

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## OBESITY: let's end the pretence and look to local primary care

The big disparities in obesity rates around Australia revealed by the National Health Performance Authority today (Thursday) should jolt us into action to combat this lethal phenomenon, says CHF CEO, Carol Bennett.

“Three quarters of the adult population in some regions are overweight or obese, contrasting with other areas where the rate is 50 per cent.

“These figures are a troubling reminder of the way this modern epidemic is enveloping our society. But the variability in the figures also under line the reality that it does not have to be this way.

“It's time to stop pretending. Too many of us kid ourselves that we are not overweight. The rapid increase in overweight or obese adults is a frightening reminder to Australians that upsized fatty and sugary diets and lack of exercise doom us to chronic disease and premature death.

“Despite the great advances in medical science, the present young adult generation could end up dying at a younger age on average than their parents.

“The campaign to counter obesity needs a national commitment to local action. Medicare Local-type primary health care can provide the advice and support people need to lose weight. We know that the causes of overweight/obesity are numerous and complex, ranging from the relentless promotion of unhealthy food and drinks to the reduced opportunities for routine exercise created by our dependence on the car and inadequate public transport.

“The primary health care movement offers the potential to champion healthy options in local communities, not only by supporting individual consumers and families but also pushing for local developments that promote physical activity and fight the insidious spread of sedentary lifestyles,” Ms Bennett said.

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*CHF is an independent not for profit organisation  
representing over 2 million health consumers.*

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