Unified federal policy framework needed to help close the nutrition gap - Media release

Improving food security for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples living in remote, regional and urban parts of Australia is essential to achieving health equity.

Today's theme for National Close the Gap Day is 'Transforming Power' - shining a spotlight on equity and equality.

"Food security is a fundamental human right," said Board Director of Dietitians Australia and Gamilaroi woman, Tracy Hardy.

"The 2021 Close the Gap Report stated that we need strategies to manage food security in response to the rising cost of food, and the impact of climate change on food availability[1].

"Yet we still don't have systems in place to ensure First Nations Peoples of Australia have equal access to food that supports self-determination of health."

This week's Food Futures conference by the Public Health Association of Australia revealed that there is no national framework that brings together the 9 Australian Government departments or agencies who play a role in feeding Australians[2].

Chief Executive Officer of Dietitians Australia, Robert Hunt is at the conference.

"Our nation's approach to food security is a rudderless ship.

“How can we have 9 federal agencies and departments deal with food-related policy, without any coordination among them?

“The need for a unified federal nutrition policy framework has been a clear theme throughout the conference, and we hope that the government will finally deal with the fact that some Australians are unable to afford or access fresh food.

“It is vital that policy for food security and nutrition identifies and builds on proven approaches and is developed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in a way that strengthens and supports culture, health and capacity.”

ENDS

[1]Close the Gap Campaign Report 2021

[2]Naudiyal P, Jones A et al, Food policy in Australia: The role of Federal Government departments and agencies

Media enquiries

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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.