

KEEPING COOL SA CAMPAIGN PLATFORM

The Need for a Medical Cooling Energy Concession in SA

The **Keeping Cool Alliance** has been formed to campaign for a Medical Cooling Rebate for South Australians with medically based “heat intolerance”.

People with medically based heat intolerance (who are often on low incomes) spend up to seven times as much as the average South Australian on air-conditioning.

Approximately 1300 South Australians suffer from medically based heat intolerance. It is associated with a wide range of conditions including MS, Parkinsons, Poliomyelitis and Post-polio syndrome, Quadriplegia, Muscular Dystrophy, Motor Neurone Disease, Cerebral Palsy, Fibromyalgia, Systemic Lupus Erythematosus, Chronic Fatigue, Lymph oedema and Scleroderma.

Every other State except Tasmania provides a medical cooling rebate to help people cope with their medical need for cooling.

The alliance is proposing a Medical Cooling Rebate for South Australia as follows:

- A rebate of approximately \$210-280 per annum or about one third of the average air-conditioning bill of people with ‘medically based heat intolerance’ in South Australia
- As with the current energy concession only people on low incomes would be eligible but a doctor’s sign-off on the ‘medical need’ for cooling would be required.
- The rebate should either be flat annual rate indexed annually to residential electricity tariffs or alternatively a percentage-based rebate could be established.

The alliance believes that a Medical Cooling Rebate would be a low cost-initiative. Based on the Victorian experience the rebate would cost approximately \$100,000, in the first year of operation rising to between \$400,000 to \$500,000 in five years. and then leveling off as uptake stabilises.

The membership of the Keeping Cool Alliance is growing rapidly and currently includes:

SACOSS	CARERS SA
MS SA/NT	MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY SA
PARKINSONS SA	MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE ASSOCIATION OF SA
NATIONAL DISABILITY SERVICES	LYMPHOEDEMA SUPPORT GROUP SA INC
BRAIN INJURY NETWORK OF SA	THE EPILEPSY CENTRE
PARAQUAD SA	HEALTH CONSUMERS ALLIANCE

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