



29 June 2016

Professor Lyn Littlefield OAM  
Executive Director  
Australian Psychological Society  
PO Box 38  
Flinders Lane VIC 8009

Dear Professor Littlefield,

Thank you for your email about the policy areas of interest to the Australia Psychological Society (APS).

Labor has set out more than 100 positive policies, including:

- Better Support for People with Mental Illness and Action to Prevent Suicide:  
[http://www.alp.org.au/mentalhealth?\\_ga=1.216324051.435956386.1462752358](http://www.alp.org.au/mentalhealth?_ga=1.216324051.435956386.1462752358).
- Stronger Medicare with New Models of Care  
[http://www.100positivepolicies.org.au/stronger\\_medicare\\_new\\_models\\_of\\_care](http://www.100positivepolicies.org.au/stronger_medicare_new_models_of_care).
- An Age-friendly Australia  
[http://www.100positivepolicies.org.au/an\\_age\\_friendly\\_australia](http://www.100positivepolicies.org.au/an_age_friendly_australia).
- Closing the gap: Positive Policies for Indigenous Australians  
[https://cdn.australianlabor.com.au/documents/Labors\\_Positive\\_Policies\\_For\\_Indigenous\\_Australians.pdf](https://cdn.australianlabor.com.au/documents/Labors_Positive_Policies_For_Indigenous_Australians.pdf).
- A National Redress Scheme for Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse  
[http://www.alp.org.au/nationalredressscheme?\\_ga=1.244948544.435956386.1462752358](http://www.alp.org.au/nationalredressscheme?_ga=1.244948544.435956386.1462752358)
- Reducing Family and Domestic Violence and supporting victims  
[http://www.alp.org.au/familyviolence?\\_ga=1.38419302.435956386.1462752358](http://www.alp.org.au/familyviolence?_ga=1.38419302.435956386.1462752358)  
[http://www.alp.org.au/domesticviolenceleave?\\_ga=1.249814979.435956386.1462752358](http://www.alp.org.au/domesticviolenceleave?_ga=1.249814979.435956386.1462752358)  
[http://www.alp.org.au/domesticviolenceleave?\\_ga=1.215193810.435956386.1462752358](http://www.alp.org.au/domesticviolenceleave?_ga=1.215193810.435956386.1462752358)  
[http://www.100positivepolicies.org.au/increasing\\_efforts\\_to\\_prevent\\_and\\_address\\_family\\_violence](http://www.100positivepolicies.org.au/increasing_efforts_to_prevent_and_address_family_violence).
- A Humane and Compassionate Approach to Asylum Seekers.  
[http://www.alp.org.au/asylumseekers?\\_ga=1.215193810.435956386.1462752358](http://www.alp.org.au/asylumseekers?_ga=1.215193810.435956386.1462752358).

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- Action on Climate Change to Protect the Environment  
<http://www.100positivepolicies.org.au/#policy-acting-on-climate-change-protecting-the-environment>.

In regards to the 10 issues you raised, please find Labor's response attached.

Yours sincerely,

**ALP Information Services Unit**  
Australian Labor Campaign Headquarters  
[www.alp.org.au](http://www.alp.org.au)



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## **Better Access**

Labor will take action to give certainty to those who experience mental illness, those who care for them and the staff that deliver critical services and programs.

A Shorten Labor Government will outline the priorities for implementation of the National Mental Health Commission recommendations within our first 100 days.

A Shorten Labor Government will also give funding certainty to the 95 headspace and six early psychosis centres currently operating around the country to enable them to stay open and continue to help young people.

## **Psychological services in regional, rural and remote Australia**

Labor generally supports the National Mental Health Commission's recommendations to devolve mental health service delivery to a regional level through the Primary Health Networks to allow better targeted and local approaches.

A Shorten Labor Government will establish a permanent Australian Healthcare Reform Commission to assist all levels of government to continuously improve our health care system.

Labor will establish 12 regional initiatives – six urban, four regional and two remote - as the first stage in implementation of a comprehensive, whole-of-system approach to suicide prevention. Regions will apply for grants to fund place-based initiatives tailored to local community needs for services and support.

We will work with stakeholders and State and Territory Governments to identify these sites within the first 100 days of government.

## **Chronic disease management**

Labor recognises the need for programs that help people to be more physically active, to eat healthier, to stop smoking and to reduce drinking at risky levels.

A Shorten Labor Government will provide an additional \$100 million over two years to strengthen the frontline of Australia's health care system – primary care.

Building a stronger primary care system will provide better day to day health care for tens of thousands of Australians, meaning fewer people end up in hospital.

Labor's investment will help develop new models of integrated primary care including the development of a unique Australian model of patient-centred medical homes – *Your Family Doctor*. Labor will ensure an appropriate mix of launch sites in metropolitan, regional and rural areas, so that the models developed meet the needs of all Australians.

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A Shorten Labor Government will tackle Australia's chronic disease crisis through a preventive health package that will help families to raise healthy children and keep Australians healthy throughout their lives.

Chronic diseases are the leading cause of illness, disability and death in Australia. One in three Australians suffer from at least one chronic disease, like heart disease or diabetes.

Many of these diseases are due to preventable risk factors such as physical inactivity, poor nutrition, smoking and the harmful use of alcohol.

A Shorten Labor Government will invest \$300 million in a five-point plan to prevent chronic disease:

- Investing in 50 Healthy Communities nationwide, to help communities at the greatest risk of chronic disease to stay well.
- Tackling obesity through Australia's first National Physical Activity Strategy and a National Nutrition Framework.
- Continuing the push to reduce smoking rates, particularly in at-risk communities.
- Addressing the harmful use of alcohol through a National Alcohol Strategy.
- Expanding the successful Better Health Channel into a nationwide platform for health information.

The National Better Health Channel will be a national health information platform, providing the health information that all Australians need, and linking them to the services and supports available in their communities, to help Australians better manage their own health.

### **Aged care**

Labor believes that older Australians – having worked hard and contributed to our nation for decades – deserve dignity and security in their older years and to remain active and included members of the community.

Currently, people aged over 65 make up 14 per cent of the population, but according to the 2014 Intergenerational Report, this will increase to 25 per cent over the next 30 years.

It is vital that we act strategically to capture the opportunities and address the challenges of an ageing population, and ensure we have both the social and physical infrastructure to make Australia an age-friendly nation.

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In 2012, Labor delivered one of the biggest reforms to aged care in a generation – the \$3.7 billion, ten-year strategy known as the Living Longer, Living Better (LLLB) aged care package.

These reforms were designed to build a fairer, more sustainable and nationally consistent aged care system to meet the challenges of an ageing population.

Today, these reforms are delivering choice, easier access and better care for older Australians, their families and carers, while ensuring the aged care and services industry is equipped to deal with the dramatic growth in our ageing population. But there is more to do.

A Shorten Labor Government will:

- Address ongoing problems in the My Aged Care gateway in the first 100 days of government, in consultation with the aged care sector, consumers and medical and allied health providers.
- Conduct an independent review of the LLLB reforms with a view to moving to greater flexibility, choice and consumer control by 1 July 2017, with a particular focus on the Aged Care Funding Instrument, following concerns raised by the sector and growing costs in this area.
- Work with the aged care sector and unions to ensure we can meet the challenges of the increasing need for aged care workers, as well as career progression and conditions for this low paid and predominantly female workforce.
- Establish the Active Ageing Fund to support programs to reduce the risk of dementia, prevent falls, improve physical activities and healthy lifestyles - enabling older Australians to age well in their own communities, at home and at work.

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing**

A Shorten Labor Government will:

- Outline the priorities for implementation of the National Mental Health Commission recommendations within our first 100 days.
- Task the National Indigenous Health Equality Council to work with the National Mental Health Commission to develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health Plan.
- Invest \$57 million in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Family Centres, which provide holistic, culturally appropriate early learning, health and family support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families in the early years before formal schooling.

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## **Institutionalised child sexual abuse**

A Shorten Labor Government will establish a National Redress Scheme for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse.

Labor strongly believes that redress should be survivor focused.

All redress should be offered, assessed and provided with appropriate regard to the needs of particularly vulnerable survivors.

To ensure the needs of survivors are central to all decision making, a Shorten Labor Government will establish a National Redress Advisory Council to work with all governments on the development and operation of the National Redress Scheme.

The National Redress Advisory Council will include representatives of:

- Survivor advocacy and support groups.
- Non-government institutions, particularly those that are expected to be required to respond to a significant number of claims for redress.
- People with expertise in issues affecting survivors with disabilities.
- People with expertise in issues of particular importance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survivors.
- People with expertise in psychological and legal issues relevant to survivors.

## **Domestic violence**

A Shorten Labor Government will deliver:

- More than \$70 million over three years in targeted funding to ensure those experiencing family violence can access critical services when they need them.
- A National Crisis Summit on Family and Domestic Violence within our first 100 days in office.
- An annual statement to the Parliament on progress in eliminating family and domestic violence.
- A commitment to responding to the recommendations of the Final Report of the COAG Advisory Panel on Reducing Violence Against Women and their Children, and the recommendations of the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence, within a year of taking office.

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- \$65 million over six years to ensure 1800 RESPECT, Our WATCH and Australia’s National Research Organisation for Women’s Safety (ANROWS) can continue their critical work in tackling the scourge of family violence.
- \$43.2 million over four years to avoid re-traumatisation of victims and survivors from being cross-examined by alleged perpetrators personally – and instead providing for both parties to be legally represented.
- \$3.6 million for pilot programs in relation to family and domestic violence in culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

These measures build on Labor’s earlier significant commitments to stopping family and domestic violence, including measures such as transitional housing options for women and children escaping family and domestic violence.

### **Asylum seekers**

In 2013, the former Labor Government implemented the Regional Resettlement Arrangement which severely restricted the ability of people smugglers in Indonesia to “sell” the journey to Australia. A Shorten Labor Government will stand firm on maintaining a policy of offshore processing to keep this perilous boat journey shut.

However, this does not mean that Labor believes these facilities should be run as punitive holding cells. The processing facilities on Manus Island and Nauru must be humane and offer people seeking safety exactly that.

Labor will empower the Commonwealth Ombudsman to provide independent oversight of Australia’s onshore detention network and will continue to ensure that those working in the immigration system enjoy the benefit of whistleblower protections to speak out about any maladministration and corruption.

Labor is absolutely committed to protecting the interests of children within the immigration detention system and will provide a strong independent voice within government to advocate for the interests of children seeking asylum. A Shorten Labor Government will appoint an advocate, independent of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, backed by the resources and statutory powers necessary to pursue the best interests of those children, including the power to bring court proceedings on a child’s behalf.

This will not reduce the Minister’s obligations in relation to unaccompanied non-citizen children or the ability of other interested parties to take court action against the Minister. The Independent Children’s Advocate will have access to all unaccompanied minors in detention and in the community to ensure their rights and interests are protected. Labor will also legislate to impose mandatory reporting of child abuse in all offshore and onshore immigration detention facilities.

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Finally, Labor will restore fast and fair processing of asylum claims for those people already living in Australia. This will see us reinstate references to the UN Refugees Convention in the Migration Act to reverse the Turnbull Liberal Government's retrograde efforts to undermine international law. We will reinstate access to the Refugee Review Tribunal and abolish the Independent Assessment Authority established by the Turnbull Government.

A Shorten Labor Government will focus on removing people from detention as soon as possible, in particular children and their families.

## **Climate change**

Labor accepts the overwhelming scientific consensus that human activity since the industrial revolution has increased average global temperatures, leading to climate change.

Labor has a clear plan to combat climate change by getting Australia's pollution levels back under control. Our plan will ensure that Australian business and workers are in the best position possible to benefit from the huge investment and job opportunities that come from a renewable energy and clean technology future.

This policy is underpinned by Labor's fundamental commitment to fairness, ensuring that Australians are supported through this transition and no one is left behind. That's why we have taken an approach that allows us to appropriately respond to economic circumstances, while also meeting long term environmental goals.

Labor's Climate Change Action Plan provides a pathway for an orderly transition to a low pollution economy through six key elements:

- [Making Australia a Leading Renewable Energy Economy](#) by ensuring that 50 per cent of the nation's electricity is sourced from renewable energy by 2030, providing the Clean Energy Finance Corporation with more certainty and more flexibility, with less red tape and more technology options, and developing new community power projects.
- [Cleaner Power Generation](#) to ensure the transition in Australia's electricity generation from old, heavy-polluting coal fired power stations to modern, clean energy is an orderly transition, with concrete support for workers and communities.
- [Building Jobs and Industry](#) maximising the job opportunities from clean energy and clean technology, while also securing the future of critical Australian industries through a Strategic Industries Taskforce. This will be supported by a Strategic Industries Reserve Fund of \$300 million to support the transition of key industries through to 2020.
- [Cutting Pollution](#) through an Emissions Trading Scheme, placing a legal cap on pollution from large polluters through a cap and offsets scheme, while supporting industry by ensuring access to international carbon offsets.

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- Capturing Carbon on the Land by reinvigorating the Carbon Farming Initiative to encourage carbon storage on the land and in agriculture, and taking decisive action to deal with broad scale land clearing.
- Increasing Energy Efficiency to double Australia's national energy productivity by 2030 and implementing new emissions standards for motor vehicles to cut pollution on our roads.

### **Disaster response funding**

While Labor has no current plan around mental health services in the event of disasters, we have a strong record in providing people the help they need in the event of natural disaster. Our broader mental health plan will ensure better access to mental health services around the country which will also support the need for help in times of disaster.

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