

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## National Nutrition Pledge Deserves Bipartisan Support

The nation's peak nutrition body has welcomed the Australian Labor Party's pledge of \$10 million into its proposed National Nutrition Framework for preventing chronic disease, tackling obesity, and alcohol misuse.

Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) CEO Claire Hewat acknowledged the move as a good start in preventative health, but urged both major parties to seek bipartisan support on a broader nutrition framework.

Ms Hewat stressed the need to look beyond chronic disease, and to consider the range of nutrition issues impacting the community, such as for those with disability, mental health issues, the growing number of older malnourished adults and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The proposed policy is just a drop in the ocean compared to last year's spend on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, which cost the Australian Government \$9 billion.

"We need to get serious about the nation's future health. A comprehensive nutrition framework would take the pressure off the cost of treatment, and ultimately increase quality of life."

The announcement assures funding to the Health Star Rating System, a tool Australians are using to choose healthier packaged foods within food categories. However, individuals also need support to include more fruit and vegetables, wholegrain food choices and dairy products, in preference to the disproportionate amount of discretionary foods containing little nutritional value.

"Accredited Practising Dietitians, who are nutrition scientists with years of university study behind them, help people make the right decision about what to eat, including around food choices and portion sizes, and support them to stick to a healthy diet."

'So they're a key part of the solution in tackling overweight and obesity and other nutrition-related health problems,' said Ms Hewat, an Advanced Accredited Practising Dietitian.

**For further information or to organise an interview with Claire Hewat, contact Felicity Curtin, Dietitians Association of Australia, on 0409 661 920.**