

Nicola Roxon's many memorable achievements in Australian federal politics were characterised by a combination of her passion for improving people's lives and her constructive, determined approach to overcoming obstacles. As the new Chairman of Bupa Australia and New Zealand, Nicola is looking forward to helping make our working lives even more rewarding and improving the wellbeing of the wider community.

Nicola Roxon

Driven by a care for others

Sydney-born, but raised in Melbourne, Nicola Roxon made the transition from industrial lawyer to Federal Health Minister and then Australia's first female Attorney General without losing sight of her core values.

"I strongly believe that you can have a drive and ambition for success, as well as bringing your own personality to work without having to 'check it in at the door,'" she says. "Most businesses, and especially Bupa, have people at the heart of them, and we need to continually guide our people in a way that is respectful to their needs, as well as inspiring them, so they can achieve their hopes and ambitions."

Throughout her career, Nicola has naturally gravitated towards roles that help others. "I love working in the health space, because when you do it well, you can have such an impact on people's lives. And it is an area that really matters to the community."

As Federal Health Minister from 2007 to 2011, Nicola oversaw major reforms to Australia's public hospital,

primary care and preventative health systems. One iconic initiative, against the most ferocious opposition, was making Australia the first country to insist that all tobacco is sold in plain packaging with large, graphic health warnings.

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"There are a lot of similarities between what we do at Bupa and what I was doing in government. We are both major 'payers' into the Australian health system and Bupa now has a huge role to play, as a trusted market leader, to help keep the government informed on some of the big picture issues facing our industry."

Nicola was elected to the Federal Parliament in 1998. When Labor won the 2007 election, she became one of the first female senior cabinet ministers with a

very young child. "When I was in parliament, I was incredibly strict with the non-negotiables in my life, which included being home for dinner and bath time. I had to set boundaries, and put in place systems, to deal with that," she recalls. "I don't think there is a magic solution to balancing work and life, as it is incredibly individual to each person, but I'm very impressed that at Bupa, there is a genuine attempt to understand people's different needs, and a determination to ensure there is much more to life than just work."

And parenthood, Nicola suggests, is one experience that can prepare people for success in today's new business landscape. "Our changing world needs people who are adaptable, multi-skilled and empathetic, and these are exactly the skills you learn as a parent," Nicola explains. "As we now look towards finding the right people based on capabilities and skills, rather than simply their CVs, it opens up a huge pool of energy and talent among people who might have left



Photograph taken by Nicola Roxon

the workforce for a period of time to raise children."

Since leaving federal politics, Nicola has taken on a range of roles that allow her to contribute the benefit of her experience and advocate for positive change. She is currently the Chair of the Cancer Council of Australia as well as having been a Director of Bupa Australia and New Zealand and the Bupa Health Foundation for three years.

Away from work, Nicola is an avid walker around the bayside

"My parents taught me at a young age about fairness and decency, generosity, having a go and helping others. When my father died, when I was 10, my mother taught me about independence and integrity. These values are the yardstick against which I continue to make my judgments today."

