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NUTRITION SHOULD FEED THE FEDERAL ELECTION

Released today, the Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) election statement outlines key areas that all political parties and the future government must address to nourish the nation. Calling for immediate action, the statement details the following the priorities:

1. Develop a new National Nutrition Policy
2. Equip Australians to make informed food choices for their health
3. Ensure all Australians are able to access appropriate care for their nutrition needs
4. Regularly evaluate health initiatives for a meaningful impact.

With over two thirds of the adult population now overweight or obese, and almost one in two Australians experiencing a chronic disease¹, the need to address the cause of lifestyle-related conditions is imperative.

“Rather than investing billions of dollars into reactive healthcare for preventable chronic diseases, we need a coordinated nutrition approach to reduce the prevalence and cost of diet-related diseases among all Australians - before it’s too late,” said DAA CEO Robert Hunt.

The solution to health lies in empowering personal behaviour change, and addressing lifestyle changes through dietary interventions. If Australians consumed a healthy diet, it has the ability to heavily reduce burden of disease with heart disease reduced by 52%, type 2 diabetes by 34% and diet-related cancers by up to 37%².

Commencing national consultative workshops to develop a National Nutrition Policy, increasing the number of Medicare funded allied health services and allowing the option of telehealth appointments under the Medicare Benefits Schedule, form a part of the priority actions which would assist all Australian’s to put their health first.

“Instead of eating our way into an early grave, we need to invest in nutrition education, evaluation, health care equity and a National Nutrition Policy,” Mr Hunt said.

DAA urges all parties to adopt the recommendations detailed in the election statement.

“There is no point spending money on portfolios to service the population, because the reality is, if we continue without a collaborative, contemporary nutrition framework, we won’t have a population.”

In addition to the election statement, DAA previously released ‘Nourish Not Neglect: Putting health on our nation’s table’, outlining the state of Australia’s health, and the value of a new National Nutrition Policy.

To read the full election statement and Nourish not Neglect report, visit: [Call for new National Nutrition Policy](#)

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For further information or to organise an interview with Robert Hunt, contact Pattie King, Dietitians Association of Australia, on 0409 661 920.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. Health Survey: First Results, Key Findings (4364.0.55.001) [Internet]. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia; 2018. Available from: <http://abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4364.0.55.001~2017-18~Main%20Features~Key%20Findings~>

² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Australian Burden of Disease Study: impact and causes of illness and death in Australia 2011. Canberra: AIHW; 2016.