



Media Release

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New data shows it's time to step up efforts on prevention

Investment must be expanded in order for further in-roads to be made on smoking, obese and overweight rates in Australia, according to Cancer Council Victoria.

Cancer Council Victoria CEO Todd Harper said the localised data released today by the National Health Performance Authority underlined, once again, the importance of making prevention a public health priority.

“As we have seen with road safety and tobacco, we know that investing in prevention and including public education campaigns, delivers results. But there is more that all states can do around obesity and smoking.”

For example, In Victoria, we can build on solid foundations in public health by adopting the following initiatives:

- Mandatory kilojoule labelling on fast food menus;
- Reducing the amount of junk food advertising that children are exposed to; and
- Introducing smoke-free outdoor dining to de-normalise smoking for children and help ex-smokers from relapsing.

Mr Harper said overall smoking levels in Victoria were at their lowest ever level of 13.3 per cent thanks to the investments already made by the state government.

He said the government had also begun to address many of the issues driving obesity at a local level such as creating healthier environments for people living in more remote or socially disadvantaged areas through the Healthy Together Victoria initiative.

“The key message to Australian governments is that: the work is not over but has only just begun. We must continue to build on the excellent work being done to tackle major public health issues like obesity and smoking. If we don't spend money on this now, we will pay the consequences later.”

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