

Transcript and video link of the Honourable Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, launching the National Hypertension Taskforce.

Video link to the speech is available [HERE](#).

Transcript:

- I'd like to welcome everyone and thank you all for coming along to this very significant event - the transition from 'High Blood Pressure Research Council' to 'Hypertension Australia' and the launch of the National Hypertension Taskforce.
- I'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which you are tonight, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, and pay my respects to Indigenous Elders past, present and emerging.
- You're here tonight because the Australian Cardiovascular Alliance and new entity, Hypertension Australia both saw that it was time to do something about one of Australia's major health challenges - high blood pressure.
- They call hypertension the 'silent killer' because it often goes unnoticed.
- But is a major risk factor for Australia's top three killers. It's responsible for 43% of coronary heart disease cases, 41% of stroke and 38% of chronic kidney disease.
- The Australian Cardiovascular Alliance and Hypertension Australia saw that it was time to do something about this, so they partnered to create the National Hypertension Taskforce and I applaud this partnership.
- Hypertension Australia's goal is to ensure that Australians have the best-managed blood pressure in the world. Their partnership with the Australian Cardiovascular Alliance works collaboratively to link researchers and infrastructure, across the whole research pipeline to address Australia's biggest cardiovascular health challenges.
- High blood pressure is one of those challenges. It puts an enormous health and economic burden on our society.
- When it comes to blood pressure, we need to 'know our numbers'. However, most of us don't.
- Alarming, one in three Australian adults have high blood pressure but half of them don't even know that they have it and we need to do more for those people.
- There's so much in our lives that we can't control. But high blood pressure is largely preventable. We can do something about it. We can find out if we have it. We can seek treatment to help get it under control, and we can limit damage to the organs that we know can have devastating long-term consequences. High blood pressure doesn't have to lead to chronic illness and fatalities.
- The National Hypertension Taskforce has set the ambitious but achievable goal of doubling Australia's rate of controlled blood pressure from 32% to 70% by 2030.

- In recent years, we've fallen way behind other countries like Germany, Canada and the US. So, a 70% control rate doesn't just mean an improvement, it means that Australia would lead the world in managing blood pressure. That's something to work towards and be proud of.
- The Albanese Government is delighted to see this collaborative cross-sector approach to solving a real health risk to everyday Australians - because if we want to make a difference, we must take a collaborative approach.
- And that's what the National Hypertension Taskforce is doing. It is taking a whole of eco-system approach to solve a major health challenge. It's putting patients at the centre and bringing together primary care, the research community, allied health, nurses, clinicians, pharmacists, peak bodies and governments. It's initiating a national conversation and enabling everyone to bring their expertise to the table to make concrete recommendations and practical actions for change.
- In their *Call to Action*, Co-leads of the Hypertension Taskforce Professors Alta Schutte and Markus Schlaich said that we have the tools to be able to do something about our current control rates. Blood pressure is a modifiable risk factor. We can get the uncontrolled back under control.
- We just have to take the next step and the National Hypertension Taskforce is that next step.
- So, I'd like to congratulate all the people involved in making it happen. This is something to remember - we've taken our statistics seriously but have stopped simply talking about them and joined forces to proactively and collectively change them and measure that change.
- I look forward to receiving the recommendations and plans from the Hypertension Taskforce. Preventing the catastrophic effects of high blood pressure is something that we all want to see happen.
- We have world class researchers here in Australia and we must continue to harness that talent and bring the community together to work on the most pressing health challenges.
- That's how we can make a major difference to the health and lives of ordinary Australians. And I'd like to thank you all for your role in that.