Health Minister casts further doubt on Coalition’s Medicare policy

Health Minister Sussan Ley has today agreed that the Government’s seven-year freeze on Medicare rebate for doctors was a bad idea.

Speaking to ABC presenter Fran Kelly this morning, Ms Ley said she wanted to lift the freeze as soon as possible but that Finance and Treasury would not let her.

Labor has promised to reinstate indexed increases on Medicare rebates for doctors from January 2017, while the Coalition has pledged to keep them on hold until 2020.

In the interview, Ms Ley went so far as to suggest health and Medicare were not voters top priorities, showing yet again how out of touch the Coalition is with the Australian electorate at a grass roots level.

Quotes from ACTU Secretary Dave Oliver:

“Health Minister Sussan Ley comments today seem to be another flimsy political move to make the Government look like it cares when in reality it is dismantling our prized healthcare system in a cynical ploy that will boost its budget and put more pressure on household budgets.”

‘People can see through the Coalition’s transparent statements and know their plan for Medicare is to run it down and sell it off.’

“The Coalition plan will destroy Australia’s universal healthcare system; it will cost patients more to see a doctor and it will put untold pressure on the healthcare system from the GP to the emergency room.”

“Voters across the country are saying that Medicare and health are top priorities this election, alongside jobs and education.”

“Voters have already been left behind in a dud deal the Government made with the big pathology providers that offers no long term security around bulk billing for diagnostic tests in the future — and, according to a leading health analyst at investment bank UBS, could actually put further financial pressure on GPs.”

“With every passing day of this election campaign it is becoming blatantly clear that voters must put the Liberals last to protect Medicare for their families’ health and wellbeing.”

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