

Response from the Australian Greens

Thank you for your email to Senator Steele-John with Arthritis Australia's election platform. We have had a number of emails from constituents in support of your asks.

It is crucial that the healthcare needs of those living with arthritis, as listed in this platform, are prioritised in the next term of government.

A strong public hospital system ensures everyone has access to high-quality care when they need it, whether it's during a pandemic, a major accident, or a life-changing health crisis. The Liberals have ripped billions from public hospitals, which has meant longer waiting times. As the country has dealt with the pandemic, surgery waiting lists have grown, but there's no plan to clear the backlog.

The Greens have a plan to clear public hospital surgery waiting lists with a one-off \$875 million payment. All people in clinical urgency categories 1, 2, and 3 will be eligible. Our package of healthcare policies will also ensure surgery waiting lists are kept clear in the future and people can get access to surgery as soon as they need it.

The Australian Greens will also invest an extra \$8 billion into our public hospitals by legislating for equal (50/50) funding growth of hospitals between the states and the Commonwealth. People will be able to get faster access to better care when they need it.

We know that an effective health system must be based on primary health care and preventive measures such as health promotion, disease prevention, risk reduction and early intervention in order to manage chronic disease, reduce ill-health and to prevent avoidable hospital admissions. The Greens want expanded community-based support services and agencies to enable people with chronic mental and/or physical illnesses, and their carers, to live in and participate more fully in their communities.

The Australian Greens prioritise the healthcare system being accessible, effective and affordable. We have a plan to stop the handouts to big private health corporations, reinvesting \$59 billion of public money that is given to private health insurance companies into the public health system. This will help reduce out-of-pocket costs, reduce waiting times, invest in a high-quality workforce, and improve access for people living in regional and remote areas. We recognise that an effective health care system, including mental health services, is dependent upon a skilled, well-resourced workforce.

Underpinning all of this, the Australian Greens want a comprehensive program of health and medical research, including research into preventive health and primary care, including for arthritis.

You can also access our plan for the NDIS here: [Equality and Justice for All | Policies | Australian Greens](#)

Could you please confirm if you were looking to do a federal election scorecard and therefore need specific commitments to your plan?

We look forward to working with Arthritis Australia and other relevant stakeholders to achieve effective health outcomes for Australians and those living with arthritis in the next term of parliament.