

Victorian Government

Pre-budget, the Cancer Council Victoria had already welcomed a \$1.7 m funding commitment from the Government. This comprised a \$1.5 m grant to expand the Victorian Cancer Registry's e-Pathology pilot, and a \$200,000 grant towards new research on mesothelioma – one of the state's deadliest diseases. The Cancer Council is contributing additional money to the mesothelioma research thanks to a generous donor. We also welcomed the Health Minister's public confirmation in April that 2012-13 money set aside for the Victorian Cancer Agency would be rolled out after some uncertainty.

There was little new spending contained in the 2013 Victorian Budget. Most state infrastructure spending will go towards completing projects. However, starts will be made on a new Monash Children's Hospital, and the Waurin Ponds Community Hospital.

There was no new money for SunSmart or Quit social marketing, which was disappointing. This will be pursued in the next state budget.

New projects/spending

- Over \$400 million towards a new Monash Children's Hospital and Royal Eye and Ear Hospital.
- \$2.04m to start work on a \$50m Waurin Ponds Community Hospital. This new 32-bed community based specialist medical and day surgery centre for Geelong/Surf Coast will include chemotherapy chairs and capacity for specialist clinics.
- \$5m towards radiotherapy services for southwest Victoria, based in Warrnambool or "elsewhere", which will help reduce some patients' travel time for treatment.
- \$2m for chemotherapy services at Seymour Hospital, and \$1.8m in 2013-14.

- \$1m each year over the forward estimates on skin cancer prevention through grants to local government, community and sporting groups to install shade in public places.

Existing projects/spending

- \$59.6 m over the next four years through the Victorian Cancer Agency to fund research into cancer. This funding is recurrent with \$15.9m available each year after 2016-17.
- \$630m Bendigo Hospital to provide 21st century facilities including an integrated cancer centre for this growing regional centre.
- Completing the \$1 billion Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre, which will become the largest cancer research facility in Australia. (Due to be completed in 2016.)
- \$93m on major upgrade of Geelong Hospital. This will include 64 extra beds to provide cancer care, palliative care and care for older patients with complex needs (\$26.1m in Commonwealth funding.)
- Olivia Newton-John Cancer and Wellness Centre. (Combining stage 2A and 2B both to be delivered by mid-2013.) Total investment: \$72m. Total spent to date: \$32.8m. Estimated expenditure 2012-13: \$38.2m. Remainder: \$1m.
- \$55m for Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre (includes Commonwealth funding). Total investment: \$14.2m. Total spent to date: \$3.8m. Estimated expenditure in 2012-13: \$10.4m.
- BreastScreen Victoria digital technology roll-out statewide. (Remaining \$733,000 to be spent by mid-2014.)

Existing projects (Commonwealth spend)

- Gippsland Cancer Centre expansion (Traralgon). Total investment: \$22m. Total spent to date \$3.88m. Estimated expenditure 2012-13: \$18.120m.
- State-wide enhancements to regional cancer centres. Total investment \$9.5M. Estimated 2012/13 \$9.5M.

Commonwealth Government

A \$226.4m “World Leading Cancer Care” package to improve cancer prevention, detection, treatment and research was one of the few, new spending measures in an overall tight health budget. Treasurer Wayne Swan, a survivor of prostate cancer, found \$18.5m for research on the disease. There was also money set aside for screening programs, treatment and support, chemotherapy drugs and data collection.

Cancer Council Victoria welcomes the expansion of the bowel cancer screening program, but it should target all Australians aged 50 every two years. We will continue to advocate, with the Cancer Council Australia, for all political parties to build on this support in time for the next Federal election.

New projects/spending

- \$18.5 m over four years for research on prostate cancer. This includes money for a new Australian Prostate Cancer Research Centre at the Kinghorn Cancer Centre in Sydney, and continued funding for centres at Epworth Hospital in Melbourne (\$6.2m) and Princess Alexandra Hospital in Brisbane (\$6.2m).
- \$16m for bowel cancer screening, which will allow 70-year-olds to be offered screening from 2015.
- \$56m to expand the age range for breast cancer screening to include women aged 70 to 74. This measure is expected to result in an extra 145,000 women being screened every two years from 2016-17.
- \$19.5m to continue the work of McGrath Foundation Breast Care nurses, who act as patient advocates and co-ordinate care for women with breast cancer. The government will create 13 nursing positions to bring the total to 57.
- \$24m for bone marrow transplants.
- \$18m for CanTeen's work providing treatment and support for young people with cancer.
- \$6m for improved lung cancer treatment.

- \$37m to the Victorian Cytology Service for early detection of pre-cancerous cervical conditions.
- \$2m for Cancer Australia to address gaps in cancer data to improve survival rates.
- \$30m on additional dispensing fees for chemotherapy drugs over the next six months while a review into these services is conducted.

Existing projects/spending

- The new package is on top of \$3.5bn that has been spent on cancer care and support since 2007, including \$275.8m for the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. The Commonwealth is also funding new regional cancer centres.
- The Government, through the National Health and Medical Research Council, is the largest funder of cancer research in Australia. More than \$1.1 billion committed since 2007. Cancer research is the single largest investment by the NHMRC.

Tax changes

- A packet of 25 cigarettes will be 7 cents more expensive from the first half of 2014, after a change in indexation that sees tobacco excise keep pace with salary rises. The budget papers did not reveal how much this would raise.

