



D

FEDERAL POLICY: HEALTH

One Nation believes that all Australians have a right to a high standard of health and hospital care. We support the development of an equitable, efficient and high quality care system that is accessible to all Australians regardless of means. Our proposed new tax system and reinstatement of public hospital boards will fund Medicare and public hospitals.

As Australians age, their need for medical services increases. Advances in technology, new investigative and correctional procedures also add to cost increases. Advances in anaesthetics have enabled patients to undergo formerly risky procedures. This places ever increasing tax-burdens, which under our present tax-system are funded almost entirely by the PAYG tax-payer, on the community. We have to seriously consider changing our tax-system in the not too distant future to maintain a basic health-care system.

ONE NATION SUPPORTS:

- 1) Free medical care for essential treatment. Patient contributions towards initial Consultation only.
- 2) Free basic dental care for all Australians.
- 3) No medical litigation (unless wilful malpractice is alleged), independent multi-disciplined Tribunal to assess Doctors competency to continue to practise.
- 4) Increased funding for Disability Home Facilities.
- 5) Upgrade Rural Hospitals.
- 6) Training for Enrolled Nurses in Teaching Hospitals to improve competence.
- 7) Health Care Graduates required serving minimum terms at Rural Centres.
- 8) Streamlining administration in hospitals.
- 9) Bring back the Commonwealth Serum Laboratory.
- 10) Train more doctors.
- 11) Hospitals to employ, rather than hire doctors.

Our aim is the reconstitution of local community management of hospitals as to provide immediate responses, which distant bureaucracy is unable to supply. Locally based management encourages community involvement in the provision of auxiliary services and provides jobs. We will eliminate bureaucratic duplication, provide efficient services and reduce costs. No federal conditions on funding and service application will apply.

- “Ageing in place”, rather than being placed in nursing homes, should be encouraged. This provides for more dignified and fulfilling final years of life. Financial assistance will be provided.
- Health services should be distributed according to demographic needs, with special funding assessment given to isolated geographical regions.

EUTHANASIA

The debate on voluntary euthanasia is in full flight again in a number of Western countries, including Australia and New Zealand. Should we be humane and allow terminally ill patients, or those whose quality of life has diminished to an unacceptable extent be given the chance of a peaceful death with dignity at the time of their own choosing? Or should we keep them alive at all costs, disregarding their often prolonged torturous suffering, the undignified drawn out attempts to let them be around for another day, doped up to the eyeballs, vegetating in homes awaiting the inescapable end?

Almost every poll conducted in the past has shown that an overwhelming majority of participants wants euthanasia legalised. The Australian Medical Association is justly concerned about the legal implications. The Right to Life Association is again trumpeting that this is too complex an issue for public opinion to be considered. The religious opposition, though small in numbers, has been able to stall attempts repetitively. There surely must come the day where a government which wants to be seen to be democratic will implement the wishes of the people it purports to represent.

ONE NATION supports voluntary Euthanasia under certain circumstances such as a directive from a “Living Will” and approval from the immediate family and two independent Medical Practitioners. ONE NATION states in their policies that it believes in and seeks provisions for Citizen Initiated Referenda. Unlike other political parties, we believe that by giving the people the opportunity to exercise their right to be inclusive, collective responsibility will provide for stable and successful governance. The government claims to govern us by adhering to democratic principles. Then let us have a referendum on all major controversial issues.

IN-DEPTH VIEW ON HEALTH

States have the primary responsibility for the provision of health services however decisions by the federal government and allocation of tied grants have a direct impact on health issues. As Australians age, they will place increasing demands on the health services. There will also be a greater demand for nursing home and hostel accommodation.

As technology is advancing with great rapidity, new investigative and corrective procedures are arriving on the medical scene; litigation has also reached epidemic proportions and needs reform. The ever-increasing costs have to be funded and it is already apparent that this is beyond the individual who can no longer afford the cost of private insurance.

- ✓ One Nation proposes to fund a quality public health and hospital system through our E-tax and social security taxes that Australians have contributed to through their working years. We propose a system of district community hospitals run by a hospital board. Community health care to be provided by local GPs who can then refer patients to hospital care if and when needed and attend to their patients in these hospitals. This will take the pressure off the hospital systems by people who abuse it for minor and non-urgent matters.

- ✓ One Nation proposes that standard health care will be free to all Australians who qualify. Visitors to the country must be covered with travel insurance to cover any health and hospital services for the period of their visit. One Nation proposes Medicare cards with photos and all relevant qualification data to be issued, so preventing the system being abused. The pension safety net shall be set at zero.
- ✓ The private health system is profit-driven and generally foreign-owned and currently subsidised by \$1.6 billion annually. One Nation proposes to redirect this money to the public system to increase the scheduled fee for consultations with GPs. Two decades of government policy enacted through regulation has allowed GP rebates to increasingly decline against cost of living rises. The result is that doctors have lost ownership and control of their practices. The giant health care corporations have swallowed them up.
- ✓ GPs are a very valuable commodity for the vertically integrated corporate medical centres through their ability to tap into Medicare funds via their referrals, pathology, X-ray and specialists. The universal health care system in Australia was designed to be a system where all Australians were able to obtain good quality health care if and when the need suddenly arose. What we are now witnessing is the beginning of the full US health care scenario in general practice, specialist services and hospital ownership. Governments are selling off our hospitals to large corporations. Greed has gobbled up bedside manner and real care to line the pockets of overseas investors. One Nation believes this abuse should cease.
- ✓ One Nation believes gap coverage between standard public care and additional care should be available. Insurance companies will be encouraged to provide coverage based on amounts rather than services. This will reduce current abuses and keep prices down.
- ✓ One Nation understands that at times things can go wrong. A newly established tribunal in the Department of Health will handle complaints about any alleged incompetence; malpractice or the hospital boards themselves. Compensation shall be based on worker's compensation rates which shall be reassessed in order to increase them back in line with current living standards and any major incident shall be based on the expense of a lifetime of care. Dissatisfied patients in private hospitals will still have their legal option.
- ✓ One Nation believes Australian seniors, throughout their working lives, have contributed through social security taxes to health care and have a right to worry-free adequate health care during their retirement years. (Please refer to One Nation Senior's policy for details).
- ✓ One Nation believes in re-establishment of the apprentice training of registered nurses. All public hospitals shall accommodate the apprenticeship scheme.
- ✓ One Nation believes in retention and encouragement of General Practice with adequate fees to cover costs to be provided from the federal health system.
- ✓ One Nation would stop costly abuse of our public hospital systems.
- ✓ One Nation would take steps to ensure quality health and medical care is available to rural communities.
- ✓ One Nation believes in the restoration of the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories to enable us to retain an alternative to the market exploitation of multinational drug companies. This would provide us with an indication of the real cost of drug production.

BACKGROUND BRIEFING ON HEALTH

The Commonwealth Health Department covers the following: Grants, Health Insurance, Health Policy, Health Service, Aboriginal Health, Medical Research, and People with Disabilities, Pharmacy, and Public Health.

The health sector is also a major employer, employing some 537,000 people. (Doctors and nurses accounting for only about 40% of this number). The Chifley Government first proposed Medical Benefits Schemes. In the 23 years of Liberal/Country Party government that followed, some progress in health was still made, with the introduction of free school milk and a Pensioner Medical Service which gave aged, invalid, widows and Service pensioners and their dependents free medical treatment by a general practitioner.

The Whitlam Government in 1974 introduced Medibank. It eliminated the means test for hospital treatment and provided standard ward accommodation for free and gave free outpatient treatment. It paid the salaries for all doctors providing care to public patients and covered 85% of all medical bills by the government. Hawke and Keating quickly replaced Medibank with the health insurance scheme, Medicare on 1/2/84. Unlike Medibank that was funded entirely from general revenue, Medicare was financed by a general tax/levy. This change in the context of Hawke/Keating policies which destroyed the economy, began the slide downhill toward private "user pays" health care - health insurance for those who can afford it and a decrepit public health system for everyone else.

Upon the return to power of the Liberals in 1996, John Howard took up where Hawke and Keating had left off. In Costello's first budget he slashed health care by \$3.4 billion. He got the ball rolling on expanded private health insurance by arranging a "rebate" for his friends in the industry of \$1.7 billion and then slashed almost another \$1 billion in his second budget. At the 1996 Premiers' Conference, he forced the states to take a \$1.5 billion overall funding cut which cut an estimated half a billion dollars in state health care funding.

In their obsessive drive to off-load the responsibility of health care and to leave it to the "magic" market place, the Howard government went all out to force people into lifetime private health insurance cover, resulting in the 1999 introduction of a 30% rebate of premiums for all members. The \$1.6 billion a year going to the private health insurance industry is equal to 15% of the total spent by federal and state governments on our public hospital and health care systems annually while profits of private health insurance funds rose 172% to a record \$343 million for 2000 and \$800 million for 2001.

HOSPITAL FINANCING

There is an existing commitment of \$31 million in funding for public hospitals under the 1998-2003 Australian Health Care Agreements. The principals of the Health Care Agreements are similar to those under the Medicare Arrangements; public hospital services will continue to be available to all eligible people:

- Free of charge to all that have paid the Social Services contribution during their working lives.
- On the basis of clinical need within clinically appropriate times regardless of where they live.

(Note Keating reduced eligibility when he put an assets test on the age pension; successive Liberal governments have further reduced its eligibility.)

HOSPITAL WAITING LISTS

Every aspect of public medical care is gradually being downgraded. Public hospitals are being starved of funds, wards and theatres close, specialists disappear and staff levels are so reduced that those on duty are overworked and often abused by irate, frustrated and neglected patients. Some good hospitals are not accredited. Patients are forced to travel long distances to the major city for even minor tests and treatment. **It is not the fault of the staff or the hospitals.** The government has an agenda to hand our public hospitals over to foreign interests. Radiology, pathology, medical insurance and even the public medical system are destined to be corporatised, privatised and foreignised. Much money is wasted by the current health care funding arrangements. One Nation is putting forward a scenario that funding should be provided direct from federal funds to district hospitals.

As state governments are proving to be incapable of running health services, they are overburdened with bureaucracy that consumes most of the funds. Hospitals are no longer funded from gambling; this \$700 million now goes to consolidated revenue to repay the massive debts.

WHY BUST MEDICARE

The Government Department “Australian Council for the Arts” (ACFA) is a classic example of taxpayer dollars being wasted at the expense of hospital and medical care. The ACFA is reported to have funded some 1678 grants in the period 2001-2 to the tune of \$177 million. If it had not been wasted in such a fraudulent way it could have provided:

- 4,480,000 bulk billed visits to the doctor
- 11 new rural hospitals
- 2853 nursing home beds
- 51,315 disability carers
- 146 ambulances

John Howard’s so-called “gun-buy-back” program cost the taxpayer hundreds of millions of dollars which has done nothing towards making communities safer from these weapons, but it could provide much needed health services. The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). The Australian Government Health Insurance Commission has been a step towards corporatising, then privatising, and health in Australia. Most have now received an expensive brochure “Saving you money on Medicines”. Basically, it is a cover up claiming as follows: “Many medicines cost the government much more than the price you pay – some cost hundreds of dollars – but the Government provides a subsidy so that you pay much less”. What they should say is your money is being wasted by the government on multinational drug companies, due to their thrusting upon us of Globalism and selling off all public assets and services. This has rapidly increased the price of drugs especially since the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories were sold off, as the multinationals no longer have any competition to keep them honest.

NUTRITION, CONSUMPTION and ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURE.

One Nation shall continue to bring to the public’s attention legitimate health concerns and our position thereof. Were we in a position to do so, we would implement that which is necessary to ensure that what we consume as food, or are exposed to environmentally, is as safe and healthy as practically possible. We hold the same philosophy with medical, pharmaceutical, dentistry, associated materials and drinking water. All environmental entities would be assessed as to the product’s impact on health.

CHEMICALS WHICH ENDANGER OUR HEALTH.

The North Coast Health directive for the fluoridation of the public water supply is both non-democratic and dangerous. The medical professionals prescribe medication by dosage and period of duration, yet Councils put chemicals into our water supply with no knowledge of the intake of each individual. Fluoride is an industrial poison, a hazardous waste product from the aluminium and phosphate industries. Although it’s not allowed to be randomly disposed of, it is one of the chemicals added to town water. Australia is one of only six countries using this U.S. development. Note: no European country is fluoridated and there is worldwide research and information on its detrimental effects. Dental Fluorosis damages the enamel on teeth making them porous, Skeletal Fluorosis occurs when fluoride, which is readily absorbed in the bones, causes calcification resulting in osteoporosis and hip fractures.

Fluoride accumulates in the pineal gland affecting the regulatory hormone resulting in early onset of puberty and the uptake of aluminium to the brain is of considerable concern. No infant should be given formula made from town water and no child under six should be given it to drink and yet it is in toothpaste, many food products and fruit juices drinks. Aspartame, an artificial sweetener, a chemical manufactured by Monsanto, is found in many processed foods, sugar substitutes and drinks such as Staminade, Diet Coke and Diet Pepsi. Aspartame causes cravings for carbohydrates, which raise blood sugar levels and changes dopamine levels in the brain so it becomes the reason for neurological problems such as depression, headaches, seizures and loss of memory, vision loss and cancer.

It is an excitotoxin and triggers Systemic Lupus and Alzheimer’s. The relationship of rage and violence within communities is a concern. Currently there are three lawsuits filed in California against twelve companies producing or using Aspartame.

Monosodium glutamate (MSG). You thought this had gone away. No. MSG poses as "natural flavourings", as hydrolysed vegetable or plant protein, as herbs and spices and by various other names. It is in soups, stocks, processed food and takeaway foods. MSG triples the amount of insulin the pancreas creates and contributes to obesity. This is another excitotoxin and Aspartame has a synergistic and additive effect with MSG. It precipitates neurodegenerative brain diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's and is of great risk to diabetics.

Irradiation of food

Irradiation of food is now taking place at Narangba, on Deception Bay [deceive the people!], north of Brisbane. The Queensland Health Minister signed the license for Steritech on 30 Jun 2003, to import, transport and use cobalt from Canada for nuclear radiation of Australian food. State owned land was provided and Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) has approved the irradiation of food. FSANZ develops food standards to cover the whole of the food supply chain from paddock to plate.

A subsidiary of the US military and defence contractor, Titan, the Surebeam Corporation which is the largest provider of irradiation technology, has been given blanket approval to irradiate tropical fruit so its partner, Turner and Growers of NZ, is about to build an \$18 million irradiation plant in Cairns. **FSANZ admits it has no money to run trials or research and so will accept the research of others. This is hardly good enough!** Irradiation of food changes the chemical structure creating different and new chemicals. At this stage herbs, spices, teas, herbal supplements and tropical fruit are being irradiated in Australia. Recently, grain fed animals and Ingham chickens have been fed irradiated grain. This means it is already in your food cycle. A health institute in the US claims 70% of vitamins are destroyed by the e-beam, others claim that it is carcinogenic, a mutagen and a tetragen, **i.e. it passes down the generations.**

What will this do to our children and our children's children? The World Trade Organisation (WTO) is pushing for a global standard on food sanitation and sterilisation and that includes food irradiation. We must all be aware that the WTO is a non-elected body, supported by large corporations, financial and insurance interests. We should not be signing Treaties and Agreements laid down and demanded by this WTO and yet our government jumps to do WTO bidding. **Mercury is a powerful poison.** In the body, mercury disrupts cellular function at all levels, affecting neurological function. Symptoms range from irritability to fits of anger, fatigue, decline of intellect and depression. Dentists have already been made aware of the dangers of the amalgam filling which has a mercury base. Large terrestrial fish contain mercury but it is more often present as a base to viral compounds in vaccines.

Your Children's Vaccines / Your Flu Shots.

"Vaccines are a cocktail containing many components including animal serums and various chemicals such as Thimersal. Thimersal is the mercury-based preservative, in the jab. There is concern about Thimersal in that it is suspected of being linked with Autism. It is thought that the prevalence of mercury-based Thimersal leads to the prevalence of Autism by the initial infant vaccine in the first months of life, providing a pathway for substances contained in the so-called triple antigen (MMR, or measles, mumps and rubella) in later shots after 12 months, to run amuck with the brain cells.

The brain cells "link points" or communication junctions become un-wired or confused. It is the follow-up shots which do the real harm, aided and abetted by the earlier mercury shots. It is interesting to note that no official medical statement has been made but Thimersal has presently been replaced by two other toxins, aluminium and formaldehyde. The new five-in- one vaccine is considered an improved childhood shot, but exactly what it contains is not publicised and could be yet another medical problem.

INTERESTING Medical Note:

The University of Calgary [Canada] Medical Research Dept has just exposed mercury as the villain in Alzheimer's Disease. Mercury causes the formation of neurofibrillar tangles, one of the two diagnostic markers for Alzheimer's. The level of mercury in humans is related to mercury/silver amalgam dental fillings and also in the continual use of flu shots. Flu shots contain 25 micrograms of mercury, yet one microgram is considered toxic. Traces of mercury damage nerves. Leading immune-geneticist, Hugh Fudenberg, considers five consecutive flu shots will cause cognitive dysfunction due to the build up of mercury and aluminium in the brain.

Chemical Use in Foodstuffs

Imported prawns contain a banned antibiotic nitrofurans and are fed with dried pellets, ground from abattoir waste. Government has a responsibility, a duty of care, to ensure that the people have safe food and health products. How can this possibly be happening? Is it not bad enough with the 8000% mark up of our meat! Where is our consumer watchdog? What has our Government done about it? Nothing, it would appear.

Gas Flushing: The process known as gas flushing enables meat to be kept on the shelf longer. A new technique of pumping gases into supermarket packaging has enabled some outlets to sell meat that may be weeks old. Today, supermarkets are doing away with butchers. Instead, they use factories to specially pre-pack their meat using a method called "gas flushing" or modified atmosphere packaging (MAP). Critics say the process enables such supermarkets to sell inferior quality, old meat that can spend weeks being stored on the shelf. Gas flushing packaging uses a mixture of oxygen, carbon dioxide and often nitrogen to make the meat appear redder and extend its shelf life in the pack.

Most Butchers will tell you that Meat should be let age properly, not packaged just to look good. Most butchers' meat is absolutely fantastic compared to what you get in supermarkets. The flavour, the tenderness and the texture. It's not just the gas flushing that affects the quality, it's the fact that the meat is already pre-prepared and then gas flushed without being naturally hung. So basically, they're getting the meat straight off the rails at the abattoirs, cutting it and most of the time it's not ready to be cut; it's too fresh and so is very chewy and very stringy.

Woolworths / Safeway say they are endeavouring to keep butchers in most stores who prepare the meat and pack it in cling-wrapped packs. But if you wanted long shelf life, gas flushing was the way to go. Woolworths say they only use it to a minor degree – claiming about 7 per cent of their product is served this way, mainly for small or remote stores where they claim it's not possible for them to have a butchery unit in that location."

Coles Myer is increasing gas-flushed packaging using oxygen and carbon dioxide. Coles say their meat was only on the shelf 6 to 10 days and in the majority of cases less than 3 days.

The question arises, how do we know how old the meat actually is?

Consumers' information on packaging to let them know about processing methods is essential if government is intent on putting a stop to the practice. People have a right to know what is in their food, how it is prepared and preserved. Information on Australian food standards is available from www.foodstandards.gov.au

NATURAL MEDICINE

For those who seek other than conventional doctors and drugs, One Nation will reintroduce previous levels of accessibility to natural medicines and would also have independent safeguards to ensure that which occurred with Pan Pharmaceutical's does not re-occur and a safe and healthy product will be ensured. We will guarantee that people continue to have a choice of natural medicines including herbs, supplements, vitamins and minerals or conventional treatments if they so choose, including the choice of health professional. Proven safe levels of dosage shall be maintained as recommended by the manufacturer or health professional as opposed to the draconian measurements that are being imposed by Codex Alimentarius. One Nation will also work towards the eventuality of building natural medical centers and holistic hospitals where surgical patients who choose alternative treatments can go to recuperate under the care of naturopaths, herbalists, acupuncturists and other holistic healers. Organic food will become more affordable due to the winding back of certification fees to be in line with those of non-organic produce.

Edited and formatted

By

Andrew Webber Policy Coordinator. NSW Federal



**FIGHTING
BACK!**

"Your democratic solution to the two party system"

Join One Nation and help fight for a brighter future for our country.

nswonenation.com.au

Phone/Fax (02) 9709 2332

PO Box 4213 Lugarno NSW 2210

e-mail: onenation@nswonenation.com.au