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Federal election 2022: Affordable access to food and nutrition not shiny enough for major parties

Dietitians Australia has scored the major parties on their election priorities, with both the LNP and Labor not demonstrating a commitment to affordable food and nutrition for Australia's most vulnerable.

Chief Executive Officer of Dietitians Australia, Robert Hunt expressed his disappointment.

"Affordable food and nutrition isn't as shiny as buying a first home, but we believe it's just as important," Robert said.

"In times of crisis, people will often say, *'at least we have our health'*."

"But when you look at the alarming statistics of Australia's health, neither Morrison nor Albanese could hand-on-heart say this."

With pre-polling for the federal election now open, Dietitians Australia has published its scorecard rating the major parties' commitments to the organisation's five federal election requests. These included:

- **Aged care** – mandatory malnutrition reporting and mealtime quality audits
- **Mental health** – Medicare items that support treatment for metabolic side effects of medications as well as dietary intervention for depression
- **Disability** – Medicare items that allow affordable access to nutrition and mealtime support for children with Autism and other disabilities
- **National Nutrition Policy** – ensuring all Australians have equal access to affordable nutrition, reversing the trend of diet-related illness and combating unsustainable eating patterns.

After Dietitians Australia first published its scorecard last Friday, Labor came forth to offer its response to the organisation's election priorities scoring half a point out of five.

"Being heard is important, so we thank the Labor Party for finally hearing our requests," Robert said.

"But we're still disappointed to see very little commitment to ensuring our nation's most vulnerable have access to affordable food and nutrition.

"The downstream healthcare costs of our poor health are worth billions – and rising. So beyond helping Australians live their best lives, preventive health measures through nutrition could actually save the nation billions of dollars."

The Greens supported all five of Dietitians Australia's election priorities.

[Click here to see the scorecard.](#)

[Click here to see the LNP, Labor and Greens detailed responses.](#)

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Australia's health in crisis – key facts:

- [Disease risk factors linked to diet costs Australia's health system \\$16.2 billion](#)
- [Overweight and obesity is the number one risk factor contributing the highest cost to Australia's health system at \\$4.3 billion](#)
- [By current trends more than 18 million Australians \(two-thirds of our projected population\) will be overweight or obese by 2030](#)
- [By 2050, Australia would need 6 ½ planet Earths to produce food at its current rate of consumption](#)
- [Food insecurity in Australia affects 1 in 6 adults and 1.2 million children in 2021](#)
- [95% of adults don't meet both the recommended intake of fruit and vegetables](#)
- [Up to 50% of people in residential aged care are malnourished](#)
- [4.4 million Australians were prescribed medication for mental illness in 2019-20 – more than ever before](#)
- [27,500 Australians die a preventable death each year from an unhealthy diet](#)