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Minister for Health and Aged Care

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Continuing focus on the global fight against cancer**

As we mark World Cancer Day, the Australian Government is urging all Australians to be aware of the early warning signs of cancer and take part in free screening programs for breast, cervical and bowel cancer.

It is also a timely reminder of the steps all Australians can take to minimise cancer risk factors including tobacco use, obesity, and exposure to UV rays.

Cancer can take a long time to develop, and screening can find cancer in the early stages. It can also find changes to cells before they become cancer or identify infections that may cause cancer in the future. Early detection and treatment gives people the best chance of survival.

This year, World Cancer Day is about understanding and recognising inequities in cancer care across the globe.

Here in Australia, there are differences in the incidence of cancer and survival outcomes across the population.

The latest statistics show over a million Australians are currently living with or have lived with cancer.

While incidence rates for most of the common cancers have increased, cancer mortality rates continue to decline, more sharply for males than females.

However there is more work to be done, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, people living in rural and remote areas and those from socioeconomically disadvantaged regions more likely to die from cancer.

The Australian Government is committed to improving cancer outcomes for all Australians, regardless of their postcode.

Between 2013-14 to 2020-21, the Government has invested almost \$27 billion in cancer control initiatives.

This has funded high quality cancer research, diagnostic and treatment services, cancer care nurses and a range of national cancer programs to improve the quality of care and access to vital information and support for people with cancer and their families.

There is no better time than today to organise a skin cancer check, talk to your doctor about your risk factors or do your breast, bowel or cervical screening.

Learn more about cancer, cancer screening, how to minimise your risks and the latest developments in cancer treatment online at <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/cancer>

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