

VICTORIAN MEDICARE ACTION GROUP

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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WHICH VICTORIAN MPs SUPPORT THE PROPOSED GP CO-PAYMENT?

'The Victorian Medicare Action Group has today commenced a survey of all Victorian Members of Parliament seeking their views on the proposed \$7 GP co-payment and changes to the level of federal government funding for public hospitals. VMAG plans to release the findings of the survey in early November.' Meredith Carter, VMAG spokesperson said today

Election questions about Medicare co-payments and public hospital funding

VMAG have written to all Victorian MPs to seek their views on the federal government's moves to shift the burden of funding public hospitals to the states and the proposal to introduce copayments for GP visits, which will potentially also be imposed in hospital emergency departments.

VMAG has asked for a response to the following questions:

1. Do you support the federal government reducing public hospital funding by \$1.8b, leaving the states to make up the shortfall or drastically reduce services?
2. Do you support a co-payment for patients presenting in hospital emergency departments?
3. Do you support the \$7 Medicare co-payment for GP services proposed in the federal Budget?
4. If you support a GP co-payment how do you propose to manage the increased load on emergency departments and community health services in your electorate as a result of patients deferring seeing a doctor early, before they become acutely ill?

VMAG will compile the responses we receive in a report to be published on the VMAG website in early November 2014.

About the Victorian Medicare Action Group (VMAG)

VMAG is an informal alliance of interested people and organisations. VMAG has a large membership including health practitioners, health organisations, community organisations, policy advocates, religious organisations, unions and consumers.

VMAG is apolitical and open for all consumers and organisations to join. The group has previously run successful save Medicare campaigns.

VMAG believes the federal government's plan to fund a *Medical Research Future Fund* from charging a \$7 co-payment to see the doctor is a short term, short sighted decision. \$7 co-payments will likely see people defer seeking healthcare, resulting in more expensive treatments being needed later and further overcrowding of emergency departments. Those with chronic illnesses; people on low incomes; people living in rural and remote areas; young families; and older Australians are all going to suffer as a result of the proposed co-payment.

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