

COMMUNIQUE

NATIONAL PREVENTIVE HEALTH STRATEGY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND NUTRITION WORKSHOP: 30 OCTOBER 2019

The Minister for Health, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, has committed to the development of a National Preventive Health Strategy (the Strategy). It is intended that the Strategy provide a long-term vision for improving the health of all Australians and that it stimulates a systemic shift to achieve a better balance between treatment and prevention. It will be a national strategy that includes primary and secondary prevention, and it will not have a disease-specific approach. The Strategy will be underpinned by the strongest research available.

An Expert Steering Committee has been appointed to provide advice on the development of the Strategy, with the first meeting held on 26 September 2019. Broad consultation is integral to the development of the Strategy and the views of public health groups, key stakeholders and consumers will be represented in the Strategy.

A series of topic-specific consultations are being held in October and early November. The second topic-specific consultation was on physical activity and nutrition, held on the 30 October 2019 in Sydney. Participants included representatives from consumer groups, government departments, not-for-profit organisations, Primary Health Networks, research organisations and other experts in physical activity and nutrition.

CONSULTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Consultation participants considered the vision and scope for the Strategy, as well as issues specific to physical activity and nutrition.

Some of the themes emerging from the discussion were:

- The importance of having a long term commitment.
- The importance of equity and reducing health differences.
- The need for a strong focus on effective, sustained implementation and accountability.
- How the Strategy can support and enhance existing national plans and programs.
- The need for stronger governance around prevention and clear indicators for prevention to measure progress
- The need to rebalance health expenditure to prevention.
- The importance of accurate person-centred communication and engagement.
- There is a strong body of evidence on effective policy and programs to support healthy eating and active living.
- The importance of intervening early in the lifecycle when it comes to promoting healthy eating and active living to achieve systemic change.
- How technological and societal changes may impact health behaviours in the future.

NEXT STEPS

The following next steps will be undertaken:

- Further topic-specific and cross-cutting consultations in early November.
- The Expert Steering Committee will meet again in November to consider the outcomes of the consultations.
- There will be a public consultation on the draft Strategy in the first half of 2020.