

2021 -2022 PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION

SAVING LIVES

THROUGH INCREASED PARTICIPATION
IN THE NATIONAL BOWEL CANCER
SCREENING PROGRAM

JODI LEE
FOUNDATION

**PREVENTING
BOWEL ~~CANCER~~**

ABOUT THE JODI LEE FOUNDATION

We are on a mission to empower Australians to take active steps to prevent bowel cancer and lead healthy lives.

We do this through a number of national initiatives that encourage Australians to screen regularly, know their family history, act quickly on symptoms and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Jodi Lee lost her battle with bowel cancer aged 41, leaving behind her husband and two young children. Before her diagnosis, Jodi was fit and healthy. She had no family history and no symptoms, which is typical of bowel cancer. The saddest part of all, is that Jodi's story could have had a different outcome if her cancer had been detected early. With that simple fact as the driving force, the Jodi Lee Foundation was established in 2010.



FACTS ABOUT BOWEL CANCER

- Bowel cancer is the second most common cause of cancer-related death in Australia, after lung cancer.
- This year an estimated 15,500 people will be diagnosed with bowel cancer in Australia.
- Detected early, 99% of bowel cancers can be successfully treated or even prevented.
- Only 44% of people aged 50 to 74 years invited to participate in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program completed the screening test. ¹
- The lowest participation in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program by age was recorded by people 50 to 54 years at 32%. ¹



SAVING LIVES THROUGH INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL BOWEL CANCER SCREENING PROGRAM

Our Recommendation: Together with the Australian Government, the Jodi Lee Foundation will deliver a mass media, population based, national health promotion campaign that will increase participation in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program.

We request investment by the Australian Government of \$2.5 million per annum over three years (2021-2022 to 2023-2024) totaling \$7.5million.

OUR CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES ARE:

PRIMARY: To increase participation in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program by people aged 50 to 54 years to a minimum of 50% by 2024.

SECONDARY: To increase participation in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program by people aged 55+ years to a minimum of 50% by 2024.

THE PROBLEM

At the current screening rates, the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program is underutilised.

Currently Australians aged 50 to 74 are invited to participate in free bowel screening through the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program every two years.

Only 32% of people aged 50 to 54 years currently participate in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. This means that 68% of eligible Australians aged 50-54 years are ignoring this free life-saving program.

Almost 2.5 million of the 5.7 million people aged 50 to 74 years who were invited to screen in 2018 – 2019 participated. This was a participation rate of 44%.

We know that Australians are far more inclined to retake the test (80%) once they have completed the test for the first time.¹ We need to convince more Australians to take the test when they are first eligible. It will save lives!

THE SOLUTION

Together with the Australian Government, the Jodi Lee Foundation will deliver a mass media, population based, national health promotion campaign that will increase participation in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program, specifically targeting the 50 – 55 age groups.

Using traditional, digital and social media, the campaign will feature a number of Australian celebrities to help convince more Australians to take the test when they are first eligible (at age 50) – as we know they are likely to continue to take the test once they have done it for the first time. The secondary focus is to encourage everyone 50-74 years, who is eligible to participate in the program, to take the test.

There is clear data that shows celebrity endorsed campaigns work in this space. For example, the global phenomenon now known as the 'Couric Effect'.

The Jodi Lee Foundation would like to replicate the impact that Katie Couric had on screening participation in the United States, click [here](#) for more information. Katie Couric has offered to help us replicate the campaign she championed in the United States. The approach was very different to Bowel Cancer Campaigns in the past. If we can replicate the Couric effect it will be the single biggest impact of any screening program in Australian history, saving many lives.



Click [here](#) to see part of the campaign where Jimmy Kimmel gets a colonoscopy with Katie Couric.

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT OUR TARGET AUDIENCE

CORE INSIGHT TARGET AUDIENCE 50-54



- They don't see themselves as 50 year olds
- Have time to actively enjoy life
- Digital consumption is about remaining up to date and relevant
- Quick information take outs
- They dislike being patronised for their age
- Still read print media
- Consume FTA TV
- They are healthy, and enjoy wining and dining
- They are freedom seekers and have passion for life

At the Jodi Lee Foundation we are constantly surprised that the take-up of the free National Bowel Screening test for those aged 50-54 years is not greater. Many Australians feel like they are too young to screen for bowel cancer, or that it won't happen to them. We believe seeing traditional, digital and social media filled with celebrities in their age group 'taking the test', will provide Australians with the extra motivation they need to convince them to participate in this program.

THE OUTCOMES

Our primary outcome is to see an increase in the participation rate of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program for those aged 50-54 years. The current participation rate for 50-54 years is 32%. Based on the evidence from previous studies, an increase to 50% during the campaign and in the three months after the campaign ends is a realistic target.

A secondary outcome is to see an increase in participation rates across the entire program (50-74 years) during the campaign period and three months after the campaign to over 50%. This rate is currently 44%.

BUDGET AND RETURN ON INVESTMENT

The Jodi Lee Foundation is seeking Government funding to create and deliver a mass media, population based, national health promotion campaign to increase participation in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. We request an investment of \$2.5 million per annum over three years (2021-2022 to 2023-2024) totaling \$7.5million.

It has been shown if we increased National Bowel Cancer Screening Program participation from 40% to 50%, an additional 24,300 cases and 16,800 deaths would be prevented in the period 2015-2040. At 50% participation, there will be reduced expenditure on colorectal cancer control of \$2.0billion (2015 prices) between 2030 and 2040.²

WHY IS THE JODI LEE FOUNDATION BEST PLACED TO DELIVER THE CAMPAIGN?

The Jodi Lee Foundation's mission is to educate and empower Australians to take active steps to prevent bowel cancer. Over the last ten years, the Jodi Lee Foundation has delivered a number of highly successful national awareness campaigns and built relationships with a number of influential ambassadors and celebrities in the target age group who are committed to supporting the Foundation and our initiatives. These campaigns have included:

- **Degrees of Separation** - a campaign targeting 50-year-olds using AFL identities and spearheaded by our former Patron, Ita Buttrose AC, OBE.



Click [here](#) view

- **Make Bowel Cancer Disappear** - The campaign shows 5,000 bowel cancer screening kits arranged to spell out the words 'bowel cancer'. Commuters and shoppers were encouraged to take the kits and as they did so, the words disappeared.



Click [here](#) view

- **'Trust Your Gut'** is an annual awareness campaign that raises awareness of bowel cancer symptoms, what they are and when to act.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN NICK LEE

Education about prevention and early detection plays a vital role in keeping Australians healthy. With more than 15,500 people diagnosed with bowel cancer each year, the need for awareness and action is stronger than ever. Our challenge always is to find relevant ways to talk to people about the facts and risks.

The Jodi Lee Foundation has already developed a number of exciting ideas for a national campaign that will increase participation in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. We have engaged with a creative agency to develop content and have secured preliminary commitment from a number of Australian celebrities interested in being part of this important life-saving campaign.

We look forward to the opportunity to meet with you and discuss how we can work together to save Australian lives.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N A Lee', written in a cursive style.

Nick Lee
Chairman
Jodi Lee Foundation

References

1. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2020. National Bowel Cancer Screening Program: monitoring report 2020. Cancer series no.126. Cat. no. CAN 133. Canberra: AIHW.
2. Long-term evaluation of benefits, harms, and cost-effectiveness of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program in Australia: a modelling study. *Lancet Public Health* 2017; 2: e331–40 Published Online June 26, 2017 [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667\(17\)30105-6](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(17)30105-6)

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