



St Vincent de Paul Society
good works

MEDIA RELEASE

2nd April 2014

Vinnies Calls On Government to Re-think Medicare Scheme

St Vincent de Paul Society Chief Executive Officer of WA, Mark Fitzpatrick, has called on the Liberal government to think about the people Vinnies assists, already struggling with rising living costs before making any changes to the Medicare system. The proposed Medicare changes may see a cost applied to GP visits and other medical appointments through a proposed co-payment scheme.

With many West Australian's struggling to meet rising health costs, organisations like Vinnies are already providing support to individuals and families with medical expenses, the co-payments, Mr Fitzpatrick said, will only affect those who can least afford it. .

"Vinnies visits over 500 homes a week offering support and comfort to West Australian's in need. The impact of housing and living expenses, such as increasing utility costs in WA, has meant that many household budgets have no room to move."

"The proposed co-payment scheme will directly impact the people we serve and may mean that people will now have to make a choice as to whether they access medical attention or not – the co-payment is nothing more than a tax on the sick and a tax on those who can least afford it"

ALP Senator Sue Lines, joined with Vinnies to condemn the proposed changes saying,

"This Government has already cut more than \$265 million out of health care for Australians. Private health insurance price hikes, effective from today, are the biggest in nine years. Add this to the \$6 tax to see your GP and the Government is swiftly creating a healthcare system unaffordable to most Australians." said the Senator.

"We need to remind this Government that healthcare should be universal and accessible by everyone. Families cannot afford to have their health put on the line for the sake of a budget surplus."

Both, St Vincent de Paul Society Chief Executive Officer, Mark Fitzpatrick and ALP Senator Sue Lines will both be available for interview and a photo opportunity today at 11.30am.

Photo and Interview Opportunity:

St Vincent de Paul Society CEO, Mark Fitzpatrick
Australian Labor Party, Senator for Western Australia, Sue Lines

Date:

Wednesday, 2nd April, 2014

Time:

11.30am

Location:

St Vincent de Paul Society (WA) Inc
Ozanam House
76 Abernethy Road
Belmont, WA 6104

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