.

Amplified over the past few years, good health in Australia is the foundation of a strong society and economy. In the unprecedented pandemic and global health challenge, AstraZeneca responded quickly to develop, deliver and distribute life extending and saving medicines and vaccines worldwide. Together with partners inside and outside of our industry, AstraZeneca's commitment remains unwavering to:

1. Science and innovation to deliver new medicines that address unmet medical need;
2. Transforming outcomes for patients, increasing access to healthcare and making healthcare systems more sustainable and resilient; and
3. Contributing sustainably to people, society and the planet.

AstraZeneca believes in the strong connection between a healthy planet and healthy people for a health society and we are taking bold action on climate change. Initiatives include, ambitious science-based decarbonisation targets; manufacturing our medicines in a more sustainable and efficient way; and reducing the environmental impact of healthcare, protecting nature and restoring local ecosystems through partnerships.

AstraZeneca supports the Government to prioritise budgets for strategic health investments and patient access to healthcare in three key areas, as follows:

Recommendation	Rationale
Invest in equitable funding and patient <u>access</u> initiatives for therapies Government investment in data and evidence collection, healthcare services and rapid reimbursement of new medicines is critical to ensure all patients from early to late stages of a disease have the same equitable access to treatment and care. Federal resources and funding must be prioritised to ensure equity in making available treatment options regardless of patients' stage of disease, ability to pay and physical location. AstraZeneca proposes a specific line item in the budget to support a program for faster access to new medicines and budget measures which reduce inequalities diagnosis, in particular in the area of cancer. The additional budget item is a necessary step in order for Australia to rapidly catch up of the individual treatments which are currently reimbursed overseas and not in Australia.	As part of the 2022-27 Strategic Agreement, there is a unique opportunity to reform the Australian system that better recognizes the full value of medicines and reaches patients faster, provided new funding and access pathways are established. Such mechanisms, often employed by similar HTA systems internationally, make sure that patients get treated equitably with potentially life changing or curative medicines following marketing authorisation in order to achieve best possible patient benefit, outcomes and quality of life. Australia's healthcare system should not support inequities between treating cancer patients with early stage disease or those with metastatic cancer, nor between those treated in the rural vs urban settings. Investing in shared data capabilities and infrastructure improves evidence-based understanding of which patients should receive a specific treatment, at what point in their disease progression, for how long and for which benefit. <i>Please see Metastatic Breast Cancer 'Supportive Case in Point' below.</i>
Invest in <u>optimisation</u> of healthcare through effective screening and diagnosis The future of targeted therapy takes advantage of precision medicine and personalised care, relying heavily on effective patient screening and diagnosis. Activities and tools must be appropriately incentivised, funded and efficiently implemented as clinical best practice in order to optimise preventative care, patient health and population health management in Australia. Introduce a practice incentive payment for primary care (GPs and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations) to undertake a Kidney Health Check to test for and diagnose chronic kidney disease at an early stage. Earlier diagnosis increases clinical treatment options, delays dialysis and transplant demand, and avoids hospitalisations.	With the greatly amplified development of precision medicine and personalised health, future medicines will revolutionise patient outcomes and survival rates. However, in order to stratify patients for the right treatment at the right time, a funded program to ensure effective screening and accurate diagnosis is required before a treatment can be administered. Without this change many Australian patients, including children, will be undiagnosed, undertreated or treated too late – resulting in unnecessary suffering and deaths. For example, in the area of chronic disease, chronic kidney disease is an under-diagnosed disease affecting 1.7 million Australians, with fewer than 10% of the people aware they have the condition. AIHW data indicates CKD accounts for 16% of hospitalisations and costs the Australian health system at least \$1.8 billion a year. Indigenous adults are twice as likely as non-indigenous adults to have signs of CKD, and dialysis treatment often separates them from their culture and country. <i>Please see Chronic Kidney Disease 'Supportive Case in Point' below.</i>

Invest in a <u>sustainable</u> planet and future Australia to support everyone's best health There is a strong connection between a healthy planet and healthy people, and it is imperative that everyone takes accountability with bold action on climate change. Working with others to reduce the environmental impact of healthcare, protecting nature and restoring local ecosystems should be everyone's priority. In addition to investing in medicines for the Australian people, we commend the Australian Government for their work to environmental sustainability in healthcare.	Future collaborations to support carbon reduction in healthcare to build on the work currently being undertaken may include co-investments made between the Australian Government, different types of industry, non-Government Organisations and charities, academics, financial institutions and governments in other jurisdictions to identify the major areas for emissions and options to reverse emissions and waste. We propose that the areas to focus on in the health sector include supply chains, digital health - in particular the possibilities for reduction in emissions related to clinical trials and patient care pathways - in particular a focus on exacerbations due to major weather events. In the past two years, AstraZeneca has shown our ambition and commitment in sustainable health, with the following highlights: • Partnership with Greening Australia to plant 25 million trees in Australia by 2025. In 2021, AstraZeneca planted ~ 800,000 trees. By 2022, 3.26 million trees will have been planted, restoring 3,500 hectares of land across six priority regions in Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia. This is part of AstraZeneca's global commitment to plant 50 million trees worldwide over the next four years. • Installation of over 1,700 solar panels on the roof of our manufacturing plant in Sydney, generating ca 7% of the company's daily power requirements, which has reduced annual CO₂ emissions by 5,713t. • 92% of all waste (or 30,000 tons of plastic waste) from manufacturing is now recycled, as is 100% of our printed material, avoiding landfill each year. • Optimised the maintenance regimen of our water systems, minimising water and steam consumption to reduce wastewater generation by 5 million litres per year (64% reduction).
--	--

References

- Medicines Australia's Compare Report [Comparison of Access and Reimbursement Environments] | Edition 5 | 2019: http://www.medicinesaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/65/2020/11/0007_Med-Aus_Compare_5_Booklet_FA_HR.pdf
- The CKD Strategic Action Plan: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-strategic-action-plan-for-kidney-disease?language=en>
- KHA's model for a kidney health check: <https://kidney.org.au/your-kidneys/know-your-kidneys/know-the-risk-factors/kidney-health-check>
- AIHW data and findings: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports-data/health-conditions-disability-deaths/chronic-kidney-disease/overview>

Supportive Case in Point

Metastatic Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is [one of the leading causes of death of Australian women](#), and is the [second most commonly diagnosed cancer in Australia](#), with more than 20,000 Australians diagnosed each year.

About [five per cent of women](#) with breast cancer are estimated to have metastatic disease at first diagnosis. However, according to Breast Cancer Network Australia, the number of women living with metastatic breast cancer is much higher, with predictions that by 2025, there will be approximately 12,840 metastatic breast cancer patients in Australia.

Patients diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer need treatment for the rest of their lives, with the goal to prolong their life and maintain the best quality of life. As a result, people living with metastatic breast cancer have significant health care needs. To meet these needs and fully support these Australian patients, significant government funding must be allocated for:

1. A system for **nationwide data collection** on metastatic breast cancer patients to ensure these 'underrepresented' patients with are counted within the healthcare system:
 - . A report released by [Breast Cancer Network Australia](#) (BCNA) in October 2022 predicted that by 2025, there will be approximately 12,840 metastatic breast cancer patients in Australia. Current figures record a much lower number of cases due to the lack of systemic data collection for breast cancer recurrence and stage at diagnosis. Incomplete data presents an inaccurate picture, which means resources are not properly allocated and those living with metastatic breast cancer are invisible to the health system and policymakers. BCNA, one of the leading advocacy organisations for breast cancer patients in Australia, is calling for improvements in the collection and reporting of metastatic data, including real-world evidence. Having an accurate figure for metastatic breast cancer patients will enable the Government to properly address the high unmet health care needs of this patient group.
2. The **healthcare system** needs to evolve to ensure the needs of metastatic breast cancer patients are addressed as a matter of urgency to ensure health outcomes continue to improve:
 - . Metastatic breast cancer is an advanced form of breast cancer with complex health needs. Due to advances in technology and science, metastatic breast cancer survival has doubled in the past 20 years, which means patients are living longer with their disease. Consequently, the health care system must be reformed to move beyond its focus on prolonging life to ensure adequate support is provided for this patient group over many years including rapid access to new treatments, broader access to pain and symptom management, palliative care services and assistance with daily living. Addressing these needs will contribute to improved quality of life and outcomes for metastatic patients. (<https://www.bcna.org.au/about-us/health-professionals/policy-advocacy/making-metastatic-breast-cancer-count/>)
3. Additional **PBS funding** is needed for medicines that help patients with metastatic breast cancer to live longer and more productive lives:
 - . The draft Australian Cancer Plan released in November 2022 and due to be launched in April 2023 does not address funding for reimbursed access to cancer medicines or equity for treatment regardless of diagnosis. [A study released in 2019 showed that 44% of the increase in the survival rates for cancer patients in Australia from 2001-2015 were attributed to the availability of new cancer medicines](#), providing evidence of the benefits of timely access to medicines. It is therefore critical for the Government to invest in pharmaceutical innovation and the availability of new treatments for all types of cancer, including metastatic breast cancer, to tackle the projected increase in cancer cases in the coming decade. Investment in alternative funding mechanisms should also be considered.

Supportive Case in Point

Chronic Kidney Disease

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) affects the lives of millions of Australians and their families. We need to incentivize primary care to detect the disease to slow disease progression and increase treatment options.

- a. The Australian Government's National Strategic Action Plan for Kidney Disease (March 2020) includes recommendations to increase early detection and management to slow disease progression and empower people to self-manage their conditions.
- b. The Strategic Action Plan describes Australia is facing a kidney disease crisis:
 - i. CKD is a silent and pernicious illness.
 - ii. While largely symptom free in the early stages, end stage kidney disease (ESKD) is fatal without ongoing treatment.
 - iii. One in three adults are at risk of chronic kidney disease.
 - iv. One in ten have early signs of disease and more than 1.7 million have no idea that they have the disease.
 - v. CKD contributes to around 17,500 deaths a year, more than breast cancer, prostate cancer and road deaths combined.
 - vi. Kidney disease disproportionately affects the most vulnerable in our society, and takes a devastating toll on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
 - vii. CKD costs the economy more than \$5 billion a year.
- c. The Strategic Action Plan provides evidence that early detection and management of kidney disease can slow or halt the progression of disease, reducing the social and financial impacts on community and the health system. The proportion of people with CKD remaining undiagnosed by primary care physicians is as high as 50%, despite the automated reporting of estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR). Among people reaching end stage kidney disease (stage 5) a quarter present to a nephrologist so late they require dialysis within 90 days, missing the chance to slow disease progression.
- d. The AIHW Chronic Kidney Disease report (August 2022) says there is no cure for chronic kidney disease (CKD), so management of the disease is the primary form of treatment. The earlier CKD is detected, the better the outcomes for halting or slowing its progression. Depending on the stage there are a variety of management options available. Treatment options at an early stage may include lifestyle modifications and medication.
- e. Kidney Health Australia describes a Kidney Health Check as quick and simple. It involves a blood test to check eGFR, and a urine ACR test to check for albuminuria, a type of protein in urine. It also includes a blood pressure check. A GP can utilize Medicare to undertake the tests, but there are not dedicated MBS item numbers for a kidney health check, unlike a Heart Health Check which was introduced in 2019.
- f. The Department of Health controls the Practice Incentives Program, which provides payments to encourage general practices to continue providing quality care, and improve access and health outcomes for patients including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.