

## Election 2019 sparks a contest in health

MEDIA RELEASE FRIDAY 10 MAY 2019

The big parties have pledged billions of dollars in welcome new health spending but there is variation in how they rate against the Consumers Health Forums priorities for the community's health.

The Consumers Health Forum today releases its [scorecard](#) on how the parties stack up in terms of policies focused on issues including patient leadership and self-management, primary care, First Nations health, prevention patient-centred issues.

"The parties have promised lots for health but what is lacking is a coherent vision to foster long-term strategies, including preventive health, integrated care and support for patient-focused care and consumer leadership in health," the CEO of the Consumers Health Forum, Leanne Wells, said.

"The scorecard rated the major parties' responses to 37 detailed measures across eight policy areas recommended by CHF in [Priorities for the 2019 Federal Election: Making Health Better](#) launched on 23 April. The Greens scored the most positives, 21, followed by Labor with 16 and the Coalition with 7.

"It has been encouraging to see significant promises from Labor in areas like primary and integrated care reform and expanded dental benefits for pensioners – and for this to be a down-payment on their vision for universal access to dental care for all Australians under Medicare. The Coalition scored best on early childhood, youth and family measures but not at all on the issues to do with the social determinants of health.

"The Greens scored well across all eight categories and particularly on prevention including its support to increase spending on prevention to five per cent of health funding.

"We sought the responses of the parties on each of our detailed proposals. We were seeking indicators of a vision for what we could achieve with a consumer-centred health system with consumers involved in design and implementation in the future.

"Australia needs to break out of the dysfunctional status quo that results from federal-state divided health funding responsibilities. To a large extent the big parties are still captive to hospital-dominated plans that chew up most of the health budget.

Health is more than hospitals and a stronger focus on community-based, integrated care would in many cases yield happier patients, better outcomes and at lower cost.

**Contact:** Mark Metherell, 0429 111 986

## Consumers shaping health



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"We support Labor's plans for a health reform commission which hopefully would work towards a more consumer-focused and integrated health system and advocate that it should have consumer commissioners as part of its establishment should Labor form government.

[Click here to see the Health scorecard summary](#)

[Click here for the detailed scorecard with commentary](#)

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**Contact:** Mark Metherell, 0429 111 986

**Consumers shaping health**

PO Box 73  
Deakin West ACT 2600

Ph: (02) 6273 5444  
Fax: (02) 6273 5888

[www.chf.org.au](http://www.chf.org.au)