Dietitians Australia

Here's the score: Nutrition is not a clear priority for the major parties in NSW

Dietitians Australia has canvassed the NSW Liberal National Party, NSW Labor and NSW Greens for details on whether they plan to commit to prioritising nutrition as part of the newly elected NSW Government.

Responses have been received from current NSW Health Minister Brad Hazzard, NSW Shadow Health Minister Ryan Park and NSW Greens Health Spokesperson Cate Faehrmann, providing voters with a glimpse into how seriously members of the newly elected NSW Government plan to take action on nutrition.

"While there have been some glimpses of hope found in the responses received from the major parties, we are not entirely confident the newly elected NSW Government will prioritise ensuring the people of NSW are well supported with the nutrition services they deserve," Dietitians Australia General Manager of Policy and Advocacy, Natalie Stapleton said.

"There are loose commitments to growing the dietetic workforce, but there is no clear commitment to boosting the presence of dietitians in public hospitals, community health, outpatient, justice, disability, maternal, newborn and child health, and aged care services,"

"This is frustrating to us as a profession, when we know how integral nutrition is when it comes to preventing chronic diseases and treating illnesses," Ms Stapleton, who is also an Accredited Practising Dietitian, said.

"Dietitians Australia will continue to push the newly elected Government for a stronger focus on nutrition policy actions and to meaningfully bolster the role of dietitians across the NSW Health system," Ms Stapleton said.

“When almost one in five people in NSW are faced with mental health conditions, it’s clear the Government must be looking at how we can deliver community mental health services differently,” Mrs/Ms Stapleton said.

“With the evidence mounting on the role dietitians can play in supporting both the prevention and treatment of mental health conditions including anxiety and depression, the time to have a dietitian in every community mental health service is now.”

“The Liberal Nationals and Greens have committed to considering the Parliamentary Inquiry into Food Security in NSW’s recommendation for the state to have a dedicated food security plan and council, which would be a welcome start to ensuring the food and nutrition needs of NSW people are supported well into the future,” Ms Stapleton said.

Read the full NSW Election Priorities from Dietitians Australia and responses from the NSW Liberal National Party, NSW Labor and NSW Greens.

Dietitians Australia’s 5 NSW Election Priorities are as follows:

- Fund every community and mental health service across NSW to include Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) services
- Increase the NSW Health dietetic workforce in public hospitals, community health, outpatient, justice, disability, maternal, newborn and child health, and aged care services
- Invest in preventive health by committing 5% of the NSW health budget to preventive health and implementing actions from both the National Preventive Health Strategy and National Obesity Strategy
- Establish a state government food security and nutrition plan and council
- Improve the delivery and consistency of Home Enteral Nutrition for NSW residents in need, through establishing dedicated services within NSW Health and reducing out-of-pocket costs.

ENDS

Natalie Stapleton is available for interview, Illawarra based.

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

Note to Editors: Dietitians Australia is the leading voice in nutrition and dietetics 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.