Nutrition now has a permanent home at Parliament House

Australia's first Parliamentary Friends of Nutrition group has been launched at Parliament House in Canberra today.

The Parliamentary Friends of Nutrition has been formed as a non-partisan forum to raise awareness of the importance of nutrition for a healthy life in Australia and to highlight the areas of most need for equity, improved access, and affordability to high-quality nutrition.

The group is Co-Chaired by Senator Helen Polley and Bridget Archer MP, and will work closely with Dietitians Australia to focus on the development and implementation of a renewed National Nutrition Policy.

"This is history in the making for advancing nutrition in Australia and a poignant achievement for hard-working dietitians who practice in a range of areas across the country," Dietitians Australia President Tara Diversi said.

"Having this presence within the Australian Parliament House will enable us to give nutrition the prominence it deserves within Australian national health policy.

"Prioritising nutrition is critical for addressing some of the most pressing health challenges we face as a nation.

"From turning malnutrition in aged care around, providing nutrition therapy to support mental-ill health, to providing holistic programs in schools, dietitians have the potential to advance the health and wellbeing of all Australians." Ms Diversi said.

"We're only just scraping the surface of measuring the full impact dietitians could achieve if better enabled within the health system in this country," Laureate Professor Clare Collins AO

said.

“We know that better nutrition could halve Australia’s burden of heart disease and reduce the burden of bowel cancer and diabetes by about a quarter,” Prof Collins said.

“I've spoken many times about the importance of preventive health and how it can improve your life.

Nutrition is part of the preventive strategy for a healthy, long life. Nutrition is important for a healthy physical and mental state”, Co-Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Nutrition Senator Helen Polley said.

“When people think about nutrition, most think about the old food pyramid, but in Australia we now have a ‘food plate’, and further revisions of our dietary guidelines are underway,” Senator Polley said.

“It is more important than ever we educate ourselves as there is much information in the community on social media now about different diets and lifestyle choices.”

“The data on the long-term social and economic impact of a poor diet is indisputable and Government's play an integral role in addressing these challenges,” Co-Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Nutrition Bridget Archer MP said.

“I am particularly interested in tackling the issue of food insecurity and as Co-Chair of this new Parliamentary Group, I will be playing an active role in engaging colleagues to bring about change in this area,” Ms Archer said.

The priority goal for the Parliamentary Friends of Nutrition group is to oversee a clear action plan for a new National Nutrition Policy, that is well-backed by Government funding.

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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.