



12 October 2018

Minister de Brenni  
Minister for Housing and Public Works;  
Minister for Digital Technology;  
Minister for Sport  
Sport and Recreation  
Department of Housing and Public Works  
PO Box 15478  
City East QLD 4002

Dear Minister

***Response to the Queensland Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2019-2029 - Discussion Paper***

The Australian Health Promotion Association Queensland Branch (AHPA QLD) would first like to thank the Minister for this opportunity to contribute to the *Queensland Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2019-2029* (Strategy) that will improve the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders. AHPA QLD would also like to acknowledge and commend the department's robust consultation process, including the establishment of the Sports Minister's Advisory Council, hosting community forums across the state, disseminating an online survey and a comprehensive discussion paper.

AHPA QLD would like to make the following contributions in response to the *Queensland Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2019-2029* discussion paper.

***What do you think the Queensland Government can do to encourage more people to be more active?***

Evidence clearly shows that initiatives and strategies that enable and encourage people to be more physically active require a collective, cross-sectoral approach and need to be multifaceted to address the needs of the whole-person. AHPA QLD suggest the Queensland Government embed World Health Organization's evidence-based strategies and frameworks into whole-of-government strategies. These strategies and frameworks include the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, Health in all Policies and social determinants of health. The social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. Social determinants need to be addressed by all agencies and tiers of government and be integrated and work in collaboration with the non-government and private sectors.

The discussion paper already highlights various social determinants that impact on a person's health and wellbeing and prevents them from undertaking healthy lifestyle behaviours and participating in community. To effectively address the social determinants of health, the Queensland Government needs to continue to develop, implement and evaluate strategies and initiatives that are multifaceted and influence the system. This should be from socioeconomic, political and cultural contexts to enable the protective factors that support the health and wellbeing of local communities and address the barriers that impact on an individual's daily living standards and health and wellbeing outcomes.

Embedding the social determinants of health will ensure that the Strategy has a collective approach to improving the health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders. An integrated and coordinated approach that identifies and establishes achievable strategic directions and priorities that address the complexities of social determinants across all tiers of government, within non-government and private sectors is required.

A major barrier that impedes people from living healthy and meaningful lives, includes stigma and discrimination and inequity within disadvantaged populations. Socioeconomic disadvantage is prevalent throughout Queensland and is the major cause of health inequality. The association between socioeconomic status and life expectancy, mortality and risk factors has been well established and demonstrated within Queensland as well as nationally and internationally.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people carry a greater burden of ill health and have a lower life expectancy than other non-Indigenous Queenslanders. Socioeconomic, environmental, social and political factors, lack of access to primary care and population-specific health risks all contribute to the poorer health status experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. People living in remote and outer regional populations also carry a higher health burden based on death rates, hospitalisation rates and risk profiles. To effectively address the health inequalities experienced by people from these disadvantaged backgrounds, AHPA QLD recommends the Strategy include the World Health Organisation's Health in All Policies framework. This framework supports policymakers and leaders to commit to:

- addressing equity;
- implement effective structures, process and resources;
- enables partnerships between health and all sectors and across tiers of government;
- builds workforce capacity and skills; and
- adopts transparency and accountable monitoring and reporting.

Health in All Policies framework provides a strategic mechanism to achieve health and wellbeing outcomes for all Queenslanders, as well as address other factors such as housing, transport and economic barriers that impact on a person's health and wellbeing. It is based on the understanding that health outcomes are influenced by a wide range of social, cultural, political, educational, economic and environmental determinants, which requires a collective and integrated approach from Government. By using the Health in All Policies approach, the *Queensland Sport and Active Recreation Strategy* can ensure a whole-of government approach, which uses policy levers as the main driver for change, ensuring that initiatives are multifaceted and address the complexities of the social determinants. This approach supports the achievement of whole-of-population outcomes, as well as achievement of targeted outcomes for people from disadvantaged backgrounds and communities.

As the discussion paper notes, evidence clearly indicates that initiatives and interventions that target the early years and perinatal period is critical to the prevention of chronic diseases and promotes long-term healthy lifestyle behaviours and outcomes over the life course. Not all Queensland children have a healthy start, particularly those living in disadvantaged and remote areas who experience a higher burden than those in urban areas. Although the Queensland Government has already acknowledged the importance of the early years, the Government needs to ensure that services, initiatives and interventions are developed, implemented and evaluated, or that already existing initiatives are reviewed to ensure that the strategic intent is achieved.

In parallel with this, Queensland Government needs to address the social and economic impacts of an ageing population. Initiatives and interventions that empower older people to participate in healthy lifestyle behaviours, including being physically active, will result in costs savings on health expenses for both the individual and healthcare system. Improving the nutrition and exercise status of older people and managing their weight will also help to reduce the risk of chronic disease and disability adjusted life years. Understanding the complex barriers that prevent older people undertaking healthy lifestyle behaviours is required. These barriers could be linked to financial hardships, lack of accessibility, lack of suitable transport, stigma and discrimination to name a few.

## **How can government investment better support Queenslanders, young and old, to play more and participate regularly in local sporting and active recreation?**

It is well known that keeping Queenslanders healthy and well has a great social and economic impact on government and society. AHPA QLD recommends that the Government use an *invest to save* approach by identifying the key drivers for change that address the downfalls of the system and close the gaps across the sectors. Government needs to invest in improving the workforce capacity and capabilities across all agencies and sectors to ensure that the Government is adaptive and responsive to the ever-changing community needs and overcome the complex barriers.

Investing in strategies and initiatives that are efficient and cost-effective is vital to ensure that public funds are well spent and address the needs of the whole person and community. Matching investment with outcomes will identify strategies and initiatives that have long-term impacts and sustainable outcomes. Health economics and outcomes research is an example of how policymakers in health identifies an initiative's/intervention's return on investment. Using both an invest to save and matching investment with outcomes will allow the Government to be more accountable and transparent with the public regarding their funding and resource allocation, whilst ensuring that health outcomes are improving, and disparities and gaps are closing.

Investing in innovation is also critical, as innovation enables strategies and initiatives to be adaptive and responsive when addressing the complexities of the systems and sectors. Innovation also support Government's ability to investigate how initiatives and intervention can be self-sustaining, or modify existing initiatives and strategies that are no longer achieving its deliverables or outcomes. It is important to invest in research and evaluation that promotes healthy lifestyle behaviour change and prevents illness or diseases from occurring in the first place. By doing so, the Queensland Government will reduce the social and economic burden of chronic diseases and impacts of an ageing population.

Investing in the Health in All Policies approach would allow Government to address the social determinants of health across the sectors, such as transportation, urban planning and communication, to improve workforce capacity and capability. This approach will have a collective impact and reduce the financial burden on the one agency. It will call on all agencies to invest and allocate sufficient resources that address the various barriers and social and environmental complexities that prevent people from undertaking healthy lifestyle behaviours. It will prevent duplication of initiatives and reduce the fragmentation that is currently observed within and across government agencies. Most importantly, it will allow flexible funding models and resource distribution to ensure that Government is responsive to the changing needs of the community, and that implementation of initiatives and intervention are localised and have a bottom-up approach.

Cost-benefit analysis has identified that investment in prevention and health promotion strategies and initiatives is critical to reducing the prevalence of numerous chronic diseases and will reduce the financial and social burden on the healthcare system and for the individual. Investing in health promotion and prevention initiatives that address the economic, social, cultural, environmental, behavioural and biological factors that influence healthy lifestyle behaviours is vital for keeping Queenslanders healthy and reducing the burden on the healthcare system. For example, health promotion strategies that target the perinatal period and early years have been identified as having a higher cost benefit due to the longer time-frame over which health benefits and health behaviours can transpire.

## **What ideas and innovations should be considered when planning for Queensland's sporting and active recreational future?**

Cost-effective health promotion initiatives and interventions utilise broad behaviour-change levers that reach the whole population, such as legislation, public policy, educational curriculum and healthy built environments. Traditional health service-based prevention activities such as patient education, information and early intervention are considered best practice approaches for clinical services. However, these activities have been identified as having a relatively high cost and low population-reach, therefore rendering these activities as cost-ineffective from a population health perspective. The attached AHPA infographic illustrates the cost-effectiveness of health promotion.

Mapping and comprehensive evaluation of existing initiatives and interventions is critical when planning to implement initiatives and activities that will support the achievement of the Strategy's intent and priorities. Mapping will prevent the duplication of initiatives and enable an integrated approach that reduces fragmentation across and within government agencies, and with non-government and private sectors. It will also allow Government to identify if existing initiatives and interventions are not achieving the desired outcomes, and therefore redirect Government invest and resources into either a review of the existing initiative with an innovative approach or allocating the funds and resources to address the key drivers for change.

Evidence-based health promotion and prevention initiatives that show cost-effective and efficiencies at a local level can be up-scaled, for example embedding healthy lifestyle behaviours into early childhood education and school-based curriculum or mandating healthy eating policies within local sporting clubs and public hospitals. Other examples include creating healthy built environments by integrating and collaborating with local government, planning agencies and developers to ensure population health is prioritised. Government should consider how global changing megatrends impact on individual and community participation in physical activity, especially with forward thinking mindset. Shifts in community demand shaped by marketing and evolving social norms; rapidly evolving information and communication technologies and how environments are being designed all impact on an individual's eagerness and ability to participate in physical activity, competitive sport and active recreation. Being aware and facilitating these shifting megatrends will contribute to people having access to appropriate sporting and recreation activities, as well as creating environments and open spaces that encourage and empower all members of the community to be physically active. As well as enabling a Government to meet the demand of future population predictions.

Healthy built environments also include active transport programs, for example within schools, workplaces and local communities to increase rates of walking, cycling and use of public transport, and reduce car dependency. However, not only does Government need to ensure that people have access to these healthy built environments. Government needs to ensure that people and the community are aware of these opportunities. Community awareness initiatives that target the impacts of various unhealthy behaviours, including tobacco use, harm associated with alcohol and other drugs, health implications of eating unhealthy foods and not participating in regular physical activity are examples of initiatives that can support people to feel empowered to change their behaviour. However, community awareness programs are not as cost-effective and efficient as intervention-based programs.

### **What is working well, and what could be improved?**

The Queensland Government has acknowledged the importance of Queenslanders' health and wellbeing via the *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities*. This overarching whole-of-government approach addresses a number of issues that impacts on the health and wellbeing. *Keeping Queenslanders Healthy* focuses on reducing obesity and increasing suicide prevention, and evidence shows that being physically active address both these priority areas. AHPA QLD commends the Queensland Government on developing a whole-of-government approach to leading strategic reform, however, it is vital that these strategic directions and priorities have an impact, which is cost-effective and measurable.

To ensure a whole-of-government approach is effective when implementing *the Queensland Sport and Active Recreation Strategy*, AHPA QLD recommends that the Strategy include a cross-agency leadership group be established that will ensure transparency and accountability for achieving the priorities and directions outline in the Strategy. This includes defining measurable deliverables and impact outcomes that are reported publicly.

Additionally, it is recommended that this cross-agency leadership group include representatives from outside of government to ensure that the Queensland Government has a collective impact on improving the health and wellbeing of Queensland. Representatives from peak bodies, academia, non-government organisations and private sectors, as well as people from the community will bring content expertise to the leadership group and contribute to effective cross-sector stakeholder engagement, as well as support the Government's long-term impacts and outcomes. A cross-sectoral approach will also prevent duplication of initiatives, reduce fragmentation across and

within sectors, and contribute to a more cost-effective and efficient system. It will also support Government to identify and address the barriers and gaps within the system.

Finally, AHPA QLD would also like to acknowledge that numerous stakeholders across the non-government and private sectors are already implementing various initiatives and interventions that have improved the rate of physical activity among Queenslanders. It is paramount that these stakeholders are supported by Government to continue implementing these initiatives.

AHPA QLD would like to thank Minister de Brenni and the department for the opportunity to contribute to the *Queensland Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2019-2019*. We look forward to continuing to work with the Minister and department during the next phase of the Strategy's development.

Regards,



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