

Monday 10 February 2020

## National Nutrition Policy required to nourish not neglect Australians

The Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) highlights the need for nutrition to be prioritised for health, to support Australians to lead healthier lives.

Commencing today, Smart Eating Week (10 – 16 February) continues DAA's call for a new National Nutrition Policy. The week signifies one year since the Association released the report: '[Nourish not Neglect – Putting health on our nation's table](#)', outlining the current health of Australia's population, and the steps needed to make a National Nutrition Policy a reality.

“In the past 12 months, the Government has commenced the development of key strategies such as the National Preventive Health Strategy, and the National Obesity Strategy, however, neither of these have identified the core role of nutrition in health,” said DAA CEO Robert Hunt.

Mr Hunt highlights the need for action to be taken now, to reduce the cost of diet-related health impacts.

“Prioritising nutrition through increasing preventive health funding in the 2020-21 budget is crucial. This would allow increased capacity for nutrition education, helping reduce health care costs for treating lifestyle related chronic diseases, and equip Australians with the skills to make informed choices for their health.”

The impact of nutrition on health, has increasingly become a topic of conversation, as seen in the Aged Care Royal Commission hearings and from influential Australians, including the 2020 Australian of the Year, Dr James Muecke, who raised the importance of making healthy food choices for chronic disease prevention.

“Almost one in two adults now experience a chronic disease, many of which arise from poor diet and lifestyle choices. The social and economic cost of poor nutrition is growing, and our nation will continue to pay the price for overlooking the importance of nutrition in preventing chronic disease, unless it is prioritised,” said Mr Hunt.

Throughout Smart Eating Week, Accredited Practising Dietitians (APDs) are demonstrating how they can support Australians to live healthier lives. Running a range of initiatives across the week, the focus of many of these events is empowering communities with the skills to read food labels and to make nourishing food choices for their health at the supermarket.

“Whether you are eating for everyday health or tailoring your diet to manage a medical condition such as diabetes, or coeliac disease – we all need the skills to navigate the supermarket and make food choices that support our health and lifestyle needs. These events are just one example of how a National Nutrition Policy can translate into practical solutions for the every-day Australian.”

A National Nutrition Policy would bridge the gap between the National Obesity Strategy, and National Preventive Health Strategy, placing access to safe, affordable and nutritious food and nutrition education for all Australians, at its core.



# MEDIA RELEASE

ENDS

For further information or to organise an interview with Robert Hunt, DAA CEO, contact Pattie King, Dietitians Association of Australia on 0409 661 920

## Smart Eating Week

Smart Eating week is run by Accredited Practising Dietitians (APDs) and supported by the Dietitians Association of Australia. When it comes to healthy eating, we know there is no ‘one size fits all’ – as we all have different health needs, preferences and lifestyles. Across the country, APDs are holding events to help you eat smarter and make the right choices for you. Find a Smart Eating Week event and connect with your local APD via [daa.asn.au](http://daa.asn.au).

**Note to Editors:** The Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) is the professional body representing dietitians nationally. Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) is the only national credential recognised by the Australian Government, Medicare, the Department of Veteran Affairs and most private health funds as the quality standard for nutrition and dietetics services in Australia. For more information visit [www.daa.asn.au](http://www.daa.asn.au). The ‘Voice of Dietitians’ section on the DAA website contains DAA’s media releases and position on topical nutrition issues in the media.