

Amanda Rishworth MP

Federal Member for Kingston

Media Release

BOWEL CANCER – DON'T WAIT TILL IT'S TOO LATE

From the start of this month people in Kingston will be offered free kits to enable them to take an easy but vital test for bowel cancer, in the privacy of their own homes.

The Member for Kingston, Amanda Rishworth, said all eligible people in Kingston who are turning 50, 55 or 65 years of age between 2008 and 2010 should take up the offer.

“Bowel cancer is one of Australia’s most common cancers and kills around 80 Australians each week,” Ms Rishworth said. “It can develop with few, if any, early warning signs.

“For too long, bowel cancer was a disease which was surrounded by silence. Although the risk of developing bowel cancer rises sharply and progressively from the age of 50, all Australians should be aware of its potential impact on their families.

“The National Bowel Cancer Screening Program is a major step forward for Australia in reducing the toll of this disease. It is being implemented by the Australian Government in partnership with state and territory government. The Australian Government is providing \$87.4 million over the next three years for the program.”

Ms Rishworth said bowel cancer was one of the most preventable and treatable cancers, provided it was detected early.

“A simple test, performed by a pathology lab using samples provided via the kit, will be able to catch abnormalities early enough to save lives,” Ms Rishworth said.

“If your birthday falls during these dates, a letter inviting you to take part in the voluntary screening program will be sent direct to your home.

“The Government will also provide funding to the states and territories, through the next Australian Health Care Agreements, to provide follow up services for people whose screening tests return a positive result.

“These screening tests for bowel cancer have been shown to be highly effective both in overseas clinical trials and in the pilot screening program in Australia.”

Some people will receive their screening invitations around the time of their birthday, while others will receive theirs to coincide with other people living in this area.

All information is private and will be kept on the Program Register which is protected by law and will not be unlawfully disclosed.