

## Obesity Collective Response to Consultation Paper: Development of the National Preventive Health Strategy

September 2020

We support the need for a National Preventive Health Strategy and the concept of building a sustainable preventive system for the future. We are particularly supportive of the following concepts included in the Consultation Paper:

- Building on previous success and lessons
- Increased investment in prevention with a strategic and long-term vision
- Many contributing factors to poor health sit outside of the health system and that a whole of government response is required
- Effective prevention requires a collective and cohesive effort across sectors and the community, with comprehensive and sustained programs/action
- Need for environments to promote health including recognition of commercial influences, availability and access to healthy food options, safe environments and opportunities for physical activity
- Recognition of equity challenges and that some groups will require greater levels of support

We would urge that there be three additions made to the Strategy:

- 1) Explicit mention of mental health;
- 2) Linkages with the developing National Obesity Strategy;
- 3) Consideration of what would be needed for successful implementation in a reasonable timeframe, with accountability.

We are concerned that the consultation paper is high level and lacking concrete actions and accountability. A number of Obesity Collective leaders attended the consultation sessions for the developing Preventive Health Strategy and provided feedback on the need for implementation planning and investment. For this to be possible, there needs to be an implementation strategy (underpinned by implementation science), specific funding for implementation and an organisation that is accountable with the authority to lead, mobilise, coordinate and support action.

As noted [in our feedback](#) on the developing National Obesity Strategy, it is important to recognise that several high-quality national strategies and plans have been developed previously. These have not been implemented or sustained successfully on a national scale. For example [an analysis by The Obesity Policy Coalition](#) showed that only one of 27 recommended obesity actions from the 2009 National Preventative Health Taskforce roadmap had been completed a decade later in 2020.

It is important that the National Preventive Health Strategy is properly funded with longer term budget commitments and leads to tangible and sustained action for a healthier Australia.

Thank you in advance for considering our feedback.