

MEDIA RELEASE

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Cancer Council welcomes National Strategy for the Elimination of Cervical Cancer in Australia

Cancer Council welcomes the release of the [National Strategy for the Elimination of Cervical Cancer in Australia](#) and funding to support its delivery, announced by the Australian Government today.

Over the past 30 years, cervical cancer rates and deaths in Australia have decreased by approximately 50% and are amongst the lowest in the world. However, there is work to be done in Australia to reach the World Health Organisation's (WHO) agreed elimination threshold by 2035: less than four cases per 100,000 women worldwide.

"Australia is positioned to become the world's first country to eliminate cervical cancer as a public health problem, through the effective implementation of the National Cervical Screening Program and HPV vaccination. This is a remarkable achievement, but the job is not done until all Australians benefit equally from such advancements," said Professor Karen Canfell, Chair of Cancer Council's Cancer Screening and Immunisation Committee.

The new strategy clearly outlines three key targets, reflecting the recommendations of public health organisations including Cancer Council to strengthen cervical cancer prevention, early detection and care. These world-leading targets go further than the WHO strategy to include:

- Extending the 90% HPV vaccination target to include boys as well as girls
- Extending the 70% cervical screening target to 5-yearly participation for eligible 25- to 74-year-olds, rather than twice in a lifetime
- Lifting the target for treatment to 95%, as a commitment to achieving elimination as equitably as possible, leaving no-one behind.

"Australia's targets are ambitious, but achievable. The strategy reflects feedback from women and people with a cervix and high-quality evidence. By acting on the 10 recommendations such as self-collection for screening, improved data collection and peer-to-peer education models, we'll reach the 2035 elimination target," Professor Canfell said.

In 2022, two in three (62%) women and people with a cervix aged 25 to 74 took part in cervical screening, whilst nearly four in five (79%) of eligible adolescents were vaccinated to protect against human papillomavirus (HPV). Together, this prevents the spread of HPV and detects HPV which causes of almost all cervical cancers before cancer develops.



“Evidence shows that most cervical cancers occur in women who have never been screened and in women who do not screen regularly”, explains Professor Canfell.

“That’s why we’re delighted to see recommendations and funding tailored to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Australians living in remote and regional areas of Australia, or who are part of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities to achieve elimination.”

“We commend the Australian Government on a strategy that outlines opportunities to improve prevention and early detection, whilst funding programs in communities to help more Australians feel confident, safe, and empowered to regularly participate in screening and get vaccinated,” Professor Canfell adds.

Find Cancer Council’s submission on the strategy [here](#).

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Contact details

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About Cancer Council Australia

Cancer Council Australia is Australia’s leading cancer charity, working to reduce the impact of cancer for all Australians. Cancer Council Australia works with its members, the eight state and territory Cancer Councils to:

- Undertake and fund cancer research
- Prevent and control cancer
- Provide information and support for people affected by cancer
- Shape and influence policy and practice

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