TIPPING THE SCALES
Australian Obesity Prevention Consensus

Australia’s health, wellbeing and productivity are being threatened by an epidemic of weight-related illness. **Most Australian adults (63.4%) are above a healthy weight, with 27.9% obese and 35.5% overweight.** More than a quarter (27%) of **Australian children are overweight or obese.** Australia, like many countries, is also seeing an increase in diseases stemming from the risk factors of diet and weight, including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer.

Leadership
- A whole-of-government multi-sectoral approach
- An approach that considers the whole of the lifespan
- Attention to reach and effectiveness in low income, vulnerable, remote and indigenous populations
- Accountability and transparency
- Research and monitoring.

8 policy actions for obesity prevention

Here we outline eight actions for the Australian federal government, established by a comprehensive consensus process as agreed elements to underpin a national obesity prevention plan.

There is scope for state/territory governments to address some of these elements where they have jurisdiction. These policies are drawn from the many national and international recommendations on obesity prevention, have been endorsed by key national community, public health, medical and academic groups, and represent the most critical and urgent components of a national obesity prevention strategy.

1. **Legislative Step:**
   - **Set clear reformulation targets for food manufacturers, retailers and caterers** with established time periods and regulation to assist compliance if not met.
   - **Legislate to implement time-based restrictions on exposure of children (under 16 years of age) to unhealthy food and drink marketing on free-to-air television until 9:30pm.**

2. **Public Education Campaign:**
   - **Fund high-impact, sustained public education campaigns to improve attitudes and behaviours around diet, physical activity and sedentary behaviour.**

3. **Health Star Rating System:**
   - **Make the Health Star Rating System mandatory by July 2019.**

4. **Active Travel Strategy:**
   - **Develop and fund a comprehensive national active travel strategy to promote walking, cycling and use of public transport.**

5. **Sugary Drinks Levy:**
   - **Federal government to place a health levy on sugary drinks to increase the price by 20%.**

6. **Obesity Prevention Taskforce:**
   - **Establish obesity prevention as a national priority, with a national taskforce, sustained funding, regular and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of key measures and regular reporting around targets.**

7. **National Guidelines:**
   - **Develop, support, update and monitor comprehensive and consistent diet, physical activity and weight management national guidelines.**

8. **Support and Resources:**
   - **www.opc.org.au/tippingthescales**

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