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## MISSING PREVENTATIVE HEALTH: ONLY TWO OUT OF THREE COMMIT

Over two thirds of our population experience obesity, yet only two out of three of our major political parties have committed to preventative health. Whilst all major parties have acknowledged the role of food and nutrition in health, the right seem to have missed the mark.

Rather than waiting for our nation to become chronically sick, it is imperative that action to prevent lifestyle related illness is taken now.

Committing \$115.6 million towards preventative health, as well as implementing a Chief Allied Health Officer to support the role of allied health professionals in Australia, Labor shows their strong commitment towards our nation's health.

The Greens have also backed preventative health, committing to establishing a Preventative Health Commission, to address factors that impact on obesity.

The Liberal National Party appear to have a considerable health 'structural' problem, with the 'stabilising' preventative health pillar. The modest funding of \$4 million for preventative health strategies via a National Action Plan to improve the health of children and young people is welcomed. However, as the average age of our population continues to rise, it appears that most of our population misses out.

"The federal budget announcement in April detailed the Coalition's focus on achieving a budget surplus. Yet, with a deficit in health prevention measures and a growing surplus of lifestyle related disease, the figures just don't add up," said DAA CEO, Robert Hunt.

Preventative health is key to promote continual wellbeing across the nation. As the cost of treating and managing lifestyle related chronic conditions continues to rise, it is evident that it would be irresponsible not to invest in health of everyday Australians.

"It is everyday Australians who keep our economy turning, who help care for the sick and educate our children. Yet, this vital group in our society, continues to miss out when it comes to the federal government prioritising their health."

Prioritising preventative health would boost our nation's productivity and wellbeing and reduce incidence of lifestyle related chronic disease. In contrast, if this issue is not addressed, we run the risk of not having the ability to look after those who need us most.

"We need leaders who have the courage to effect change by investing in the all stages of health – not just when it is too late. We're here to work with all parties to help build healthier communities across Australia," said Mr Hunt.

Without our health, we have nothing. This election it's time to vote for leaders who invest in you.

**ENDS**

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