

# Better Access Australia

Omnibus Poll Questions on Newborn Screening, February 2022

Research conducted by KORE CSR on behalf of Better Access Australia.

Method: Online survey

Target population: Australians over 18 years of age

Collection dates: February 4 to 9, 2022

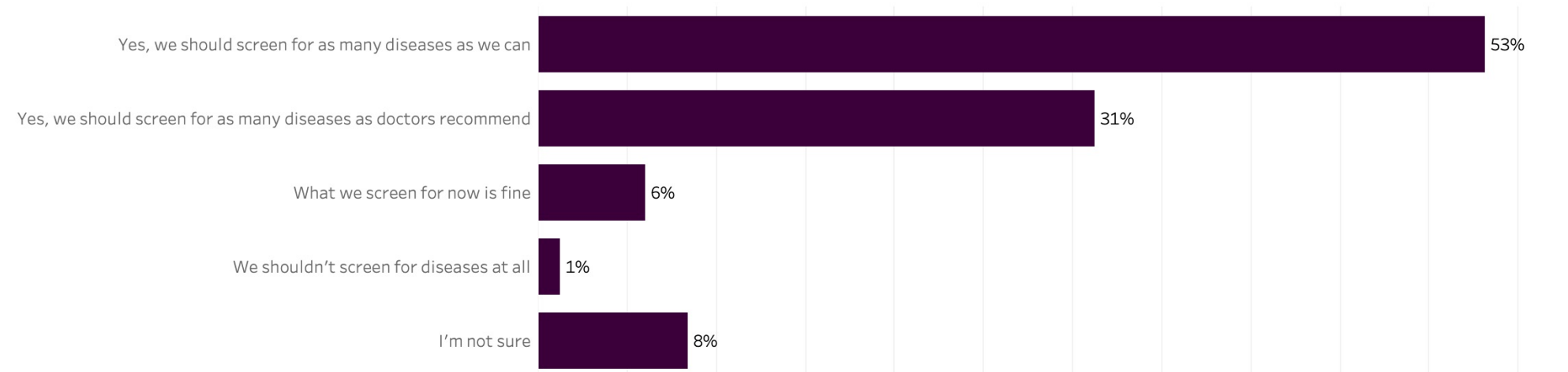
Sample: 1258

Margin of Error: 3%

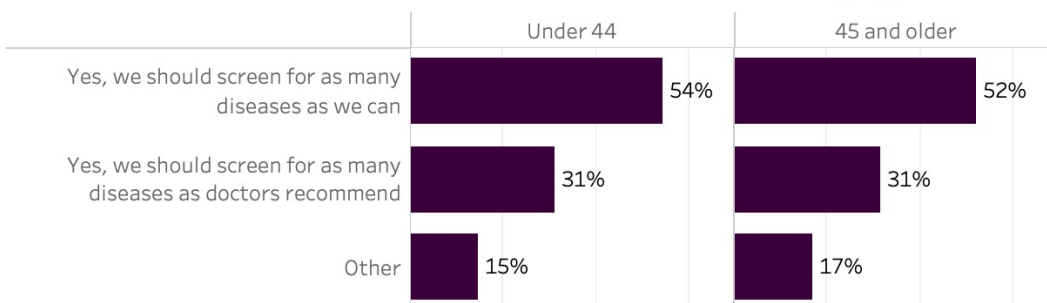


# Should Australia screen newborn babies for more diseases?

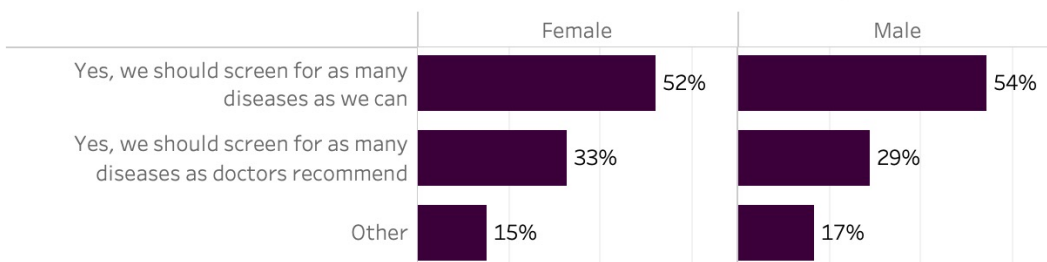
Without a diagnosis you cannot get treatment for a disease. Australia only screens newborns for up to 28 diseases at birth. In California they screen for 80 diseases. **Should Australia screen newborn babies for more diseases?**



## Should screen newborn babies for more diseases by age



## Should screen newborn babies for more diseases by gender



## What people are saying about this...

"And what about screening before birth? Seems to me that the more we know about our health the better"  
75 and over male, Victoria

"Assuming that early detection and treatment leads to better overall outcomes, why wouldn't you support this"  
65-74 year old female, Queensland

"Capturing childhood disease early with early intervention could save lives, reduce suffering for children and families and save money in the health system."  
35-44 year old male, Queensland

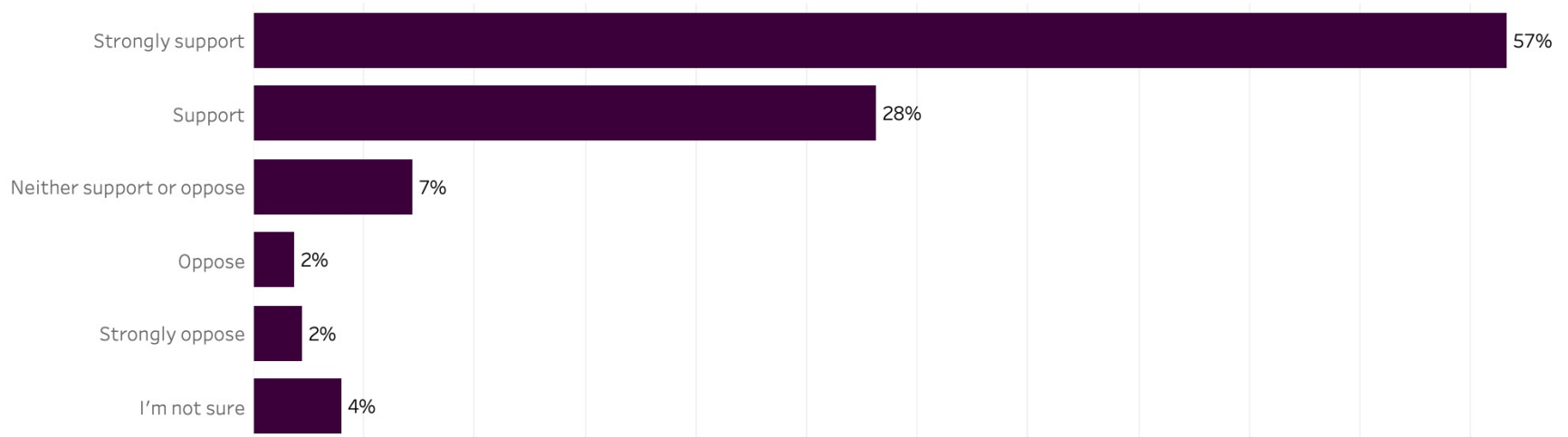
## Summary

There was very strong support for screening newborn babies for more diseases, with 84% saying they would support the move, 7% opposing and 8% not sure.

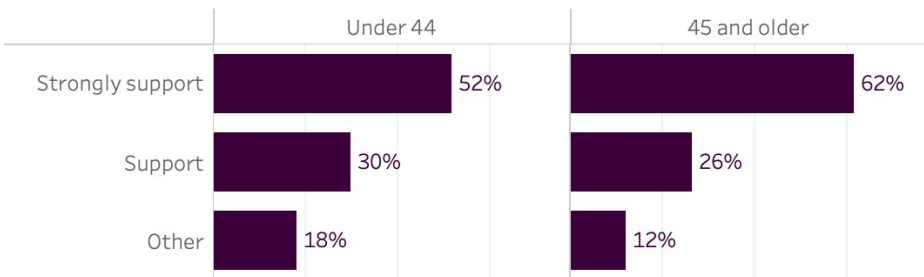
There were no significant differences when analysed by age, gender, state, education, or occupation.

# Would you support a national program to ensure all babies are screened for the same diseases?

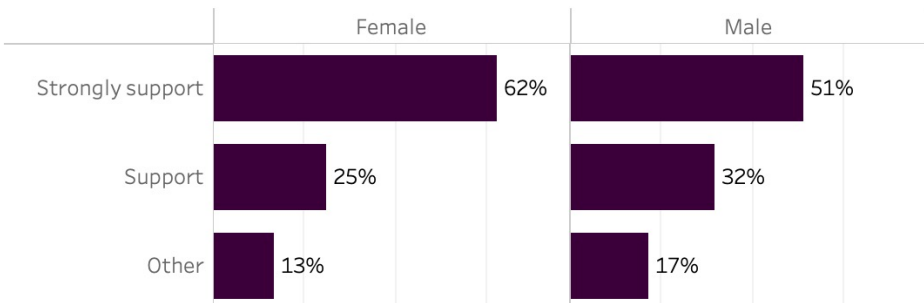
Babies born in different states and territories in Australia are screened for different diseases. Would you support or oppose a national program to ensure all babies are screened for the same diseases?



## Support for national screening program by age



## Support for national screening program by gender



## What people are saying about this...

"It should be consistent Australia wide. We need to see which states do it best, and replicate that Australia wide."  
35-44 year old female, NSW

"I don't support national screening at the expense of geographic or demographic specific screening - support it as a consistent base"  
45-54 year old female, Victoria

"I support consistent screening across all states and territories, provided the screening conducted in NSW is not diminished to lower levels than it is now."  
55-64 year old female, NSW

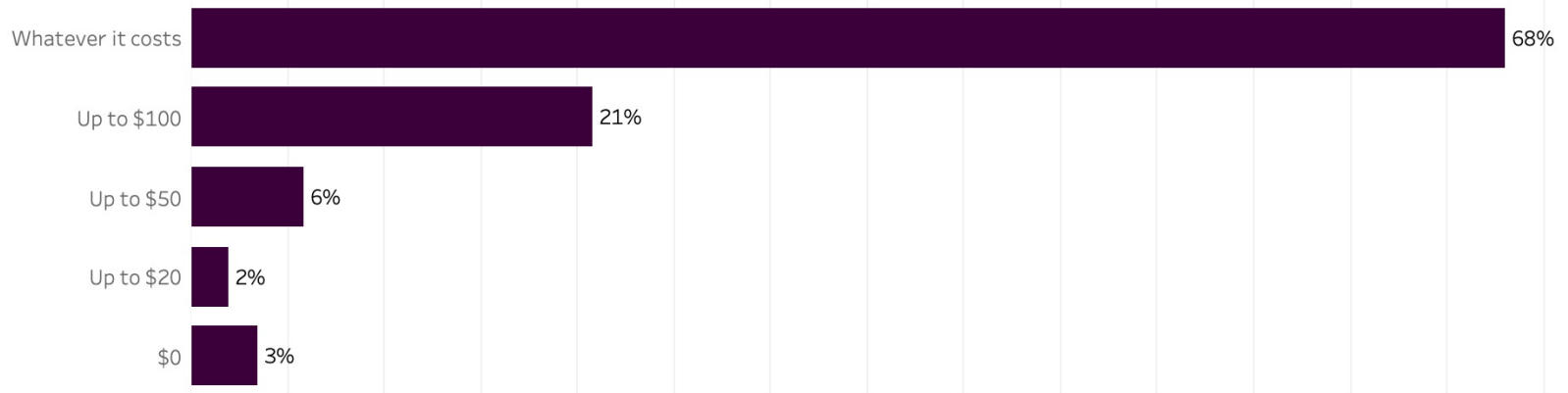
## Summary

There was very strong support for a national screening program with 85% supporting the idea, and only 4% oppose. However, a note of caution that came through in comments is that people would not want a national program to come at the expense of existing programs.

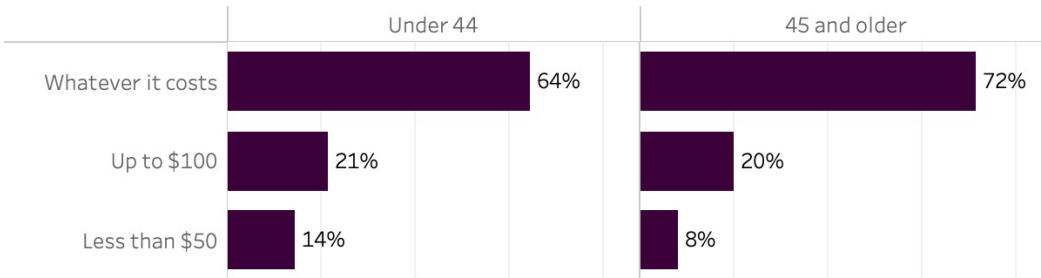
Women and people over 45 were more supportive, as were people with higher levels of education. ACT (93%) and Queensland (89%) were slightly more supportive.

# How much should government pay for newborn screening

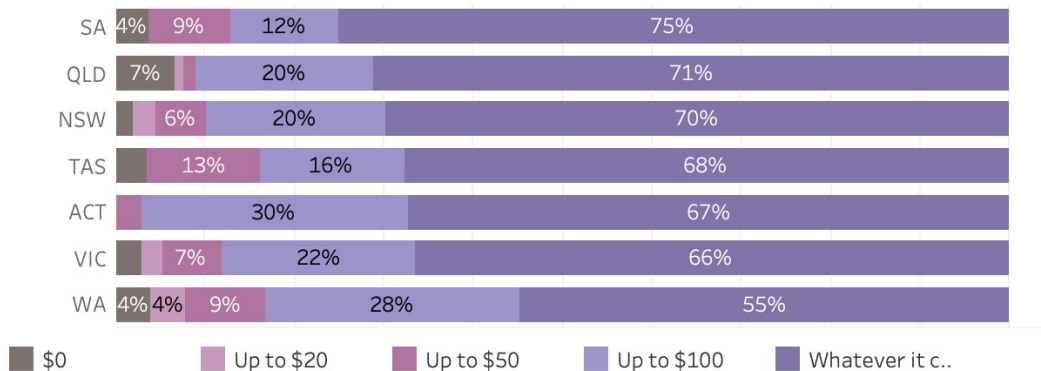
The government currently spends \$100 per COVID-19 test. How much would you support government spending per baby to screen for up to 80 diseases at birth?



## How much should government pay by age



## How much should government pay by State



## What people are saying about this...

"\$100 per child is peanuts in the context of what gets spent in the health system."

35-44 year old male, NSW

"Cost of these types of screening should not be an issue, and are consistently decreasing."

75 and over male, WA

"Early screening could save a lot of Medicare money later on."

55-64 year old female, Victoria

## Summary

There was very strong support level of 68% for whatever it costs for newborn screening, with a further 21% supporting a cost of \$100. Only 3% didn't think the federal government should pay for screening, and a number of those indicated it should be on the States to provide screening.

There were little differences across gender, education or occupation. However, older people were more likely to support 'whatever it costs', while WA had a noticeably lower support level than other states.