

# Media Release

**The Hon Nick Staikos MP**  
Minister for Consumer Affairs  
Minister for Local Government



Wednesday, 7 May 2025

## FINANCIAL ADVICE BOOST FOR CANCER PATIENTS

The Allan Labor Government is supporting Victorians affected by cancer by providing greater access to financial counselling.

Minister for Consumer Affairs Nick Staikos met with Cancer Council Victoria financial counsellors and staff this week after the Labor Government awarded a \$935,000 grant to allow the organisation to expand their financial counselling service.

The service gives people affected by cancer practical advice and guidance to help manage the costs associated with accessing treatment.

The Cancer Council's financial counselling program has helped thousands of Victorians find information about healthcare options, out-of-pocket costs, government benefits, superannuation and insurance, during difficult times in their lives.

The latest grant will allow Cancer Council Victoria to increase its financial counselling services by 20 per cent over the next two years. The organisation will also pilot the use of artificial intelligence to provide more real-time support to more Victorians.

The Labor Government announced in January that 16 organisations across the state would share \$15 million in funding to expand and support the services offered to thousands of Victorians who are experiencing financial hardship, particularly mortgage or rental stress.

This is in addition to the more than \$16 million the Government is already providing this financial year for generalist and specialist family violence and disaster response financial counselling services across the state.

People affected by cancer can access the financial counselling program by calling 13 11 20.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Consumer Affairs Nick Staikos

*"We're backing Cancer Council Victoria because they provide vital support to Victorians living with cancer, including financial counselling."*

*"This grant will allow Cancer Council Victoria to revolutionise the way it delivers its financial counselling service by trialling the use of AI to improve outcomes for clients."*

### Quotes attributable to Cancer Council Victoria Head of Strategy and Support Danielle Spence

*"Financial assistance and support services are crucial in helping cancer patients manage costs that come as a result of a cancer diagnosis and alleviate some of the financial stress associated with their care."*

*"We welcome this support from the Victorian Government – it means we'll be able to reach more people across the state, particularly those in regional and remote areas."*

## Quotes attributable to lymphoma survivor Tahli Batkilin

*"Obviously being down to one income was a challenge – we were lucky that my husband could keep working, but during Covid the kids weren't at school, so I had the extra worry of who was going to look after them when I was in hospital – my husband had to take time off to be with the kids."*

*"Thinking about what we spent our money on, I didn't even know if I was going to survive, let alone be able to go back to work again, so we really felt like we had to save everything just in case."*

*"The mortgage doesn't stop, the bills don't stop, so while we were lucky that my husband could work, it also meant he couldn't take extra time off to take me to my treatments – so he would feel bad about that. It was a double edge-sword."*