

Tipping the Scales: progress and barriers to address obesity in Australia

Jane Martin
Executive Manager
 JaneMartinOPC

Obesity Prevention Summit
Eastern Region, 11th December, 2019



WHO Collaborating Centre
for Obesity Prevention



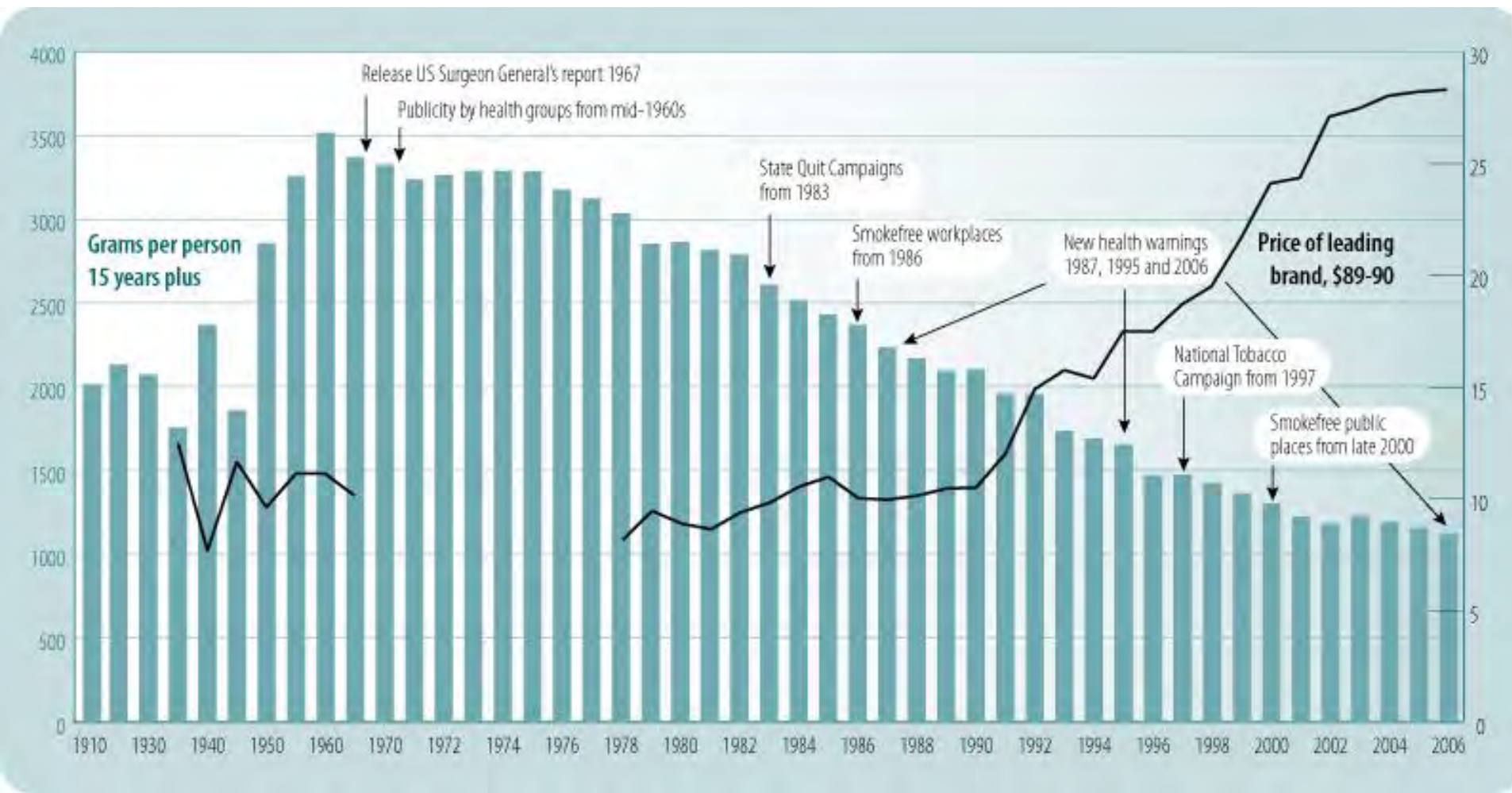
Comprehensive Approach for Tobacco Control - Government

Possible Action by the Government

Decisive steps should be taken by the Government to curb the present rising consumption of tobacco, and especially of cigarettes. This action could be taken along the following lines (*paras. 112-119*):—

- (i) more education of the public and especially school-children concerning the hazards of smoking;
- (ii) more effective restrictions on the sale of tobacco to children;
- (iii) restriction of tobacco advertising;
- (iv) wider restriction of smoking in public places;
- (v) an increase of tax on cigarettes, perhaps with adjustment of the tax on pipe and cigar tobaccos;
- (vi) informing purchasers of the tar and nicotine content of the smoke of cigarettes;
- (vii) investigating the value of anti-smoking clinics to help those who find difficulty in giving up smoking.

Estimated tobacco consumption Australia 1910-2006



Major events in tobacco control and tobacco products consumption per person 15 years and over, Australia, 1906 to 1998–99, (grams)

Source: Tobacco in Australia, Facts and Issues 3rd Edition.

What is the OPC?



Enter keywords



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[What we do](#)

[What you can do](#)

[Media](#)



Our work

Advocacy for policy change

The Obesity Policy Coalition aims to influence change through policy and regulation to improve diets and help prevent obesity, particularly in children.



Our campaigns

Tipping the Scales

Identifies eight clear actions the Australian government must take to reduce the impact excess weight and poor diets are having on the nation's physical and economic health.



Media

Tuesday 21 November 2017

[Sugar, Sugar or Honey. Honey? Health Agencies Call for Clearer Labelling of 'Added Sugar'](#)

Tuesday 19 September 2017

[Tipping the Scales: We must halt obesity to save Australian lives](#)

What's the latest on Twitter

Obesity Coalition Retweeted



Obesity rates worldwide have more than doubled since 1980. How the world is getting fatter



Feb 16, 2018

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Policy

- Analyse and prioritise policy initiatives
- Encourage all levels of government to support evidence-informed policy initiatives

Legal and Regulatory

- Enforcement of existing laws and self regulatory codes
- Law reform through advocating for changes

Key policy issues



Prevalence and cost of chronic disease

Including a focus on prevention as well as treatment and acute care

Developing and advocating the case for prevention

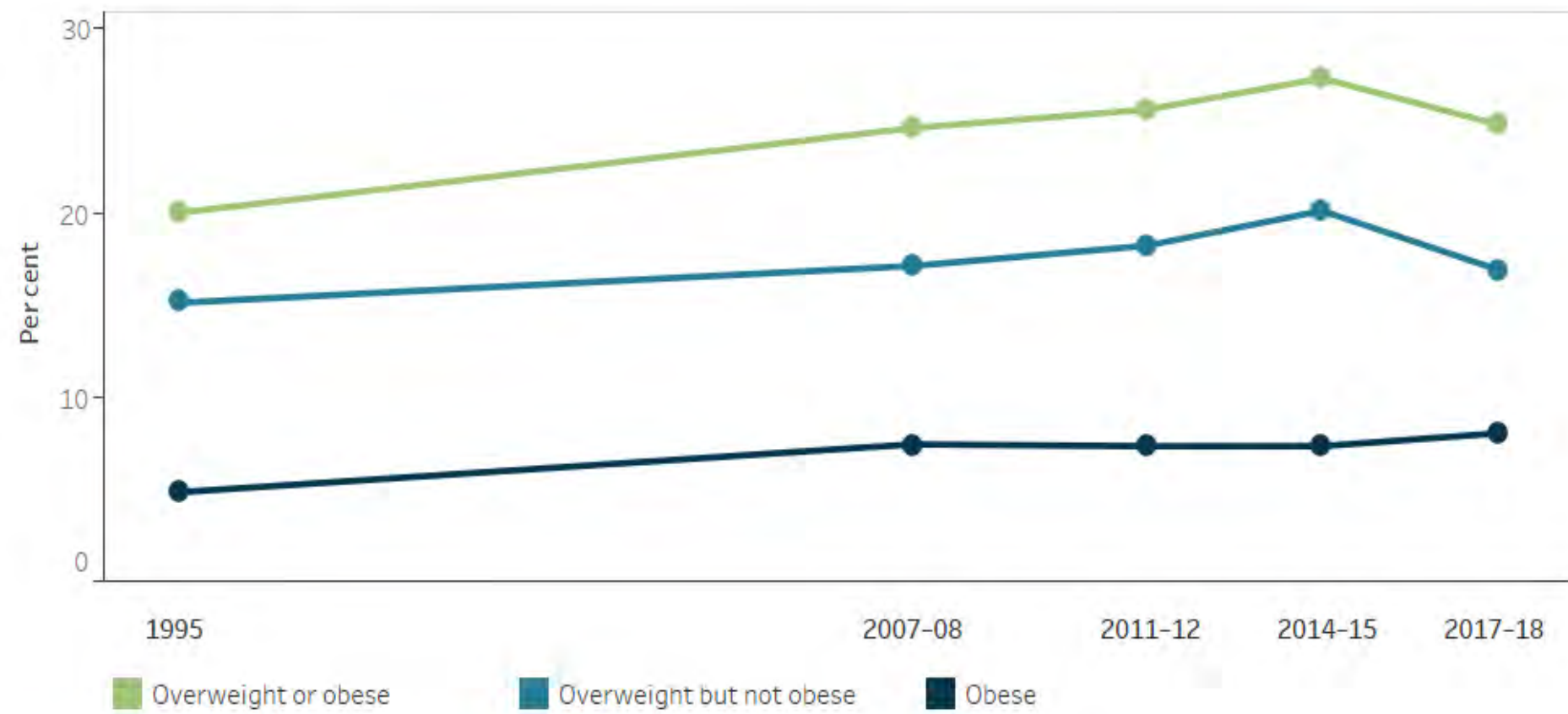
Creating a sense of urgency

Developing the research and evidence base

Building consensus around policy response

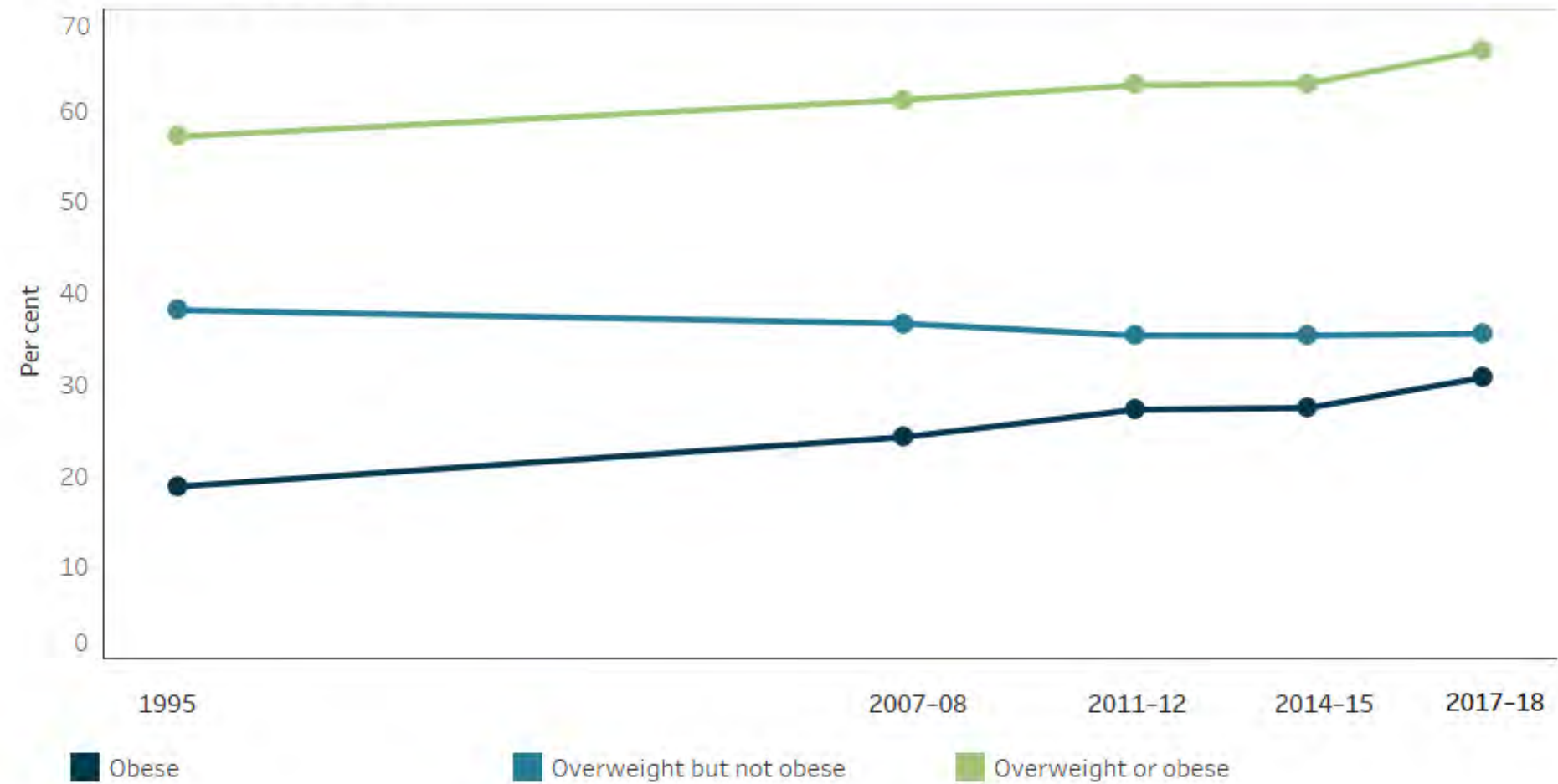
What is the problem?

Figure 1: Proportion of overweight and obese children and adolescents aged 5–17, 1995 to 2017–18



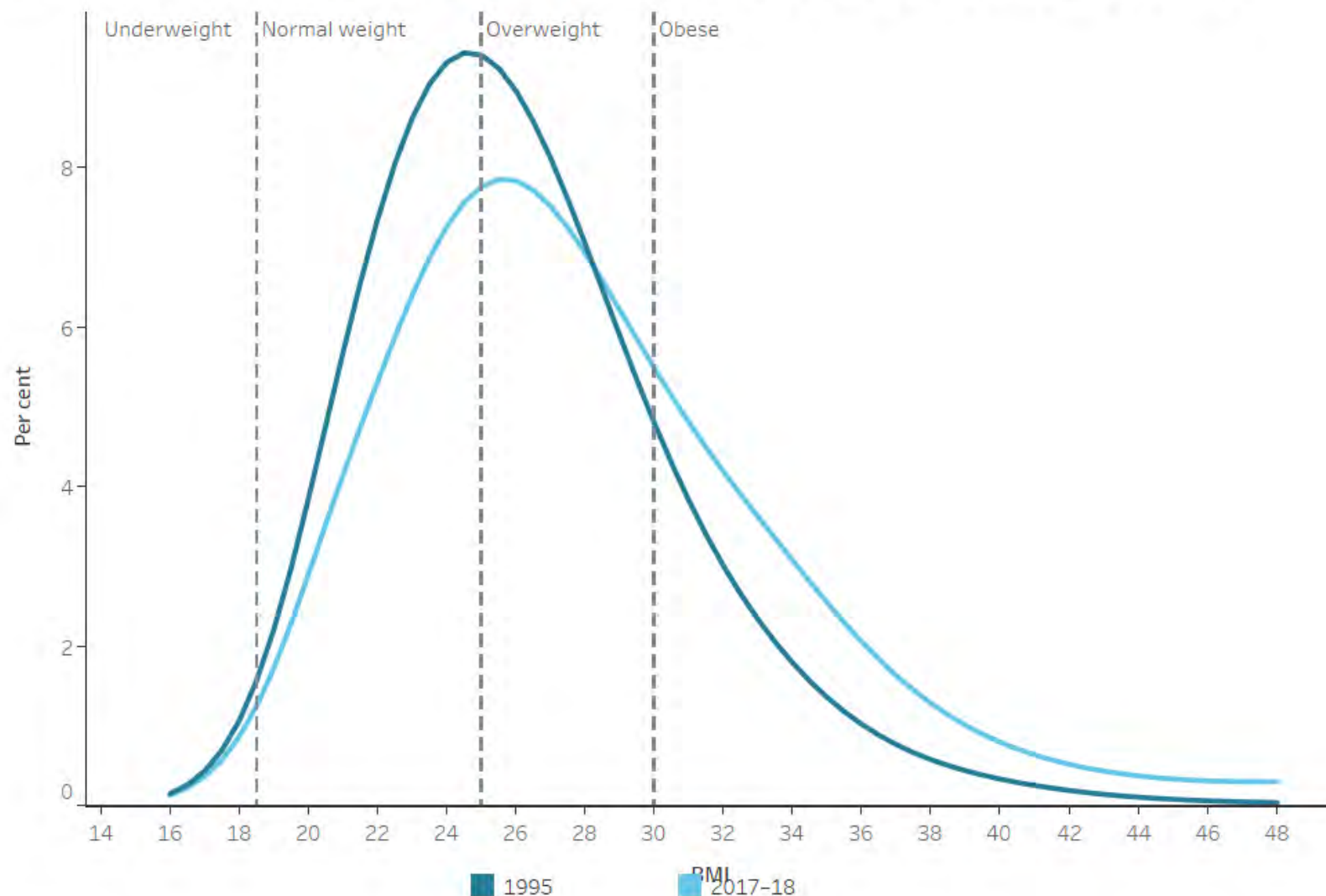
Notes:
1. Overweight and obesity classification is based on measured height and weight.
2. 95% CI = 95% confidence interval. We can be 95% confident that the true value is within this confidence interval.
Sources: ABS 2009; ABS 2013a; ABS 2013b; ABS 2015; ABS 2019; Table S2.
www.aihw.gov.au

Figure 2: Age-standardised proportion of overweight and obese adults aged 18 and over, 1995 to 2017-18



Notes:
1. Overweight and obesity classification is based on measured height and weight.
2. 95% CI = 95% confidence interval. We can be 95% confident that the true value is within this confidence interval.
Sources: ABS 2010; ABS 2013b; ABS 2014; ABS 2016; ABS 2019; Table S8.
www.aihw.gov.au

Figure 3: Distribution of BMI among persons aged 18 and over, 1995 and 2017-18



Notes

1. The distributions have been smoothed, including the minimum and maximum values which are based on aggregates of 16 or less and 48 or more.
2. BMI classification is based on measured height and weight.

Source: ABS 2019; Table S8.

www.aihw.gov.au

What should be done?

Complementary
approaches to
prevention

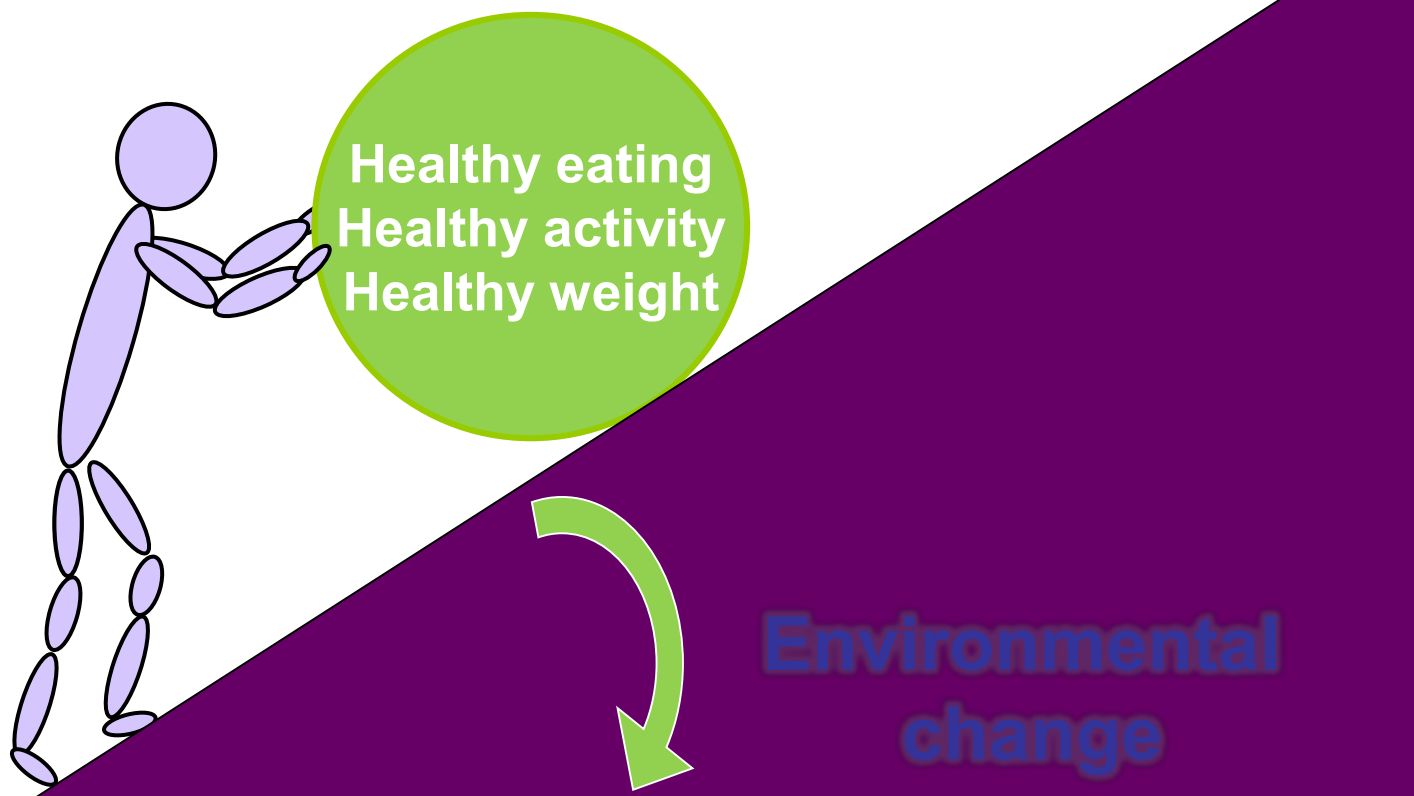
Individual
behaviour change



**The environmental
gradient is steep**

Complementary
approaches to
prevention

Individual
behaviour change



**So, changing
the gradient ...**

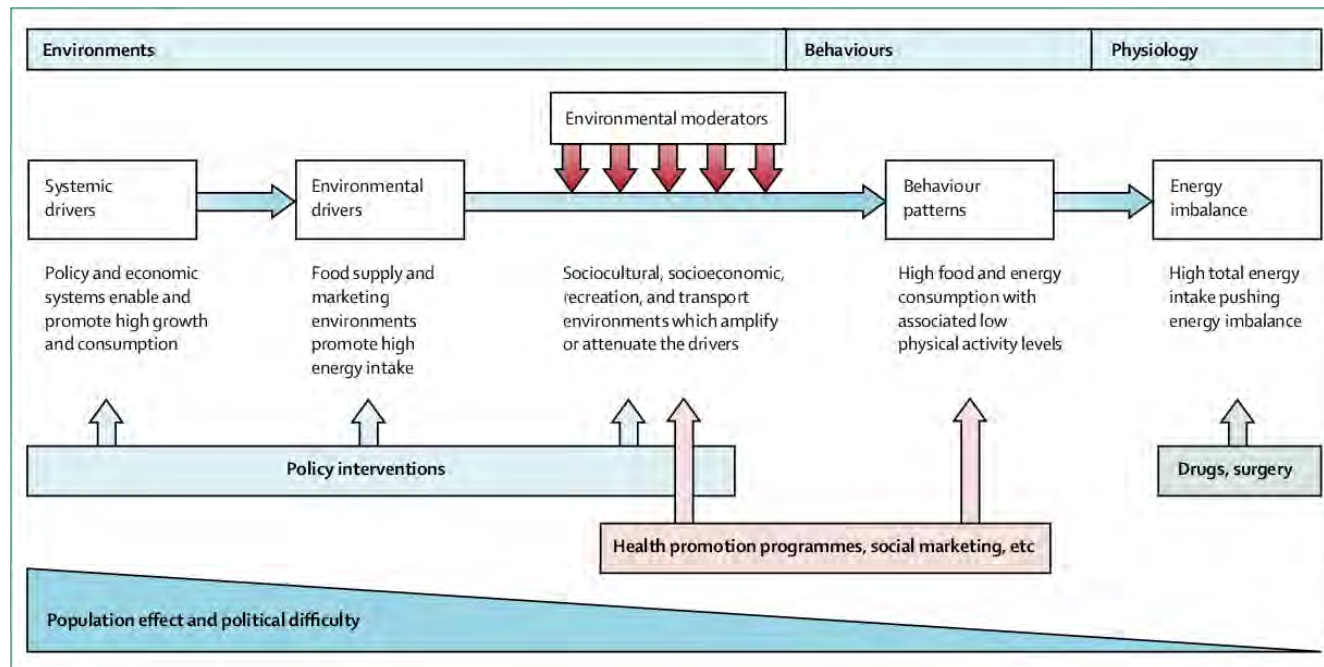
Complementary
approaches to
prevention

Individual
behaviour change



**... will make it easier
to change behaviour**

Determinants and Solutions

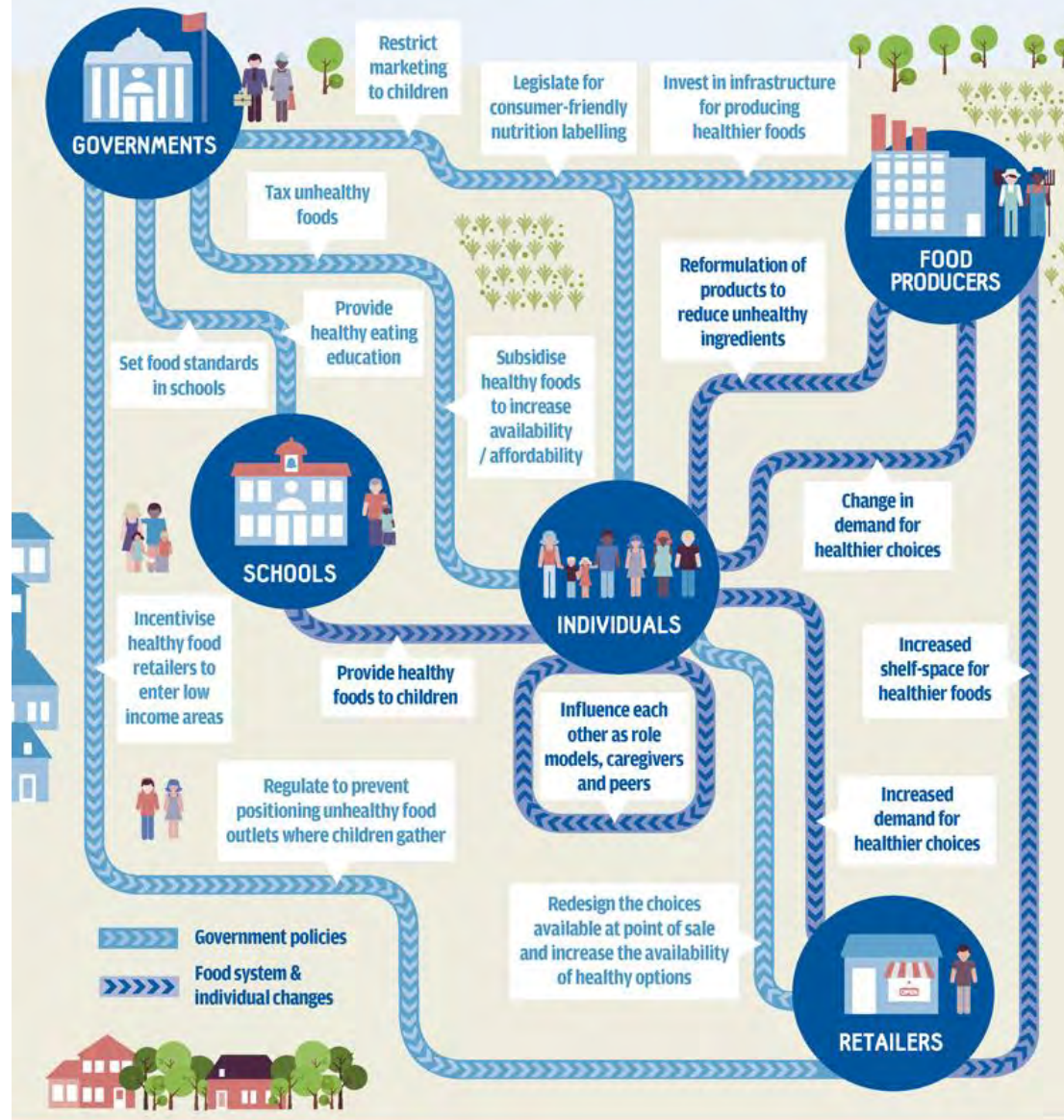


A framework to categorise obesity determinants and solutions

Swinburn et al, Lancet 2011

HOW CAN GOVERNMENTS SUPPORT HEALTHY FOOD PREFERENCES?

The food system is an interconnected network of producers, industry, and institutions. But at its heart is the individual. Policy can affect all parts of the network, influencing a cultural shift towards healthier food preferences.



AUSTRALIA: THE HEALTHIEST COUNTRY BY 2020



A discussion paper prepared by the
National Preventative Health Taskforce

TAKING PREVENTATIVE ACTION

A RESPONSE TO
AUSTRALIA: THE HEALTHIEST COUNTRY BY 2020

THE REPORT OF THE NATIONAL PREVENTATIVE HEALTH TASKFORCE



What progress has been made?



Policies for
tackling obesity
and creating
healthier food
environments

**Scorecard and priority
recommendations** for
Australian governments

February 2017

Further details available at
www.foodpolicyindex.org.au

Best Practice for Federal Government

Government	Policy areas rated highest (with reference to international best practice)	Priority policy recommendations
Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring: Regular monitoring of population body weight at a national level • Food prices: No GST on fresh fruit and vegetables • Food labelling: Development of the Health Star Rating scheme, and regulations on health and nutrition claims • Dietary guidelines: Food-based dietary guidelines implemented, based on rigorous evidence • Governance: Procedures for transparency and broad consultation as part of policy development within the Food Regulation System 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Establish obesity prevention as a national priority, with a national taskforce, sustained funding, and regular monitoring 2 Develop a National Nutrition Policy, building on the work that has already been undertaken to inform its development 3 Implement a health levy on sugar-sweetened drinks, and invest revenue raised into public health interventions 4 Implement mandatory time-based (up to 9:00pm) restrictions of unhealthy food advertising on broadcast media 5 Fast-track changes to the Health Star Rating scheme to address anomalies / design issues, and make the scheme mandatory for all packaged food by July 2019 6 Commit sustained funding and ongoing support for a comprehensive diet and nutrition survey conducted every 5-10 years 7 Establish targets for national population dietary intake and for reductions in key nutrients in major food categories

Update in 2019

Summary of key areas of progress and recommendations for each jurisdiction

Government	Key areas in which progress has been made	Recommended areas for action in 2019/2020
Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership: The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Health Council agreed that a national strategy be developed on obesity, with a strong focus on the primary and secondary prevention and social determinants of health• Food labelling: Continued commitment to and investment in the Health Star Rating (HSR) system and the 5-year review of the HSR system. Substantial progress in considering options for the labelling of added sugars on packaged food and drinks• Food composition: Progressing the activities of the Healthy Food Partnership, including through development of draft reformulation targets for manufactured foods, and development of a voluntary food services pledge scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership: Develop a comprehensive National Obesity Strategy, based on best practice recommendations for obesity prevention and incorporating consensus recommendations from public health groups• Food labelling: Finalise the outcomes of the 5-year review of the HSR system, including adoption of the recommendations coming out of the review. Finalise work on the labelling of added sugars on packaged food and drinks• Food composition: Set comprehensive national targets for reformulation of packaged food, including detailed monitoring and reporting of progress, and strong incentives for industry to meet targets

What has facilitated change?



Health Minister's advice

“On obesity in particular, the mixed approaches from advocates and researchers about what is needed to be successful have made it more difficult for governments to act decisively. When multifactorial approaches are likely to be needed, this can make the ‘ask’ confusing – governments often want a clear plan, or a clear starting point. In some public health areas, it is often hotly contested where one should start.”

Nicola Roxon, ex-Health Minister, Rudd Govt

Tipping the Scales – initial collaborators

Auckland University

Australian Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance

Australian and New Zealand Obesity Society

Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute

Cancer Council Australia

Deakin University

Diabetes Australia

Kidney Health Australia

National Heart Foundation

Obesity Australia

Obesity Policy Coalition

University of Melbourne

University of Sydney (Charles Perkins Centre)

LiveLighter WA

TIPPING THE SCALES

**8 critical actions
Australia must
take to tackle
obesity**

1



7:30 PM

**Toughen
restrictions on
TV junk food
advertising
to kids**

2



**Set food
reformulation
targets**

3



**Make Health
Star Ratings
mandatory**

4



**Develop an
active transport
strategy**

5



**Fund public
health education
campaigns**

6



**Add a 20%
health levy to
sugary drinks**

7



**Establish a
national obesity
taskforce**

8



**Monitor diet,
physical activity,
weight guidelines**

opc.org.au/tippingthescales
#TippingTheScales

Endorsed by

Australian Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance





Photo Shutterstock

SUGAR HIT

Some of Australia's highest profile health groups have joined forces to push a tax on soft drinks and a ban on junk food advertising. "This is really urgent," said Obesity Policy Coalition executive manager Jane Martin. "We have a generation of children that could die younger than their parents."

Aisha Dow reports, Page 2

Obesity Government support unlikely

Health groups call for 20pc levy on soft drinks

EXCLUSIVE

Aisha Dow

Health Reporter

A 20 per cent tax on sugary drinks is being proposed by Australia's leading health organisations as part of a tough new strategy to tackle obesity, which they say poses a greater risk to the nation than smoking.

A coalition of 34 high-profile groups including the Obesity Policy Coalition, Cancer Council, Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne and the Stroke Foundation

are calling on the federal government to establish obesity prevention as a national priority.

The strategy includes a ban on unhealthy food advertising on free-to-air television during prime time, between 5.30pm and 9.30pm, when they say the greatest numbers of children are watching.

"This is really urgent," said Obesity Policy Coalition executive manager Jane Martin.

"We have a generation of children that could die younger than their parents."

Rates of obesity continue to climb in Australia, with about 63 per cent of adults and 27 per cent of children obese or overweight.

The action plan, titled "Tipping the Scales" and launched on Tuesday, renews calls for a tax on sugary drinks, with a suggested levy of

Australian Health Policy Collaboration - alignment

TEN PRIORITY POLICY ACTIONS TO PREVENT AND REDUCE CHRONIC DISEASES IN AUSTRALIA

This complementary suite of priority policy actions will help get Australia on track to reach the 2025 targets and significantly reduce preventable illness and disability in the population. The priority policy actions were developed by Australia's leading chronic disease scientists, researchers and clinicians. Designed to tackle shared risk factors for chronic disease, these actions will drive change where it is needed most.





Select Committee into the Obesity Epidemic in Australia

On 10 May 2018, the Senate resolved that the Select Committee into the obesity epidemic in Australia be established on 16 May 2018.

The closing date for submissions is **6 July 2018**.

The committee report is expected to table in the Senate after 4.30pm today.

The Select Committee into the obesity epidemic in Australia, established on 16 May 2018 to inquire into and report on 26 November 2018, on the following matters:

- a. The prevalence of overweight and obesity among children in Australia and changes in these rates over time;
- b. The causes of the rise in overweight and obesity in Australia;
- c. The short and long-term harm to health associated with obesity, particularly in children in Australia;
- d. The short and long-term economic burden of obesity, particularly related to obesity in children in Australia;
- e. The effectiveness of existing policies and programs introduced by Australian governments to improve diets and prevent childhood obesity;
- f. Evidence-based measures and interventions to prevent and reverse childhood obesity, including experiences from overseas jurisdictions;
- g. The role of the food industry in contributing to poor diets and childhood obesity in Australia; and
- h. any other related matters.

About this committee

- [Committee Membership](#)
- [Information about the inquiry](#)
- [Final Report](#)

Senate Inquiry - Executive Summary

National Obesity Strategy

At present, Australia does not have an overarching strategy to tackle obesity. The committee heard compelling evidence around the need for a wide ranging array of multi-strategies to address obesity. **The committee is of the view that a whole-of-government approach at the federal level is required to develop, resource and deliver a comprehensive National Obesity Strategy.** The committee believes that key to the success of a national strategy is the establishment of a National Obesity Taskforce, which would comprise representatives from all levels of government alongside stakeholders from the NGO and private sectors. The inclusion of all stakeholders is critical to the taskforce adopting a coordinated response to improve diets and lifestyles, and reduce the burden of chronic disease in Australia.

Food labelling

While it is true that the causes of the rise in overweight and obesity can be attributed to multiple systemic factors, there is no doubt that a major contributor is poor diet and in particular the increased consumption of processed and discretionary foods. Inquiry participants identified several strategies to improve provision of healthier food choices, including better food labelling. A simple and consistent front-of-pack labelling system is essential for enabling consumers to make informed and healthier food choices. The committee heard that the Health Star Rating (HSR) system has the potential to empower consumers to effectively compare the nutritional value of foods. However, the committee was made aware of a number of significant problems with the current HSR. **The committee is supportive of making the HSR system mandatory and recommends the adoption of some significant changes to address inconsistencies in the system.** Importantly, the committee is of the view that making it mandatory will drive food companies to reformulate more of their products in order to achieve higher HSR ratings.

Food reformulation

Food reformulation initiatives can improve the availability of healthier products, and can contribute to improve diet at a population level. The committee received compelling evidence that reformulation works, especially around salt and sugar. **The committee is of the view that reformulation of food and products must be accelerated to enable increased access to healthier food options.**

Tax on sugary drinks

The committee is of the view that the introduction of a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages should be considered as it would have a significant impact on reformulation. It will compel the food industry to reformulate more of their products. This will drive food and drink companies to focus on producing and marketing much healthier products.

Advertising of discretionary foods

The committee heard compelling evidence supporting the introduction of stricter rules aimed at reducing children's exposure and influence of discretionary food marketing on children. **The committee believes that there is a need to review the current rules around advertising on free-to-air television and recommends introducing restrictions on discretionary food and drink advertising on free-to-air television until 9.00pm.** Additionally, the committee believe that children and their parents need to be better informed about the nutritional value of the foods and drinks advertised on all forms of media.

Education campaigns

The committee heard that there is a clear need for governments' leadership to establish and resource comprehensive education campaigns. The committee is of the view that public education campaigns are effective and play an important role in improving attitudes and behaviours around diet and physical activity. **The committee agrees with submitters that there is a critical need for developing a suite of publicly funded education campaigns.**



Media Release

TIPPING THE SCALES: FOUR CORNERS

Airs Monday April 30, 2018

Tipping the scales: Sugar, politics and what's making us fat.

"How did the entire world get this fat, this fast? Did everyone just become sloths?" Doctor

The figures are startling. Today, 60% of Australian adults are classified as
By 2025 that figure is expected to rise to 80%.





CATHERINE KING MP
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND MEDICARE
MEMBER FOR BALLARAT

Implementing Australia's first **National Obesity Strategy**. While all jurisdictions have committed to develop a Strategy, progress has stalled under the Liberals, with the Coalition even mocking overweight people and the obesity crisis at a National Summit.

In contrast, Labor will develop and implement the first National Obesity Strategy, including specific plans to increase physical activity and improve nutrition, and consideration of **mandating the Health Star Rating system** and **food reformulation targets**.

Because of the urgency of action on overweight and obesity, Labor will also make a number of down-payments on the Strategy, including:

- Investing \$39 million over three years to roll out *LiveLighter* as the **national anti-obesity campaign**. In Western Australia and Victoria, this proven campaign has reduced the consumption of sugary drinks and fast food, as well as purchases of junk food. Labor's investment will roll this campaign out nationally, with four bursts a year to maximise impact.
- Investing \$6 million to restore federal funding to the **Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program**, which teaches kids about food in a fun, hands-on way. Labor's commitment will restore support for around 800 schools that have already implemented the program, and support at least 1,200 additional schools and early learning centres to implement the program.
- Reviewing **junk food advertising** to children. Labor will conduct a comprehensive review of the regulatory framework for food and drink advertising and marketing to children, in conjunction with relevant health, media and advertising bodies, to ensure the framework is fit for purpose in the contemporary media environment.

What progress is there at a national and state level?





COAG Health Council

Communiqué

12 October 2018

Obesity

Health Ministers considered a number of agenda items relating to obesity. It was agreed that a national strategy be developed on obesity with a strong focus on the primary and secondary prevention measures, social determinants of health, especially in relation to early childhood and rural and regional issues.

Deloitte National Obesity Summit

15 FEBRUARY 2019



health.gov.au/obesity

Summary of Proceedings

Department of Health

Deloitte
Access **Economics**



National Obesity Strategy

Overview

Have your say on a national obesity strategy.

Overweight and obesity is an issue affecting our whole community. Take action and join in the consultations on a national obesity strategy. You can be a part of creating a healthier future.

Closes 15 Dec 2019

Opened 4 Nov 2019

Contact

The Social Deck

0101 117 110

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New plan promised for illness prevention



By AAP | 5:22pm Jun 12, 2019



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Grappling with what Australians eat and how they use alcohol and other drugs will form part of a new federal government effort to prevent people from becoming unwell.

Health Minister Greg Hunt has revealed plans to develop a new preventive health plan while speaking at a conference in Melbourne.

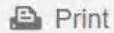
"Whether it's drugs and alcohol, whether it's the work in relation to diet, whether it's other elements, we are developing, with you, a long-term national preventive health strategy," he told the event on Wednesday.

The commitment comes as more than half of Australians are living with a chronic illness such as arthritis, cancer, respiratory disease, heart disease or diabetes.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare will on Thursday release its latest report on the causes and impacts of disease in the nation.

Mr Hunt says the report will set out the major health risk factors that can be addressed when it comes to alcohol, other drugs and tobacco.

"We also have to deal with obesity and poor diet which come together and contribute to issues in relation to blood pressure, in relation to our glucose levels," he said.



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Queensland hospitals to ban junk food and sugary drinks

By [Josh Bavas](#)

Updated 3 Aug 2018, 10:23am

Sugary drinks and unhealthy snacks will be banned from Queensland public hospitals and health care facilities in a bid to crack down on obesity.

Junk food advertising around children in schools, sports grounds and public transport hubs will also be phased out, as part of the radical overhaul by the State Government.

Some Queensland hospitals have already enforced their own sugar bans on vending machine items, but the new guidelines will create a uniform approach across the state.



PHOTO: Soft drinks will be among the first items in the firing line under the new rules. (ABC, file photo)



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Media Statements

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Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services The Honourable Steven Miles

Thursday, May 02, 2019

Palaszczuk Government delivers on Health and Wellbeing Queensland

A new health agency will soon tackle Queensland's ongoing obesity crisis and help people make positive lifestyle changes.

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services Steven Miles said Parliament voted today to establish Health and Wellbeing Queensland (HWQ) as a new health promotion agency.

"Queensland's overweight and obesity rates are alarming – two-thirds of adults and one quarter of children are overweight or obese," he said.

"I see the impacts every day, as Queenslanders experience discrimination, disability, disease and early death.

"But many of the underlying causes of poor health, including obesity, are determined by the environments where we live, work and play.

"To improve the lives of Queenslanders we need to look beyond the traditional health strategies and tools.

"That's why we've created HWQ, to help people make better choices and live better lives."

HWQ will be an independent statutory body and will bring together the community, the private sector and all levels of government to drive collaboration and change.

"HWQ will work across our society, including with groups not typically associated with health care services including sporting clubs, parenting groups and transport organisations," Mr Miles said.

"They will also work with stakeholders and government departments to provide input into policy development and future strategies."

In addition to establishing HWQ, the Palaszczuk Government has committed funding of \$3.59 million in 2019-20 for prevention initiatives to support:

- the delivery of health education in schools;
- supporting school tuckshops to provide healthy food and drink options;
- working with communities to encourage healthy eating and cooking and
- providing community-based walking programs for people of all ages.

"It's not enough to just treat health concerns when they arise anymore – we have to prevent them in the first place,"

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Junk food ads binned by Queensland Government in bid to address obesity

 By [Lily Nothling](#) and [Kate McKenna](#)

Updated 21 Apr 2019, 1:00pm

The Queensland Government will ban junk food promotions at government-owned sites in a bid to crack down on poor diets and childhood obesity.

Health Minister Steven Miles said the unhealthy marketing would be phased out at more than 2,000 outdoor advertising spaces, including bus stops, train stations and road corridors.

"Junk food advertisers target kids, we know that, and obesity in childhood is a leading indicator of obesity in adulthood," Mr Miles said.

"This is about doing what we can to protect our kids from the kind of marketing that leads them to make unhealthy choices."

Mr Miles said the ban would affect leased spaces owned by the State Government.

"Obesity is a real challenge for our community, for our hospitals and the health services, but also for the individuals who are suffering — this is really just a decision about the Government leading by example and saying that we will use our spaces to advertise healthier options," he said.



PHOTO: Queensland Health Minister Steven Miles said the Government was trying to lead by example. (Flickr: Grill Pipe)

Key points:

- Health Minister Steven Miles says obesity is a real challenge for Queenslanders
- The ad ban has been welcomed by the Obesity Policy Coalition
- The State Opposition is branding the move a "knee-jerk reaction"



Public education and public support

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Our Top Tips to **LIVELIGHTER**

▲

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



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Mexican mince -
nachos style

[See Recipe](#)

How much sugar do
you drink? Try our
calculator



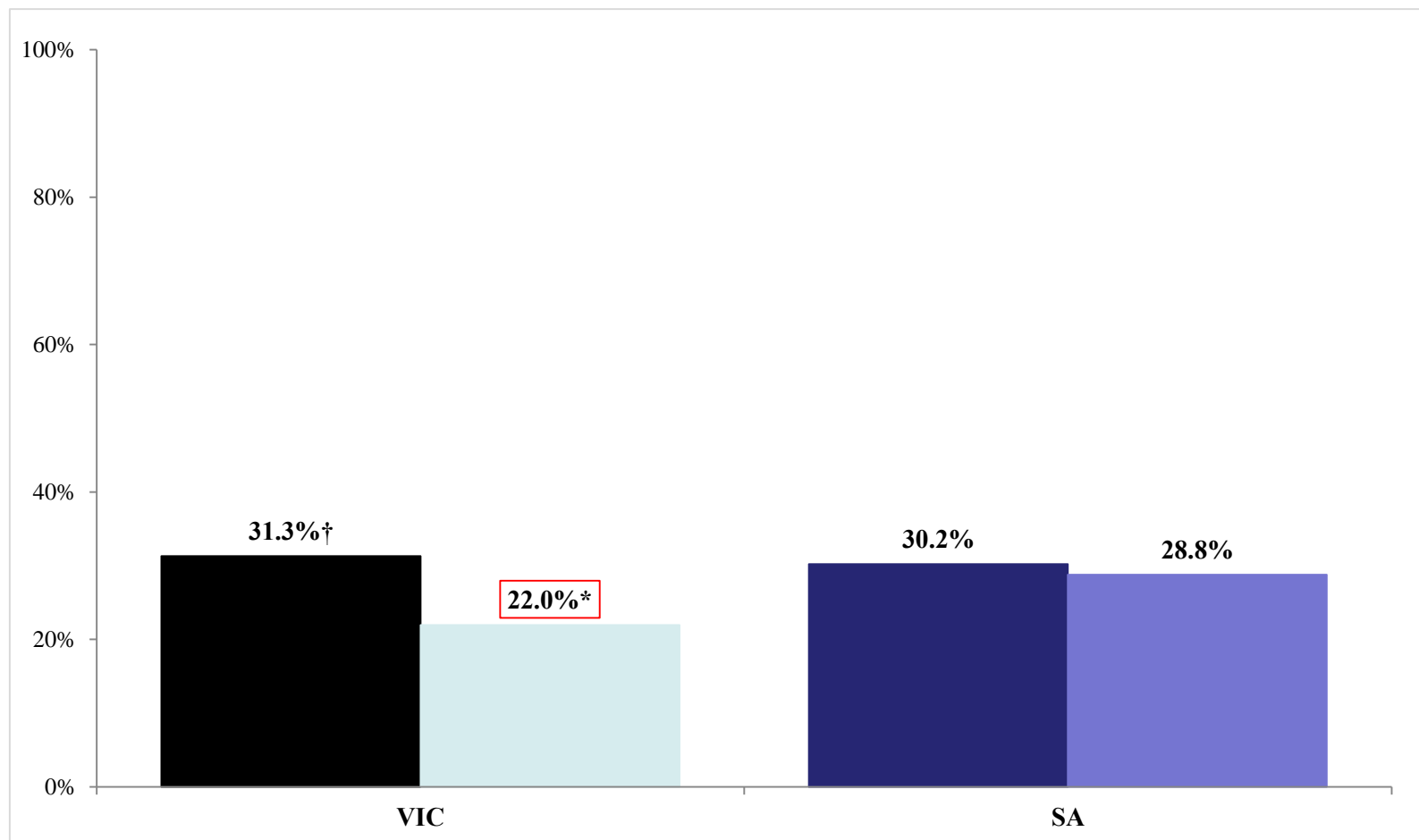
Start to live a healthier lifestyle

What is toxic fat?





Sugary Drink Consumption (N=2,786)



NOTE: *Significant difference at $p < 0.05$ compared to reference category (†).

Significant reduction in frequent (4+ cups p/wk) sugary drink consumption among Victorian adults.

DON'T BE SUCKED IN



They're cold, cheap and tempting; but what frozen sugary drinks don't advertise is the obscene amount of sugar in them. Sugar that can cause toxic fat around your vital organs and lead to cancer, type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

LIVELIGHTER

livelighter.com.au

A public health initiative supported by:





SUGARY DRINKS DON'T BELONG IN SPORT

Our athletes don't fuel their bodies with sugary soft drinks, neither should you. With almost two in three Aussie adults overweight or obese, it's time to question junk food sponsorship of sport.



JUNK FOOD AND SPORT DON'T BELONG TOGETHER

Our athletes don't fuel their bodies with sugary soft drinks, neither should you. With almost two in three Aussie adults overweight or obese, it's time to question junk food sponsorship of sport.



Public support by for regulations to address obesity Australia, 2017

Question	Very/somewhat serious (%)	Not too/not at all serious (%)	Don't know (%)
How serious do you consider the problem of overweight and obesity in Australia?	92.5	6.1	1.4
	A great deal/some/a little (%)	None at all (%)	Don't know (%)
How much government regulations do you think there should be around protecting people from overweight and obesity in Australia?	86.1	9.4	4.4
	Agree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Disagree (%)
Government regulations should restrict advertising of unhealthy foods and beverages on television during times when children are watching	78.9	12.2	8.9
Government regulations should restrict advertising of unhealthy foods and beverages to children on the internet	75.8	13.9	10.2
Government regulations should restrict advertising of unhealthy foods and beverages at sporting events	71.4	17.0	11.6
Government regulations should restrict advertising of unhealthy foods and beverages in public spaces (e.g. bus stops, train stations, roadside)	70.3	18.3	11.4
The government should regulate food and beverage advertising	69.5	18.0	12.6
Government regulations should prohibit sugar-sweetened beverage companies from sponsoring children's sporting organisations, teams and events	63.4	18.6	18.0
Government regulations should prohibit fast food companies from sponsoring children's sporting organisations, teams and events	58.7	21.6	19.7
The government should introduce a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages and use the money raised to fund health services and programs to reduce overweight and obesity	57.2	17.4	25.5
The government should introduce a tax on unhealthy foods, and use the money raised to fund health services and programs to reduce overweight and obesity	54.6	18.6	26.9
The government should introduce a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages	54.5	16.9	28.5
The government should introduce a tax on unhealthy foods	48.9	19.7	31.3

Why is progress so slow?

Margaret Chan, Director General, WHO

“Efforts to prevent non-communicable diseases go against the business interests of powerful economic operators. In my view, this is one of the biggest challenges facing health promotion.

... it is not just Big Tobacco anymore. Public health must also contend with Big Food, Big Soda, and Big Alcohol. All of these industries fear regulation, and protect themselves by using the same tactics.

Not one single country has managed to turn around its obesity epidemic in all age groups. This is not a failure of individual will-power. This is a failure of political will to take on big business.”

Global Conference on Health Promotion, Helsinki, Finland 2013

THE LANCET

January 2019

www.thelancet.com

The Global Syndemic of Obesity, Undernutrition and Climate Change: The *Lancet* Commission report



"The Global Syndemic represents the paramount health challenge for humans, the environment, and our planet in the 21st century."



Milken Institute School
of Public Health
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



"Vested interests constitute a major source of policy inertia that prevents change to the existing systems."

The Global Syndemic of Obesity, Undernutrition
and Climate Change

THE LANCET

The best science for better lives

Beverages Council Opposition to Tax

As raised in a number of other reports, the industry's defence against the idea of a tax on soft drinks has been consuming vast amounts of resources. Whilst we were successful in keeping the issue out of the majority of the last federal election campaign, with the make-up of the Senate and the Greens stating their support for a 20% tax on soft drinks, the issue is never

Our learnings from other markets through our international network tells us that these types of threats must be constantly challenged before they get before a parliament for debate. We have also learned that the broader the industry defensive lines, the better. As mentioned in the Public Affairs Committee report, this was the main idea behind the Beverages Council initiating the sugar roundtable of associations.

Drink firms miss out on obesity summit

EXCLUSIVE

Cathy O'Leary
Medical Editor

Soft-drink makers have accused the State Government of shunning them at a preventive health summit tomorrow, claiming they should be part of efforts to reduce obesity.

Geoff Parker from the Australian Beverages Council, which also represents makers of fruit drinks, bottled water and energy and sports drinks, said Health Minister Roger Cook's office had made a mistake by not asking them to the invitation-only event.

But Mr Cook said industry groups and the public could take part online.

Because of the limited number of seats, priority had been given to key WA health experts and community leaders.

"Sugary drinks are certainly part of the problem and more needs to be done by the industry to improve the health and wellbeing of West Australians, particularly our kids," he said.

Heart Foundation chief executive Maurice Swanson said junk food and drink manufacturers bombarded people with sugary-drink promotions, brand ambassadors, gaming apps and social media posts. "Our

children ... are being groomed for obesity," he said.

A leading obesity researcher will tell the summit the Government should introduce mandatory menu labelling at fast-food and chain restaurants to allow diners to easily see the kilojoule count.

Obesity Policy Coalition executive manager Jane Martin said research showed that if people were shown the energy content of

food, they generally had meals with 15 per cent fewer kilojoules.

"Although that doesn't sound a lot the impact can be large because these outlets are serving a lot of meals to many people, and we're all putting on weight and a bit can add up," she said.

Menu labelling needed to be supported by education — to put individual food choices in the context of the average daily energy intake of 8700 kilojoules.

Mr Cook said he had asked the Health Department to look at mandatory kilojoule menus for fast-food chains.

Queensland hospitals to ban junk food and sugary drinks

By Josh Bavas

Updated 3 Aug 2018, 10:23am

Sugary drinks and unhealthy snacks will be banned from Queensland public hospitals and health care facilities in a bid to crack down on obesity.

Junk food advertising around children in schools, sports grounds and public transport hubs will also be phased out, as part of the radical overhaul by the State Government.

Some Queensland hospitals have already enforced their own sugar bans on vending machine items, but the new guidelines will create a



Decision 'insulting' to people's intelligence

Australian Beverages Council spokesman, Geoff Parker, said the industry had been blindsided, calling it an insult to people's intelligence.

"Unfortunately the Queensland Government has decided not to consult with the industry on this particular move and that's disappointing," Mr Parker said.

"From an impact on industry perspective, this ban will have very little impact.

"But it must be insulting for visitors to Queensland hospitals and staff of Queensland hospitals that the Government doesn't trust them to make their own decisions around what they eat or drink.

"People don't want governments snooping around in vending machines or hospital cafeterias."

Beverages Council

Coupled with this is a situation that some hospital districts in some States are now looking to adopt their own guidelines for what is and isn't allowed for sale in vending and cafeteria offerings within their buildings. This is a clear case of overreach on behalf of the administration of these districts and is another emerging risk the industry must address.

Coalition Building – Beverages Council

To assist the industry to defend against the threat of a tax, the Beverages Council was instrumental in establishing a sugar roundtable that comprised a number of associations and organisations that would be negatively impacted should such a tax become a reality. These included the Beverages Council, the Australian Food and Grocery Council, the Australian Industry Group, the Australian Association of National Advertisers, the Australian Sugar Research Alliance and the Canegrowers Association. The establishment of such a group will ensure that a much broader coalition is able to proactively defend against any proposed tax over this next term of government.

Partnering to oppose a Health Levy on Sugary Drinks

INDUSTRY SEEKS CONSTRUCTIVE RESPONSE TO OBESITY



The Australian retail, farming, grocery and beverage sectors contribute more than \$311bn to the economy each year, and account for approximately 15% of the total workforce in Australia.

Our industries understand that obesity is a public health problem in Australia, and that it is appropriate for calls to be made for Australians to modify and improve their dietary intake.

However, it is not beneficial to blame or tax a single component of the diet.

Obesity is a serious and complex public issue with no single cause or quick-fix solution. A new tax is not the way to make our nation healthier.

The McKinsey Global Institute, for instance, classifies taxation as one of the least effective obesity interventions, with 'No direct evidence for change in weight or change in consumption or physical activity levels.'^[1]

- In fact, consumption trends show that the change such a tax seeks to effect is already happening.
- Recent Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data indicates a decline in added sugar intake over time, yet obesity rates continue to climb.^[2]

As a food supply sector, we recognise that we have a role to play in improving the food choices available for the Australian consumer.

We will continue to:

- Promote and support healthy balanced lifestyles that involve responsible eating habits and





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WHO Collaborating Centre
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