



## Submission to The Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee Inquiry on the extent and nature of poverty in Australia

Cancer Council responded to The Senate Committee Inquiry into the nature and extent of poverty in Australia, which sought to understand factors such as the rates and drivers of poverty in Australia, the relationship between economic conditions and poverty, the impacts of poverty amongst different demographics and communities, and mechanisms to address and reduce poverty. The Senate referred this Inquiry on 7 September 2022, and the consultation period closed on 3 February 2023.

Cancer Council's submission focused on the social determinants of health and the interplay between socio-economic status and the increased likelihood of receiving a cancer diagnosis. Further to this, our response highlighted how some of the modifiable risk factors which can increase the likelihood of developing cancer, such as daily smoking, and insufficient levels of physical activity, are highest within the lowest socio-economic areas in Australia. As a result, Cancer Council are calling for investment in preventive health and health promotion in economically disadvantaged communities, including integrated multi-channel behaviour change strategies and improving access to healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity.

Additionally, our submission centred on the financial costs of cancer, and how receiving a cancer diagnosis can often result in individuals experiencing financial toxicity and can subsequently place them at risk of poverty. Therefore, Cancer Council has recommended that Australians be afforded appropriate income support by government if they find themselves on low incomes, or unable to work as a result of a cancer diagnosis.

Further information about the Senate Inquiry is available at [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Community\\_Affairs/PovertyinAustralia/Terms\\_of\\_Reference](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/PovertyinAustralia/Terms_of_Reference)