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MEDIA RELEASE

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**\$250 MILLION INVESTMENT IN LIFE CHANGING CANCER MEDICINES
TO BENEFIT PATIENTS IN KOOYONG**

The Turnbull Government will invest \$250 million to make four life-changing cancer medicines available to patients in Kooyong from August 1.

The listing of these new medicines will save patients thousands of dollars, in some cases the saving for each patient will be over \$130,000 per year.

The new listings on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme will now mean cancer patients will pay a maximum of \$39.50 per script or just \$6.40 per script for concessional patients, including pensioners.

This will make a profound difference to patients and their families who are facing the daily battle against cancer.

Almost 1,000 patients with a type of head and neck cancer, squamous cell carcinoma, who would otherwise pay almost tens of thousands per year for Opdivo, will now have affordable access. The drug is part of the new wave of medicines utilising the body's immune system to fight cancer.

For some patients, Opdivo significantly slows the spread of cancer, extends the patient's life and in some cases causes remission from the disease.

Around 220 patients with a subtype of lymphoma cancer, relapsed or refractory mantle cell lymphoma, will benefit from the listing of Imbruvica, as patients would otherwise pay \$134,000 for a year's treatment. Imbruvica works by targeting, reducing and in some cases killing cancerous cells.

More than 1,500 patients who are receiving chemotherapy for cancer treatment will benefit from Neulasta which helps the body to make new neutrophils, a type of white blood cell.

Chemotherapy sometimes damages and depletes neutrophils and Neulasta aims to prevent this condition, helping the patient to fight off infection by creating new white blood cells which in turn helps manage the side effects of chemotherapy and allow patients to stick to their treatment regime. This would otherwise cost a patient \$4,700 for a course of treatment.

Around 1,125 patients with rare types of leukaemia cancer, myeloproliferative neoplasms, would otherwise pay more than \$18,000 per year, will now benefit from the listing of Pegasys.

The medicine, which has anti-viral and anti-proliferative properties, strengthens the body's immune system to fight infections and diseases.

The Turnbull Government's strong economic management means we are providing Australian patients with access to life-saving and life-changing medicines quicker than ever before.

Since coming into Government, the Coalition has helped improve the health of Australians by subsidising more than \$9 billion worth of new medicines.

In the Budget we announced our commitment to invest \$2.4 billion in new medicines to build on our commitment to guarantee those essential services that all Australians rely on.

We are now making on average one new PBS listing every single day. Only the Coalition can be trusted to deliver for Australian patients.

Our commitment to the PBS is rock solid. Together with Medicare, it is a foundation of our world-class health care system.

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