

LABOR PUTS PREVENTION 1st – BLUEPRINT TO TACKLE CHRONIC DISEASE WELCOMED BY PREVENTIVE HEALTH ALLIANCE

18 June 2016: Labor has put chronic disease prevention firmly on the election campaign agenda today, releasing its plan for *Healthy communities and chronic disease prevention*.

This morning's announcement has been welcomed by Prevention 1st, a preventive health alliance led by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE), the Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA), Consumer Health Forum of Australia and Alzheimer's Australia, that has been calling on all political parties to commit to efforts to reduce chronic disease ahead of the July election.

Today's announcement follows the Labor Party's commitment to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, stroke and dementia announced over the past week and equates to an investment in health of more than \$350 million.

Alzheimer's Australia's Chief Executive Carol Bennett congratulated the Labor Party for resuscitating its commitment to preventive health and building on the work of the Preventative Health Taskforce.

"I commend the Labor Party for acknowledging the importance of preventive health. We know that investing today secures the health of our children and of future generations, but will save lives," Ms Bennett said.

At least 31 per cent of the disease burden can be prevented if governments would target five modifiable risk factors; tobacco use (9%), high body mass (5.5%), alcohol use (5.1%), physical inactivity (5%) and high blood pressure (4.9%).

Consumer Health Forum of Australia, Chief Executive, Leanne Wells says Labor's plan represents a comprehensive commitment to action that closely mirrors [Prevention 1st's Election Platform](#) released earlier this month, and would go a long way to addressing the five risk factors.

Labor's plan is distinguished by its strong focus on community-based action to tackle obesity and physical inactivity. It's comprehensive but targeted; recognising that we need to focus efforts on communities most at risk from chronic disease, the value in awareness raising, in targeting those most at risk from smoking, and the importance of promoting physical activity and a healthy diet," Ms Wells said.

FARE Chief Executive, Michael Thorn was particularly encouraged by Labor's acknowledgement that children must be protected from alcohol advertising, it's timing coming just days before another alcohol-drenched State of Origin game.

Mr Thorn says it is now up to the Coalition to indicate how it intends responding to Australia's greatest health challenge.

"We have been saying for a number of weeks in the lead up to the Federal Election that Australians deserve to know how the parties plan on tackling Australia's greatest health challenge. In the wake of this morning's announcement I now call on the Coalition to show its commitment and vision for tackling chronic disease in Australia," Mr Thorn said.

Ms Bennett, Ms Wells and Mr Thorn (@MichaelTThorn) are available for interview.

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Prevention 1st is a new campaign by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) and the Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA), Consumer Health Forum of Australia and Alzheimer's Australia, calling on all Australian governments and political parties to commit to a strong preventive health agenda to tackle Australia's greatest health challenge. Prevention 1st will pursue every opportunity to express the need for action on public policy that the evidence shows will stop and prevent the rising burden of chronic disease.