

Tuesday, 4 January 2022

## **ACCC announcement a damning indictment of Scott Morrison's failure of leadership on Rapid Antigen Tests**

Today's announcement that the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has been forced to take action to stop unscrupulous operators ripping off Australians desperate to get their hands on Rapid Antigen Tests is a damning indictment of Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his ongoing failure of leadership when it comes to the pandemic.

Australians who need Rapid Antigen Tests should not have been abandoned by their Government and left at the mercy of the private market in the first place. Scott Morrison must make Rapid Antigen Tests free and accessible for all Australians who need them, just like they are in the United Kingdom and the United States, and he must do so immediately.

Australia's system of universal public health care, Medicare, is a source of national pride. Mr Morrison's undermining of Medicare with his pivot to a "user pays" pandemic is wrong, and he must immediately reverse course. Australians' access to health care should not depend on their income or their postcode, everybody should get the care they need.

### **Quotes attributable to ACTU Acting Secretary Liam O'Brien:**

"The fact the ACCC has been forced to take action to stop unscrupulous operators ripping off Australians desperate to get their hands on Rapid Antigen Tests is a shocking indictment of Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his total failure of leadership on rapid antigen testing.

"The ACCC has been left to clean up Scott Morrison's mess. If Mr Morrison had listened to unions and business, who warned him back in October to make Rapid Antigen Tests free and easily accessible for all Australians, there would be no private market for dodgy operators to manipulate and the ACCC investigation would be completely unnecessary.

"Rapid Antigen Tests must be free and accessible for all Australians who need them, just like they are in the UK and the USA. Working people are losing shifts and wasting hours as they scramble to find Rapid Antigen Tests and, if they're lucky enough to find an outlet that still has them in stock, they are being gouged by skyrocketing prices.

"Australia's system of universal public health care, Medicare, is a source of national pride. Prime Minister Scott Morrison's undermining of Medicare with his pivot to a "user pays" pandemic is wrong, and he must immediately reverse course. Australians' access to health care shouldn't depend on their income or postcode, everybody should get the care they need.

"The union movement once again calls on Prime Minister Scott Morrison to make Rapid Antigen Tests free and accessible for all Australians – he must do so immediately. Working people are desperate for Rapid Antigen Tests and they cannot wait any longer."

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