

TO THE HONOURABLE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

This petition of concerned citizens of Australia draws to the attention of the House the continued lack of full implementation of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (NBCSP).

National Health & Medical Research Council approved *Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Prevention, Early Detection Management of Colorectal Cancer* strongly recommends biennial screening for bowel cancer for the Australian population over 50 years of age.

Since the launch of the NBCSP five years ago, Australia still lacks a comprehensive program which provides biennial screening for Australians over 50 years of age. These delays continue to result in unnecessary deaths from what is essentially a preventable disease.

- Over 14,000 Australians - men and women, young and old – are diagnosed with bowel cancer each year.
- One in 12 people will develop bowel cancer in their lifetime. The disease kills over 4,000 people each year – more than breast cancer or prostate cancer.
- If caught in time, around 90 per cent of bowel cancer cases can be successfully treated. Screening has been estimated to save around 30 lives per week.

We therefore ask the House to do all in its power to ensure the implementation of a comprehensive National Bowel Cancer Screening Program - biennial screening for the population aged 50 and over, together with a public awareness campaign informing people of the purpose and relevance of screening for this preventable disease.