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MEDIA RELEASE

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Roxon's Immunisation Changes – All Stick, and No Carrot

Changes to childhood immunisation arrangements announced today are budget savings wrapped up as an incentive, and will actually penalise those families that fail to immunise their child rather than provide an incentive for those that do, Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Primary Healthcare, Andrew Southcott said today.

“Minister Roxon is threatening to take more money away from families who are already suffering from cost of living pressures caused by this Government's financial mismanagement”

“To claim that families are being given a financial benefit to immunise their child based on the changes announced today is just not true. The incentives are actually being removed”

Instead of providing incentives for parents to do the right thing and immunise their child, the Labor Government have instead decided to penalise families that don't.

“The changes announced by Minister Roxon today are all stick, and no carrot” Andrew Southcott said.

The \$726 Family Tax Benefit A was money that families were already going to receive, money that will now be stripped away if parents fail to immunise their child in time.

In addition, the Maternity Immunisation Allowance of \$129 which is paid on top of the Family Tax Benefit A payment is now being scrapped.

“This is a budget saving disguised as an incentive” Andrew Southcott said today.

This “incentive” measure is set to save the Government \$209.1 million over four years.

“The Gillard Government will be handing down their crisis mini-budget soon, and it seems that the Maternity Immunisation Allowance was the first thing to go”

The Maternity Immunisation Allowance was originally introduced in 1997 by the Howard Government as part of the “Immunise Australia: Seven Point Plan” which has seen childhood immunisation rates rise significantly.

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