

# TACKLING PANDEMICS

## Our plan to keep people safe from infectious diseases

The costs of pandemics are all too familiar. Large-scale outbreaks can claim countless lives, disrupt our society and ravage the economy – especially if we're not adequately prepared, as was the case with Covid-19.

Covid-19 won't be the last pandemic we face. We need to establish a national framework for dealing with pandemics that ensures we can keep everyone as safe and healthy as possible.

The Greens will ensure we can produce enough of our own vaccines onshore for everyone. We will establish a National Centre for Disease Control to lead a unified, apolitical health approach across the entire country, and we will build safe and effective quarantine facilities that are fit for purpose in every state.

### THE GREENS WILL:

- ▲ Establish a National Centre for Disease Control with \$246 million of funding.
- ▲ Invest \$250 million over the next two years into Covid-19 vaccine research
- ▲ Build and operate a publicly-owned mRNA vaccine production facility
- ▲ Use a boosted foreign aid budget to invest in COVAX to support global equitable vaccine access

## PAYING FOR OUR PLAN

By making billionaires and big corporations pay their fair share of tax and winding back handouts to big polluters, we can build a better life for all of us.

One in three big corporations pays no tax, and many big corporations and billionaires send their profits offshore tax-free.

The Greens will tax billionaires with a new 'billionaires tax', require big corporations making excessive profits to pay a 'corporate super-profits tax', and axe billions of dollars in handouts to the coal, oil and gas giants that are driving the climate crisis.

These measures have all been costed by the independent Parliamentary Budget Office.

When big corporations and billionaires pay their fair share, everyone can have the services they need for a better life.

## NATIONAL CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL

Australia is now the only country in the OECD that does not have a national authority on communicable disease control. The Covid-19 pandemic has simply exposed the significant gaps in our planning and response to infectious disease outbreaks.

There is no doubt that we will face pandemics in the future. The threat of new and emerging communicable diseases will continue to be a global challenge – especially if the world continues to delay action on climate change, which we know has a deleterious impact on infectious disease transmission patterns.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>World Health Organization (WHO), Climate Change and Infectious Diseases, <https://www.who.int/globalchange/climate/en/chapter6.pdf>

The Greens will invest \$246 million over the estimates to establish a National Centre for Disease Control (CDC). The CDC would be responsible for overseeing infectious disease policy and coordinating rapid responses to outbreaks like Covid-19. It would also be established as a fully independent body at arm's length from the government, ensuring our future responses to pandemics are based on science – not politics.

## PUBLICLY-OWNED MRNA PRODUCTION

The mRNA technology used to make the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines is revolutionising the way we do medicine. But the Commonwealth still hasn't committed to investing in mRNA vaccine production onshore.

The Greens will invest to establish a publicly-owned mRNA vaccine production

facility in Australia. This will allow us to produce our own mRNA vaccines and medicines onshore, ensuring we are ready to fight against Covid-19 variants and any future pandemics.

Having the capacity to produce mRNA medicines in Australia also allows us to invest in cutting-edge treatments for cancer and other genetic diseases.

## VACCINE RESEARCH FUNDING

As well as investing billions of dollars in additional funding into science and research, the Greens will commit funding to support further research into Covid-19 vaccines.

Increasing research funding will help us develop booster shots and next-generation vaccines to get ahead of emerging variants, ensuring we are fully protected against Covid-19 into the future.

## HELPING OUR NEIGHBOURS

None of us are safe until all of us are safe. Vaccine hoarding by wealthy countries leaves the rest of the world exposed and at significant risk of generating dangerous mutations, as Delta, Omicron and other variants have demonstrated.

We have a moral obligation to help other countries access vaccines and prevent Covid-19 outbreaks – particularly our neighbours in the Pacific region, which is falling dangerously behind the rest of the world on vaccination rates.

The Greens will ensure we produce enough vaccines to share with our neighbours. We will also continue to actively support global access

to vaccines by using a boosted foreign aid budget to commit an additional \$250m in funding to the worldwide COVAX initiative, which enables low-to-middle income countries equitable access to the Covid-19 vaccine.

We will also continue to fight to waive intellectual property rights on Covid-19 vaccines to allow other countries to manufacture and sell cheaper generic copies of the vaccine.

**FIND ALL OUR POLICIES:**

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