New strategy supports Australians to eat their way to good health - Media release

With a focus on preventing poor health long over-due, Dietitians Australia welcomed the launch of the Federal Government's National Preventive Health Strategy last week.

Outlining a 10-year plan to improve the health and wellbeing of all Australians, the inclusion of a policy achievement to reduce food insecurity, along with other food and nutrition targets will help all Australians to access the food they need to thrive.

"We've long been advocating for a national focus on nutrition, and the launch of this strategy is a step in the right direction," said Robert Hunt, CEO of Dietitians Australia.

"As a part of the consultation process, we recommended enhanced measurement of household food security, and for action to be taken to reduce food insecurity for those most at risk. It's really promising to see these included in the strategy.

"Our individual eating patterns are influenced by so many factors – such as what food is affordable, the types of food available to us, as well as the use of advertising.

"This varies greatly across the country and it's a shocking reality that health and food inequality continue to exist in Australia.

"To see real, tangible, and positive changes to health, action needs to be taken on all levels, rather than all the responsibility for health being left to an individual.

“We hope this strategy helps drive change in this area.”

Targets to increase the number of fruits and vegetables eaten and to reduce the amount of highly processed foods consumed are also welcomed, as these will help support health improvements. However, strategies to address the health of both children and older adults, warrants further consideration.

“Addressing childhood nutrition is important, however we would have preferred to see a greater focus on ‘optimal growth’. This addresses both excess weight and faltering growth – both of which can have a significant impact on health,” said Robert.

“For older adults, while its good to see access to food being included, it’s key to remember that food is only nutritious when it is eaten.

“We hope the strategy implementation considers ways to reduce the rates of malnutrition for older Australians, to ensure our population ages well and lessens the strain on our aged care system.”

As the leading voice of nutrition in Australia, Dietitians Australia looks forward to supporting the Department of Health with the development of the Strategy’s immediate priorities for action, to kickstart the prevention of poor health in Australia.

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Media enquiries

For media enquiries and interviews, contact our Media Officer on 0409 661 920.

Note to editors: Dietitians Australia is the leading voice of nutrition in Australia, representing dietitians nationally and advocating for healthier communities. Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) is the only national credential recognised by the Australian Government as the quality standard for nutrition and dietetics services in Australia.