



MEDIA RELEASE

THE COALITION'S POLICY TO INDEX THE SENIORS HEALTH CARD

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A Coalition government will provide more peace of mind to self-funded seniors by indexing the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card (CSHC).

Click here to read our policy.

Having done the right thing and saved for their retirement, many retirees face unexpected medical bills and of losing their entitlement because of changes in retirement income.

The current CSHC threshold of \$50,000 income for singles and \$80,000 for couples has not been increased since 2001.

If elected, the Coalition will index the CSHC to the consumer price index which occurs annually in September each year, with the first indexation to take effect in the first changes in consumer prices over the current financial year.

The CSHC provides cost of living assistance to retirees who are of pensionable age but do not qualify for the Age Pension. It ensures cardholders receive a Pension Supplement; a concessional rate for items listed on the PBS; a reduction in out-of-hospital expenses, through the Medicare Safety Net; and concessional bulk-billed GP appointments, at the discretion of the doctor.

We understand the concerns of seniors about cost of living pressures, rising costs for healthcare as well as rising utility bills. That is why the Coalition will end the carbon tax, keep fortnightly pension and benefit increases, end Labor's health insurance and index the CSHC.

By re-starting indexation of income thresholds we can allow more retirees to keep their CSHC and reduce the fear of losing the card because of unexpected changes in income.

The last Coalition Government expanded access to the CSHC from 33,000 to 318,000 in 2007.

While indexing the CSHC has a \$100 million cost to the budget over the next five years, estimates, the CSHC encourages seniors to be self-reliant.

Indexing the CSHC and providing greater cost of living assistance to older Australians is part of the Coalition's *Real Solutions* Plan to build a stronger Australia and a better future for all Australians.

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