

## OA welcomes \$4M for National Action Plan for Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis Australia (OA), and the Australian Government will officially launch the National Strategic Action Plan on Osteoporosis today, Thursday 17 October 2019, with the Minister for Health, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, in the lead up to World Osteoporosis Day (Sunday, October 20). The *National Strategic Action Plan for Osteoporosis* will provide critical support to the 4.7 million Australians over the age of 50 who currently live with poor bone health and embark on a preventative approach to reduce future bone fractures and the impact of osteoporosis on the Australian healthcare system.

In 2019 the cost of osteoporosis will reach over \$2.1 billion – 70 per cent of which will be directly related to fracture costs. Australians will sustain up to 165,000 broken bones (fractures) due to poor bone health, with 4.7 million Australians over 50 continuing to be impacted by the disease.

The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health, stated that the launch of the *National Strategic Action Plan for Osteoporosis* is a significant step in improving the quality of life for Australians living with poor bone health and reducing the substantial financial burden that osteoporosis has on the Australian healthcare system. Mr Hunt said, “The Action Plan addresses the urgent need for a national strategic response to the challenges and burden of osteoporosis across Australia. It will focus on increased awareness, education and prevention of osteoporosis, including improved diagnosis and management, and care of people with, or at risk of, osteoporosis. The Government is allocating \$4 million to support implementation of the Action Plan.”

Currently 66 per cent of Australians aged over 50 are estimated to have poor bone health. Hip fractures remain the costliest type of fracture related to osteoporosis. Other types of fractures remain widespread – wrist, spinal, arm and leg fractures. While osteoporosis mainly affects women, men also need to check their bone health with 25 percent of cases occurring in men.

Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians, said the *National Strategic Action Plan* will have a substantial impact on the management and prevention of osteoporosis. Minister Colbeck said, “Millions of Australians are affected by osteoporosis and poor bone health. The Morrison Government’s \$4 million investment in the *National Strategic Action Plan for Osteoporosis* will support better prevention of osteoporosis and poor bone health and will help improve quality of life for people across Australia, particularly seniors.”

OA CEO, Mr Greg Lyubomirsky, welcomed the launch of the *Action Plan*, stating that the *Plan* sets out important priorities and actions to guide efforts to prevent poor bone health and ensure osteoporosis is a national priority. Mr Lyubomirsky said, “This is an exciting outcome for osteoporosis prevention, as this is the first time osteoporosis has received the attention it deserves. OA commends Minister Hunt and Minister Colbeck on their commitment to making this substantial investment to commence implementation of key actions in the Plan. This is an important step forward in supporting the 4.7 million Australians with poor bone health”

The *National Strategic Action Plan on Osteoporosis* will address three key priorities:

1. Increasing osteoporosis awareness and education with a focus on prevention
2. Improving osteoporosis diagnosis, management and care; and
3. Data collection, monitoring and strategic research.

The launch will include national experts, people living with osteoporosis and National Osteoporosis Advocate, Ita Buttrose AO.

The evidence-based plan provides a roadmap to improve the prevention, diagnosis and management of osteoporosis nationally. The plan aims to reduce the personal and economic burden that osteoporosis and related fractures have on the community and in particular older Australians.

OA looks forward to working with stakeholders across Government, the broader health care sector and people living with osteoporosis, including family and carers, to implement this plan.

### About World Osteoporosis Day

World Osteoporosis Day (WOD), October 20, is driven by the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF) and is dedicated to raising global awareness of the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis. The day aims to put osteoporosis and fracture prevention on the global health agenda by reaching out to policy makers, healthcare professionals, and the community.

### About Osteoporosis Australia

Osteoporosis Australia (OA) is the national not-for-profit organisation responsible for providing osteoporosis information and services to the community and health professionals. OA's vision is to build strong bones for a life without fractures. OA encourages active investigation of Australians at risk. Once diagnosed osteoporosis can be managed to reduce the risk of fracture.

Osteoporosis is a common disease affecting 1.2 million Australians and 6.3 million Australians have low bone density.

Osteoporosis Australia website: [www.osteoporosis.org.au](http://www.osteoporosis.org.au)

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