

## TEMPLATE LETTER - PATIENT

DATE

TITLE

MEMBER FOR X

ADDRESS

Via email: XXX

### CUTS TO CANCER CARE

Dear XXX,

I write as a resident of your local area and someone who has received treatment for cancer.

I am extremely concerned about the reduction in funding that the Commonwealth Government is making to the Radiation Oncology Health Program Grants (ROHPG) Scheme.

Radiation oncology uses controlled doses of radiation to treat cancer, either for cure or to control symptoms such as pain. The treatment delivered is called radiation therapy.

I received radiation therapy as part of my treatment at [XXX – insert personal story].

The proposed changes amount to a significant reduction in the Commonwealth's investment in radiation therapy. The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists estimate that the changes will cut \$67 million from the sector over 3 years.

Radiation oncology is an essential treatment for a significant number of cancers. It is estimated to be involved in 40% of all cancer cures and is used in palliative care to relieve symptoms such as pain.

However, it uses a number of highly expensive pieces of equipment. The ROHPG Scheme was designed to help cover the cost of this equipment and ensure that this equipment is replaced when needed. Due to the high cost involved in replacing this equipment, without support from the Government, it is likely that hospitals and practices will delay replacement resulting in equipment becoming aged and out of date. Before the ROHPG Scheme was introduced radiation therapy equipment was rarely replaced due to the high cost, which compromised patient treatment.

I am concerned that these changes will threaten access to modern radiation therapy equipment and have a profound impact on the delivery of cancer care.

**I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss my experience with radiation therapy and why it is essential that the government reviews this decision.**

I am available on [XXX].

Yours sincerely,

XXXX