



Preventive Health – support for thalidomide survivors

The Australian Government will provide a life-time support package for all recognised thalidomide survivors to help with out of pocket health care costs and daily living expenses. This support can improve their quality of life and help meet their specialised needs, particularly as they get older.

This package will support thalidomide survivors through:

- a one-off lump sum payment up to a maximum of \$500,000 in 2020–21, scaled according to disability
- ongoing annual payments starting in 2021–22, scaled according to disability
- extraordinary assistance payments for healthcare support worth \$14.1 million

The support package will provide \$44.9 million over the forward estimates.

The support package is in response to the 11 recommendations of the Final Report from the Senate Inquiry into support for Australia’s thalidomide survivors.

While payments can never compensate for a lifetime of hardship, it is hoped they will offer some peace of mind and reassurance to survivors, and also to their families and carers.

Why is this important?

Survivors of thalidomide have suffered from circumstances beyond their control that have caused a lifetime of pain and hardship. It cannot ever compensate for the hardship and suffering, but it will provide support and recognition going forward.

Who will benefit?

There are currently around 135 recognised thalidomide survivors. Other individuals who come forward with claims as a thalidomide survivor will be individually assessed.

How much will this cost?

This will cost \$44.9 million over four years from 2020–21, and \$3.9m ongoing from 2024–25.