

Doorstop with Member for North Sydney and Professor Stephen Mulligan

TRENT ZIMMERMAN MP – MEMBER FOR NORTH SYDNEY: My name is Trent Zimmerman, the Federal Member for North Sydney and I am so pleased that we have the Prime Minister in this part of Sydney this morning for what is a very important announcement for those patients with leukaemia across Australia.

And I am particularly pleased we are the Royal North Shore Hospital which is one of Australia's great hospitals and this morning we've had the opportunity to talk to some of the patients and seen the fine work of the doctors and nurses.

Thank you Prime Minister for being here. Welcome back to North Sydney.

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you Trent and it is great to be here at Royal North Shore. And to see the, as Trent said the outstanding work that is being done by the doctors and nurses here.

Now, what we're announcing today is the listing of Imbruvica or Ibrutinib which is a new cancer drug which is having an extraordinary life changing, lifesaving impact for patients with leukaemia and lymphoma. And we're going to hear from one of those patients in a moment, Warren Lippiatt – he's going to talk about the change it has made to his life and to his family.

Now, this drug which has been going through trials over the last four years or so would cost \$180,000 for a course. Completely beyond the reach of the vast majority of Australians. We are putting it onto the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. A monthly course will cost \$38.80 or \$6.30 if you have a concession card – bringing this drug, this life-saving drug, within the reach of all Australians.

It is one of 1,500 new drugs costing in total \$7.5 billion that we brought on to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme since we came into office.

It is a reminder of how keenly focused we are in the fight against cancer.

One in \$6 spent on drugs through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme goes to drugs that are fighting cancer.

We have seen outstanding results. We are going to hear now from Professor Stephen Mulligan, the haematologist here, who has been supervising the Imbruvica trials and knows what a difference it makes. Then we will hear from Warren Lippiatt, the patient who has had an extraordinary recovery thanks to this drug – a recovery, a life-changing recovery, that now will be available to thousands of other Australians.

Professor Mulligan, step forward.

PROFESSOR STEPHEN MULLIGAN – ROYAL NORTH SHORE HOSPITAL:

Thank you very much Prime Minister.

This drug, Ibrutinib is being used to treat patients with the most common form of leukaemia called chronic lymphocytic leukaemia. It grows in the lymph glands, the bone marrow, it causes failure of the bone marrow and failure of the immune system.

Now, when standard treatments fail for these patients, previously they've had very few treatment options available. This new drug Ibrutinib really has revolutionised the outlook for these patients with a very marked improvement in their overall survival and wellbeing. Generally speaking, the drug is remarkably well tolerated.

It is really to be welcomed to put this drug onto the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme to make it available for patients with CLL widely across Australia.

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you. Warren, just tell us when you started taking Ibrutinib and where have you got to? You said to me earlier you had run out of options?

WARREN LIPPIATT – PATIENT:

I had, Prime Minister, I had completely run out of options. I was diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukaemia about 13 years ago and the path and the journey that it has taken me on has been nothing less than a roller-coaster ride – would be the best way to describe it. In and out of hospitals being treated with different forms of chemotherapy, all to have, four and a half years ago simply run out. The disease had taken over my body. I was approaching a stage where nothing was working and, fortunately, through Janssen, Johnson & Johnson, and through Stephen Mulligan, I was placed on a clinical trial for this particular drug. Within weeks, I was starting to feel better.

I was an individual who had run totally out of options.

PRIME MINISTER:

How old were your children?

WARREN LIPPIATT:

My children back then were 3 and 5. But when I was diagnosed, my wife was pregnant with our first child. She was pregnant, she was 8 months down the track and we were told that I'd have five years to live back in those days.

Thinking that you may not see your first child go and spend their first day at school was just – oh, I can't describe the feeling at the time.

This drug has not only saved my life but it's saved hundreds and it will save thousands of people's lives in the future.

This is a step forward and I thank the government and I thank all the physicians that have been involved in it because it's not just about me. It's about changing people's lives.

Four and a half years ago, I could barely walk. I'm not the same man as I am today. There is no question about that.

All I do today is stand here very grateful and very thankful that we have had this progression with these types of drugs that will turn lives around.

There was once upon a time I was not working. I'm now back at work. It's incredible. Absolutely incredible. Thank you, Prime Minister.

PRIME MINISTER:

Warren, thank you.

[Applause]

Ladies and gentlemen, you can see the significance. It's life-saving, life-changing. Not just for patients like Warren but for their families, for children who will have their fathers and mothers with them for years and years.

This is an example of what we can do if we ensure that we bring the latest drugs on to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme as soon as they are tested and trialed and we are doing that.

You saw yesterday our announcement with Ian Frazer about Gardasil 9. What an extraordinary Australian achievement that is. That's a vaccine that is protecting thousands, millions of young people, particularly young women, from the Human Papillomavirus which, of course, is the precursor to cervical cancer.

These are life-changing, lifesaving measures.

We are proud to be able to support them. They are all built on the foundation of great medicine, great medicine practiced here at this hospital and around Australia.

Do you have some questions?

JOURNALIST:

This must be one of the best parts of your job, making announcements like this today?

PRIME MINISTER:

It is, it is. You're absolutely right. It is a great privilege to be able to lead a nation that delivers outstanding healthcare. Always setting out to do even better and always setting out to ensure that the best and the latest drugs are available and affordable for all Australians.

JOURNALIST:

Is this drug used in other parts of world?

PRIME MINISTER:

The answer is yes but I will ask Stephen to speak about it.

PROFESSOR STEPHEN MULLIGAN:

Yes. The drug is now becoming more widely available across the world. Since the clinical trials were conducted some two and three years ago, it has progressively become available just as it is here in Australia.

PRIME MINISTER:

Very good, any other questions?

JOURNALIST:

On another matter Prime Minister, can I ask you-

PRIME MINISTER:

We'll come to that, but any other questions on health? We also have the Chief Medical Officer Brendan Murphy is here if you have any other questions on health matters or vaccines or PBS?

JOURNALIST:

What's the next priority with the government? You mentioned Gardasil, now this one, is it an ongoing trend?

PRIME MINISTER:

We will continue to list the latest drugs. They obviously have to be trialed and assessed. It is a very careful process but as you hear from Stephen, how long have the clinical trials been going on for now?

PROFESSOR STEPHEN MULLIGAN:

With this particular drug, just over four and a half years.

PRIME MINISTER:

So four and a half years of clinical trials and now the drug has met all the requirements for listing and now it is listed. We will continue to do that.

You saw just the other day we listed Zydelig – another cancer drug that is used for leukaemia patients. So we'll be constantly bringing the latest drugs forward on the PBS.

You had a question on another matter?

JOURNALIST:

On the Clean Energy Target, is the government considering not having any form of Clean Energy Target or are you looking at some sort of scheme with subsidies behind it?

PRIME MINISTER:

What we are determined to do is to ensure that energy is reliable, affordable and that we meet our emissions reduction commitments that we have made through the Paris Agreement.

We've had a lot of failures in energy policy in years gone by. And as you've seen this with energy policy being driven by politics and ideology, in some cases, as much idiocy as ideology, to be frank.

I'm being guided, my government is guided by engineering and economics.

So, what we are doing is making sure that we have the energy that we need at prices we can afford and it will be there when you want to have access to it. You've got to keep the lights on.

JOURNALIST:

And are you confident that there's government policy in place or do you need new policy to ensure that the market does deliver affordable and reliable power?

PRIME MINISTER:

We are obviously working through all of the recommendations that we have had from the Finkel Review. We are working intensely on ensuring that the rules that will apply after 2020, when the Renewable Energy Target is met, will deliver us that affordable and reliable power.

You have to recognise – I don't want to spoil this pleasant occasion by being unduly partisan but I will just be very frank with you – the Labor Party's failures on energy policy have been extraordinary.

The idea that you would bring so much renewable energy – wind and solar, which is variable – into the electricity system without providing the backup or the storage to support it when the sun isn't shining and the wind isn't blowing, was a comprehensive failure of policy.

Now, I'm turning that around. You can see the emphasis I've put on storage. Snowy Hydro 2.0 will be the biggest battery in the Southern Hemisphere. Gigantic additional storage. We are going to need a lot more than that too, by the way. But that's why you have got to plan this properly.

Look at gas. An extraordinary state of affairs where, again, the Labor government under Julia Gillard allowed gas exports from the east coast without making any attempt to protect or ring-fence the needs of domestic consumers.

I've had to take very strong action, as you have seen, holding up the prospect of export controls to ensure we got agreement from the gas exporters that there will be sufficient gas to meet domestic demand on the east coast.

Step by step what we're doing is putting in place the energy policy based on engineering and economics. They are the two guides to our policy.

JOURNALIST:

Can you guarantee your energy plan will bring down the cost of electricity?

PRIME MINISTER:

What I can certainly say to you is that the measures we have taken already with respect to gas have seen the wholesale price of gas come down. Because there was more demand than there was supply – price is a function of supply and demand. We had the extraordinary situation that the east coast market was short of gas.

So we're doing a lot of things – making sure there is sufficient supply of gas, making sure the market is transparent and the work with the ACCC and Rod Sims, you will have seen what he's been doing there to make sure that all of these trades are going to be publicly disclosed.

Transparency is a very good guide to ensuring that we get affordable and reliable energy.

We have seen what Josh Frydenberg is doing, for example, to abolish the Limited Merits Review process.

This was a system where the people, the network companies that owned the poles and wires could go to the regulator, get an agreement on what they could charge and then if they didn't like it, appeal to the Courts. Invariably, they got a higher price. No other utility had that privilege – so we're abolishing that. So they're going to have to live with what the regulator says. That will also reduce upward pressure on energy prices.

But the critical thing is, as I said earlier, there has been a failure of policy – it's been guided by ideology and idiocy – stupidity in some cases. We're changing that.

We're focused on engineering and economics. That's the way to deliver affordable and reliable power and meet our international commitments.

JOURNALIST:

Labor is calling on the government to admit defeat on your, tightening the citizenship laws – have you lost that battle?

PRIME MINISTER:

We'll continue to negotiate with the crossbench.

We're very disappointed that the Labor Party is not prepared to stand up for Australian citizenship.

It's particularly disappointing to see Tony Burke out there objecting to a requirement that people who become Australian citizens should have a command of English. He advocated that himself only a few years ago – wrote a very powerful and eloquent op-ed, I recall, in *The Daily Telegraph*.

Obviously he couldn't even convince himself, or perhaps he's just playing politics, as usual, with where we should be absolutely united in ensuring that Australian citizenship is valued and that it works as part of our effort to ensure that our community, the most successful multicultural society in the world is more and more integrated as time goes on.

JOURNALIST:

Will you have to adjust it though to get support in the Senate?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, you're asking me to speculate about crossbench negotiations.

Let me say that I've often been told on occasions like this that we have no chance of getting something through the Senate, and then we do.

But then I get asked the question the next time and then we get it through the Senate again.

So we've got more through the Senate since the last election than we got through in the whole previous Parliament, three years.

So we'll just keep working away. We treat all of our colleagues with respect. We listen to their concerns, from time to time we reach compromises that enable legislation to pass.

Just one more maybe.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, the latest Newspoll shows quite an alarming drop in support for the Coalition in regional areas, from 44 per cent to 34 per cent. Has the Coalition been doing enough to win voters in regional areas?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, I can assure you, we are very focused on delivering for Australians everywhere, and whether it is in big cities like Sydney, or whether it is in regional Australia. I spend a lot of time in regional Australia.

I know, for example, how important the cost of energy is there. And you can see why we're relentlessly focused on that.

You can see how important health services are.

You can see how important mental health services are, and again, we are putting more resources than ever before, just as you've seen today.

Whether it is in the PBS, whether it's in respect to hospitals, whether it's in respect of supporting primary care and guaranteeing Medicare – all of those things support Australians around the country, but particularly in regional Australia.

JOURNALIST:

What about the High Court ruling? Are you still confident that Barnaby Joyce is eligible?

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes, as I have said, it's now in the hands of the High Court, of course, and we await their decision.

But the government, based on the legal advice we have from the Solicitor-General is confident that the DPM and the other two, Senators Nash and Canavan, will be found not to be disqualified from sitting in the Parliament.

Thank you all very much.

[Radio interview with Jonesy and Amanda – WSFM 101.7 Pure Gold](#)

AMANDA: The Prime Minister has dropped by this morning. Good morning Mr Turnbull.

PRIME MINISTER:

Good morning!

AMANDA:

Nice to see you.

PRIME MINISTER:

Great to see you.

AMANDA:

I saw you with a whole group of smiling teens yesterday, announcing some great things about vaccines for young girls?

PRIME MINISTER:

Yeah, young girls and young boys too –

AMANDA:

Can boys take it too?

PRIME MINISTER:

They do, they do –

JONESY:

This is a leukaemia –

PRIME MINISTER:

This is Gardasil. This is yesterday, this was the Gardasil announcement. This is the great vaccine that protects people from the HPV, the Human Papillomavirus which is the cause of cervical cancer and indeed some other cancers.

We are introducing a new Gardasil from next year, which will cover 90 per cent of the risk. It's a real, it is a huge change. It is basically, we're at a point where we could eliminate over time, that Human Papillomavirus.

So I was there at North Bondi Surf Club, with a lot of young Nippers and junior lifesavers and of course, with Ian Frazer who was one of the two medical scientists that discovered this vaccine.

JONESY:

Amazing technology isn't it?

PRIME MINISTER:

It is! Well it is and it underlines the importance of being able to invest in the right drugs and new drugs.

We're announcing another great development today which will provide relief from leukaemia for nearly 1,000 sufferers of chronic lymphocytic leukaemia and lymphoma. It's a new drug called Imbruvica.

JONESY:

Geez.

PRIME MINISTER:

That currently would cost \$180,000 to have a course. We're putting it on the PBS, because we're managing the health budget well, and it will cost \$38.80 or \$6.30 if you're on a concession card.

So, that's what you can do if you manage the health budget well – you can deliver these lifesaving drugs to keep Australians well.

JONESY:

You know I was reading about you, back in the days when you were working for Kerry Packer. He wanted to get *Playboy*, the licensing rules for *Playboy Magazine*. So you had to do that whole – that was your job, you had to –

PRIME MINISTER:

I went to Chicago, yeah.

JONESY:

And did you meet Hugh? Because he just died last week.

PRIME MINISTER:

No, I didn't. I know he did and no I didn't meet him, because he'd actually moved to L.A. by that time and the business was being run in Chicago where it was founded by Christie Hefner who is his daughter.

So, I negotiated with her and it took, I was there for a few weeks and we got, secured the licence, the Australian licence for *Playboy* and Kerry published an Australian edition of *Playboy*.

JONESY:

Oh yeah?

AMANADA:

Did you get to go into the Mansion?

PRIME MINISTER:

No I didn't. Look, it really should have been so much more fun, but I –

[Laughter]

AMANDA:

Matching pyjamas?

[Laughter]

PRIME MINISTER:

Basically going between, going into an office block in Chicago.

JONESY:

Right, this is what you said to Lucy? It's so boring! There's nothing!

[Laughter]

PRIME MINISTER:

Yeah well it was so long ago, it was actually, I think Lucy and I were dating but we hadn't got married, but anyway.

JONESY:

That would have been even harder! That's even harder!

PRIME MINISTER:

That's right.

AMANDA:

While we've got you here, would you play a game with us?

PRIME MINISTER:

Yep, okay.

AMANDA:

It's a quick quiz we'd like to do with you. I know you hang out with a lot of politicians.

JONESY:

Yep.

AMANDA:

We thought we'd come up with a thing called *My G8 Mate*. I know Australia is in the G20 –

PRIME MINISTER:

Yep, that's right.

AMANDA:

Which means we're not the top echelon but these are your homies, these are the people you hang out with on a regular basis.

JONESY:

Prime Minister, I've taken the liberty of making an intro for this by the way.

[Music plays]

Time to play now *My G8 Mate*.

AMANDA:

Just how well do you know you co-politicians? Are you ready for question number one?

PRIME MINISTER:

Okay, I'm concentrating.

AMANDA:

Okay concentrate. Which G8 leader's buttocks went viral earlier in the year after this person was photographed in some tight pants?

PRIME MINISTER:

Ah-

AMANDA:

Do you remember this story? It's on many screensavers around our office.

JONESY:

He might have been from –

AMANDA:

See, you've said a 'he', it's a bit of a clue.

PRIME MINISTER:

Okay, well, I dunno – Justin Trudeau?

AMANDA:

Yes, correct! The Canadian Prime Minister.

JONESY:

Those buttocks!

PRIME MINISTER:

He's pretty handsome.

JONESY:

He's a pretty handsome guy, isn't he?

PRIME MINISTER:

Yeah I've been with him at international meetings and I've got to tell you, he is the most popular selfie target.

[Laughter]

AMANDA:

Even for you?

PRIME MINISTER:

Oh, yep absolutely.

JONESY:

Do you ever feel when you're there, do you say: 'Okay Justin, why don't you just go over there, go on, just hang out with them'?

PRIME MINISTER:

No I think the thing to do with Justin is just to sort of slipstream behind and you can get some-

AMANDA:

In the wake.

PRIME MINISTER:

Pick up some reflected celebrity status.

JONESY:

Plus those buttocks as well.

AMANDA:

Is he worth the crush? Is he crush-worthy?

PRIME MINISTER:

Oh, look, he's super smart and he's young and good looking. He's got everything going for him.

AMANDA:

What's not to love?

PRIME MINISTER:

And he's Prime Minister of Canada.

JONESY:

Oh don't waste the Prime Minister's time like this.

AMANDA:

I just want to know.

PRIME MINISTER:

His wife Sophie is fantastic too actually –

AMANDA:

Oh, drat.

PRIME MINISTER:

Luce and I get on very well with them.

JONESY:

Question number two.

AMANDA:

Alright, question number two for you – which G8 mate made a cameo in the film Home Alone 2?

PRIME MINISTER:

That would be the Donald.

AMANDA:

That's correct.

JONESY:

And do you know that he insists on being, if you want to use his hotels or anything in a movie, he insists on making a cameo in it? That's part of the thing.

PRIME MINISTER:

Really?

JONESY:

Yeah!

PRIME MINISTER:

Wow. Well that's definitely personal branding in a big way.

[Laughter]

AMANDA:

Question number three, which G8 mate has a black Labrador called Nemo? Do you talk pets when you hang out?

PRIME MINISTER:

No, but that's – a black Labrador called Nemo? Okay, I'll have a go, would it be Putin?

AMANDA:

No, it's actually Emanuel Macron.

PRIME MINISTER:

Oh really?

AMANDA:

Yeah, but I'm wondering maybe –

PRIME MINISTER:

Okay, I know Macron but I didn't know he had a black Labrador called Nemo.

JONESY:

This is good.

AMANDA:

Also because he's so young he's only just seen the film *Finding Nemo* himself.

[Laughter]

JONESY:

I think Putin would have a dog called Rex wouldn't he?

PRIME MINISTER:

Or Fang.

[Laughter]

AMANDA:

Fang! Sic 'em Fang!

JONESY:

Or Stalin.

PRIME MINISTER:

On reflection, yes.

AMANDA:

Well here's your final question which G8 mate once tried to crush a frying pan with his bare hands?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, that would have to be Putin.

AMANDA:

It would have to be Putin.

JONESY:

Nah, it was John Howard. John Howard.

[Laughter]

It's always great to see you Prime Minister.

AMANDA:

And it's always good to see these health initiatives.

JONESY:

Yeah doing great stuff.

AMANDA:

It's a great thing.

PRIME MINISTER:

Yeah it is. It's very important and we've got a great PBS, Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. It costs a lot of money, but we can keep on putting these lifesaving drugs on it, because we want to make sure that we do everything we can to keep Australians well and healthy.

AMANDA:

Bring back Bex I say.

PRIME MINISTER:

And a good lie down, okay.

JONESY:

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, thank you yet again.

PRIME MINISTER:

Thanks very much, thank you.

Providing affordable access to new treatment for Leukaemia and Lymphoma

More than 920 Australians each year will benefit from affordable access to a new medicine for leukaemia and lymphoma patients.

Ibrutinib (sold as Imbruvica®) would normally cost \$187,390 on average per course of treatment, putting it beyond the reach of most patients.

This \$466 million listing on the pharmaceutical benefits scheme will save patients hundreds of thousands of dollars.

From 1 December 2017, it will cost a maximum of \$38.80 per treatment and just \$6.30 for concessional patients.

It will be available to eligible patients with relapsed or refractory chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (CLL) or small lymphocytic lymphoma (SLL).

Ibrutinib is used when CLL or SLL has progressed or has not responded to first line treatment with chemo-immuno-therapy.

It is significantly more effective than the treatments currently available through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

The Turnbull Government is guaranteeing Medicare and we're continuing to make medicines available and affordable for Australians who need them.

Since coming into Government, the Coalition has helped improve the health of Australians by adding around \$7.5 billion worth of medicines to the PBS.

More than 60 new cancer medicines or amended listings have been approved by the Coalition Government since October 2013. This includes new treatments for advanced pancreatic cancer, melanoma, advanced breast cancer, ovarian cancer and lung cancer.

We are now spending one in every six dollars of PBS expenditure on cancer medicines.

Announcement of the addition of

Gardasil 9 to the National Immunisation Program

PRIME MINISTER: Good morning and welcome to North Bondi Surf Club. We're surrounded this morning by lifesavers and future lifesavers, and we're talking today about an important new step in saving lives.

Ian Frazer, Nobel Prize Winner, developed Gardasil, which is a vaccine that has for ten years been made available first to girls 12 and 13, and then from 2013 to boys and what it is able to do is to protect, at a level of 90 per cent, the kids that have been immunised from cervical cancer.

It is an extraordinary development, Australian medical science – it is, so many of those young boys and girls down there will be proofed throughout their whole lives from this virus that is of course the cause of cervical cancer and other cancers as well.

Now we're making an announcement today of an important new step that will take the level of protection up to an even higher level and that is with the introduction of Gardasil9. Which is a new evolution of the Gardasil vaccine that will protect against additional strains of the human papillomavirus, make it even more effective, providing even greater protection for young Australians and throughout their whole lives.

There is the possibility of eliminating this virus completely through vaccination. It is a great story about the importance of vaccination, the importance of our immunisation programs and I'm proud to be here to make this announcement with the Health Minister, with Ian Frazer, with our Chief Medical Officer Brendan Murphy and with Caroline Scott, who is a nurse immuniser who will talk about her experience in immunising kids in schools.

So I want to handover now to the Health Minister Greg Hunt, to talk more about this important step, an example of the way in which we are keeping Australians safe and healthy, we are saving lives, the young lifesavers behind us, they're getting ready to save lives on this beach. What we're doing with this vaccine, is ensuring we will save thousands of lives for years to come – Greg.

THE HON. GREG HUNT MP, MINISTER FOR HEALTH, MINISTER FOR SPORT:

Thanks very much Prime Minister, Gardasil 9 will save lives and protect lives.

It's about giving young people the opportunity to have a full, rich life without the risk of cervical cancer and so many other cancers which affect both young women, but also non-cervical cancers that affect young men.

As the Prime Minister said, Ian Frazer has been amazing in bringing to the world along with so many other Australian researchers, Gardasil and now Gardasil 9.

As a dad of a 12-year-old girl, I'm pleased that she will have an even better level of protection as she goes into high school next year, as a Health Minister I'm delighted that Australia will lead the world in the introduction of Gardasil 9.

This is about ensuring that through our national immunisation program, which is a world leading program, we will be able to protect young Australians and indeed as the Prime Minister says, have a real shot at eliminating this virus and to take an Australian discovery and development to the world.

So I am delighted that as of the 1st of January 2018 we will commence the introduction of Gardasil 9 for all young Australians, 12 and 13 throughout the country.

PRIME MINISTER:

Thanks, Ian.

PROFESSOR IAN FRAZER – IMMUNOLOGIST AND INVENTOR OF THE GARDASIL VACCINE:

Today represents a further significant step in the process of getting rid of cancers caused by a virus infection that we now have a vaccine for.

About 30 years ago, my colleague Jian Zhou and I came up with the technology that has enabled these vaccines to be made available worldwide and with the partnership with CSL we were able to turn that technology into a practical vaccine.

About ten years ago, I was privileged to give the first shot of vaccine to the daughter of one of my science colleagues; she was the first to be protected in Australia and the first of over 200 million people worldwide that have now received a vaccine to help prevent cervical cancer.

But the new vaccine will make sure that even more people are protected against cancer, and more importantly those women who have screening for cervical cancer are much less likely to have an abnormal test or need treatment for. So this makes a real difference for the women are being screened, it makes a real difference for the country and it's a demonstration once again of how medical research really can change lives.

Thank you very much.

PRIME MINISTER:

Thanks Ian, Caroline do you want to talk about your work as a nurse immuniser.

**MS CAROLINE SCOTT – AUTHORISED NURSE IMMUNISER/CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST
WESTERN SYDNEY PHU**

Yes so I work in Western Sydney, I've been immunising students now for over 14 years and that was during the introduction of the Gardasil vaccine in 2007.

We've got an amazing team of nurses and we're very proud of our work, and we work in collaboration with schools, with education – so its health and education working together.

With this, we're actually preparing students for later on in life. So we gauge – we really try to encourage our parents to accept the vaccine. We need our coverage rates to be high, because we want the kids to be protected. So we want to-

PRIME MINISTER:

Tell us what's the important message you can deliver to 12 and 13 year olds, but above all their parents when they get that consent form that comes home from the school?

**MS CAROLINE SCOTT – AUTHORISED NURSE IMMUNISER/CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST
WESTERN SYDNEY PHU:**

To get vaccinated, basically.

PRIME MINISTER:

Explain it to their kids, and give the consent.

**MS CAROLINE SCOTT – AUTHORISED NURSE IMMUNISER/CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST
WESTERN SYDNEY PHU:**

Explain, so sit down, read the information, sign the consent form, take it back to school.

But probably more importantly on the morning of vaccination parents need to give their child a good breakfast and let them have a positive attitude. So that's what they need, and we will look after the rest.

PRIME MINISTER:

That's great Caroline. Brendan – you're the Chief Medical Officer. Do you want to just say a little bit about the importance of the National Immunisation Program, and the commitment we've made through 'No Jab, No Pay', really pull court press to ensure we get the benefits of herd immunity through the community.

PROFESSOR BRENDAN MURPHY – AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER:

Thanks Prime Minister.

The National Immunisation Program we now spend \$460 million nationally with a large range of vaccines all throughout life, our vaccination rates now well in the 90 per cent since we've had huge improvements over the last twenty years.

We have a fantastic partnership with the states and the Commonwealth where Commonwealth funds the vaccines on the program and the states, as we've heard

from our colleague here administer the vaccines.

We have seen the disappearance of killing diseases, polio doesn't exist in Australian anymore, measles endemically doesn't exist, although as we've seen recently we can have imported cases from overseas. A whole range of viruses and bacteria which cause devastation and serious injury have now been got rid of through the National Immunisation Program.

It's just a huge success story, and I just encourage every parent, every Australian, vaccination is safe, it saves lives.

Vaccination is one of the most wonderful lifesaving developments in western medicine.

Thanks Prime Minister.

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you very much, and just a word perhaps Ian, perhaps you could just say a word about the prevalence of cervical cancer and the impact that we're seeing over time from Gardasil?

PROFESSOR IAN FRAZER – IMMUNOLOGIST AND INVENTOR OF THE GARDASIL VACCINE:

Cervical cancer kills about a quarter of a million women worldwide every year. In this country, the data that has been collected since the vaccine has been introduced show that there's been an about 90 per cent reduction in the pre-cancer that would require to be treated surgically amongst women that have been vaccinated.

So that basically this vaccine is working exactly the way we would expect it do, and there's a real prospect that over time the viruses that cause the cancer will disappear from the community and the cancer will go to.

PRIME MINISTER:

That's fantastic, well thank you very much and congratulations to the Minister and Ian, and Chief Medical Officer and our immuniser, nurse immuniser and we'd be happy to take some questions.

JOURNALIST:

What are the major differences between the vaccine we've got now and this version we're going to see rolled out next year?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well it deals with more strains, but Ian perhaps you could explain how most of the problems are created by a couple of strains of HPV, but there are a number of others and just explain how the new vaccine works?

PROFESSOR IAN FRAZER – IMMUNOLOGIST AND INVENTOR OF THE GARDASIL VACCINE:

The papillomavirus comes in about 200 different flavors if you like, but only

ten of them contribute to cancer. The vaccine that we have at the moment protects against two of those ten, and those two together are responsible for about 75 per cent of the cancers.

This new vaccine adds in further strains which are responsible for most of the other 25 per cent, so that by giving the vaccine that we now have it will be possible to protect against almost all cervical cancers.

I should point out that those people who have already had the current vaccine are well protected by that vaccine and so long as they carry on doing the recommendation of the government, which is that they should continue to get screened for cervical cancer through the program that's available at the moment, they will be fully protected.

But in the future, the nine (inaudible) vaccine is going to make it even easier to protect.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister inevitably there will be parents who will resist this and won't get their children vaccinated, what's your message to the anti-vaxxers, I mean as a –

PRIME MINISTER:

Well our message is precisely the one that Greg's just given, and I have and the Chief Medical Officer have and we all have.

Vaccination is vitally important, it's not just important for your child, it's important for everybody else's child.

You need to get vaccination up to a very high percentage to achieve that herd immunity. So those people who decide not to vaccinate their children are not only putting their own children at risk but everybody else's at risk too.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister US President Donald Trump has this morning tweeted "in relation to negotiating with North Korea, sorry but only one thing will work", what do you think he means by that?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I'll just repeat what I've said before, that the best way of ensuring that this reckless, dangerous, criminal regime comes to its senses without military conflict is to continue to impose strong economic sanctions on North Korea.

Now I'm pleased to say that the global community is united in that, you've seen China in particular which has the greatest leverage over North Korea, committing to the latest round of UN Security Council sanctions, which include a restriction on oil imports into North Korea.

So, what we need to do is to continue to put that economic pressure as a global community on North Korea, and that is the best prospect of resolving, of changing, this regime from its dangerous and reckless course, without conflict.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, how confident are you about the high court's decision on dual citizenship?

PRIME MINISTER:

Very confident.

JOURNALIST:

So do you have plans for a bi-election and would you support a bi-election if-

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I've said we are confident based on the advice we have from the Solicitor-General – that the court will find that Senators Canavan and Nash and the Deputy Prime Minister are not disqualified from serving in the Parliament.

So that's the advice that we've received, that's the submission that's been made but of course it will be determined by the court. There will be a hearing sitting on it this week.

JOURNALIST:

Why's it necessary to have the power to lock up children as young as ten without charge?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well it's very important to remember that children – there's actually no change here by the way – I'm very disappointed to see Mark Dreyfus crab walking away from what we were told by his leader was a bipartisan commitment to keeping Australian's safe from terrorism.

Now under our criminal law, children can be charged with committing crimes, as you know. What the 14-day detention arrangement does is it enables when police are investigating terrorism offences to detain, to arrest somebody, whether they are a minor or an adult, to detain them for questioning before they are charged. It is subject to judicial supervision, by magistrate and it is – what this will do is standardise it across the country.

All the Premiers and Chief Ministers agreed with it, its been recommended with our police commissioners around the country. This is very, very important tool that we are giving our police, our security agencies to keep us safe from terrorism.

There's no place for set and forget, there's no place for complacency. We have to be ever vigilant and resolute in keeping Australians safe.

And I'm sorry that Mark Dreyfus is trying to walk away from that commitment, but I hope that Bill Shorten will pull him back into line.

We need an absolute united front, a full court press in giving our police the means they need to keep us safe, this is a very important reform and as you saw at the COAG meeting last week it had universal support.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister are you concerned about allegations that a large number of postal votes have been damaged in recent elections, and then declared void?

PRIME MINISTER:

I've had no information to that affect at all – none at all.

The postal survey on same-sex marriage is being conducted very well, by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as you know there is a very high participation rate which is already over 60 per cent and that is much higher than many of the critics said.

Our political opponents, Bill Shorten in particular didn't want Australians to have their say, he did everything he could to prevent Australians having their say and what this survey has demonstrated, that Australians did want to have their say and they're having their say. And I'd encourage anyone who has not returned their postal survey to do so.

Have your say, most people already have but there's many people who haven't. So have your say, get it back, it's up to you how you vote, Lucy and I have voted 'Yes'.

JOURNALIST:

Just quickly, are you anticipating it's going to be harder to pass things through without Nick Xenophon?

PRIME MINISTER:

We respect every member of the Senate, and every Member of the House too of course. But every member of the Senate from whatever party they're from. We're often told by experts in the media that we can't get legislation through. Haven't we Greg?

We've often been asked, said why won't you admit you can't get something through? And you know something? If you talk to people, respectfully, if you make your case, if you're prepared to compromise you can get a lot done. And we have got an extraordinary amount of legislation through the Senate since the election.

How many people said we were be in office but not in power? Quite a lot.

We've got more legislation through in the not quite 18 months since the last election than we did in the whole three years of the previous parliament, so we're getting things done and I'm confident that whatever, whoever, when Nick retires from the Senate, whoever replaces him, will work with the new Senator just as we have with all those that are there today.

Thank you all very much.

[A new vaccine to strengthen the health of young Australians](#)

From the start of 2018, young Australians will have free access to the new Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, protecting against more strains of HPV infection.

This new and improved vaccine is a significant breakthrough and will provide Australian children with even greater protection against HPV.

Gardasil 9 is the most comprehensive and effective HPV vaccine ever.

The new Gardasil® 9 vaccine protects against nine strains of HPV (up from four) and will be offered through school based immunisation programs to all 12 to 13 year old boys and girls in years 7 or 8.

In addition, only two doses are required (instead of three), making it easier for adolescents to receive the full schedule and be fully protected.

Schools have been used for many years to deliver successful immunisation programs, including pertussis (whooping cough), varicella (chicken pox), and the current version of Gardasil®.

Receiving the HPV vaccine through a school based program maximises protection for girls and boys.

HPV coverage rates in Australia are now higher than they have ever been, with the proportion of 15 year olds receiving all recommended doses increasing to 78.6 per cent for girls (up from 78 per cent in 2015) and 72.9 per cent for boys (up from 67.2 per cent in 2015).

The new vaccine will help protect girls and women ages 9 to 26 against cervical, vaginal, vulvar, and anal cancers and genital warts caused by 9 types of HPV.

For boys and men ages 9 to 26, the vaccine will protect against anal cancer and genital warts caused by those same HPV types.

Australia was the first country to introduce a free national HPV program,

starting with girls in 2007, followed by boys in 2013.

Adding Gardasil® 9 to the National Immunisation Program (NIP) is part of our \$460 million investment in 2017-18 for vaccine purchases and activities to promote immunisation uptake.

The Australian Government's HPV vaccination program, funded through the NIP, is credited with dramatically reducing the incidence of the HPV infection and disease in Australia.

The Turnbull Government's recent expansion to the NIP means all individuals up to the age of 19 years can catch up on missed vaccines, including Gardasil®.

Further information about the new vaccine will be provided to parents and adolescents over coming months, in preparation for the 2018 school year.