



Media release

Minister for Health The Honourable Lawrence Springborg

Thursday, October 24, 2013

Time for Queensland to step up fight against obesity

Health Minister Lawrence Springborg is tackling Queensland's biggest killer head on with the launch of a new awareness campaign focused on the state's rising rate of obesity.

The *Healthier. Happier.* campaign aims to tackle the rising rates of obesity in Queensland.

"Obesity is now the leading preventable cause of premature death in the state, overtaking tobacco, and the *Healthier. Happier.* campaign will address the issue head on," Mr Springborg said.

"Queensland has the highest rate of adult obesity in Australia at 30.4 per cent, compared with 27.5 per cent nationally.

"Although people may be aware that overweight and obesity is one of the biggest health issues we are facing, they do not recognise it in themselves.

"Research associated with the campaign shows even though 65 per cent of Queenslanders are overweight or obese, one third do not realise it."

Mr Springborg said campaign research also showed many Queenslanders within the healthy weight range were at risk because of their unhealthy behaviours.

"Almost one quarter of Queenslanders are at risk of becoming overweight or obese in the future and we need to do something now to combat this serious health and social issue," he said.

The first phase of the campaign asks people to honestly consider their weight, lifestyle, eating and physical activity habits.

Mr Springborg said every Queenslanders could make small changes to be healthier.

"No matter what your size, you should take steps to eat well and be active, improve your diet and increase your physical activity to lead a healthier life and reduce the risk of chronic disease," he said.

"The health problems linked to being overweight or obese are many and varied, including cardiovascular disease, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, some cancers, sleep apnoea and musculoskeletal problems.

"These problems are largely preventable through a healthy and active lifestyle.

"We want to see people reduce their risk of chronic disease, live healthier and boost their quality of life and this three-year campaign aims to help achieve this."

Mr Springborg said the \$8.5 million campaign would comprise TV, radio, press, online and outdoor advertisements over three years, and would roll out from 27 October.

"Tackling the issue of obesity in Queensland is not easy, but it is now such a critical issue that the whole community needs to help out," he said.

"This campaign encourages everyone, no matter what their size, to lead a healthier life and reduce the risk of chronic disease."

[ENDS] 24 October 2013

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