



The Royal Australasian
College of Physicians



19 June 2015

The Hon Jill Hennessy
Minister for Health
Level 22, 50 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Email: minister.health@health.vic.gov.au

Dear Minister,

Re: Preventative Health Funding in Victoria

We write to you as a collection of leading population health and prevention bodies in Victoria to discuss and seek clarification about the State government's plan for health promotion and preventive health in our state.

We were understandably pleased to see your recent parliamentary speech showing support for a sustained and systematic approach to preventive health via Healthy Together Victoria (Hansard, 28 May 2015 pdf). We too are disappointed that the federal government ceased funding for the National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health in 2014, and that it failed to commit funds for similar prevention initiatives in the 2015 Federal budget.

We now look to the Victorian state government to show leadership on this issue and seek practical solutions and strategies to ensure the continued delivery of effective community-based health promotion and preventative health programs in Victoria.

In February this year, the prestigious medical journal, *The Lancet*, recognised the important role played by the workforce in *Healthy Together Victoria* communities, noting:

"... the professionals in place to promote local health do not deliver programmes or projects, but they support local settings and community leaders to map their systems (such as food provided in schools or the fruits and vegetables supplied in a town) and identify and take the necessary measures within the systems to promote healthy food and physical activity environments and behaviours."

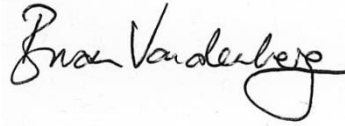
We recognise there are significant pressures on Victoria's health budget. However, without funding certainty, we are concerned that the gains and lessons learnt from *Healthy Together Victoria* will be lost. As you know, Healthy Together Victoria is a pilot program and it is therefore important for the funding to be continued until the end of the trial period so that the initiative can be appropriately evaluated and assessed.

We wish to open dialogue between yourself and our preventative health agencies about the future of preventative health in Victoria, and work together to seek local solutions to this disappointing situation affecting our community. David Towl from the Australian Health Promotion Association will be in touch with your office to arrange a meeting time.

Yours sincerely



David Towl
Victorian President
Australian Health Promotion Association



Brian Vandenberg
Victorian President
Public Health Association of Australia



Laureate Professor Nicholas J Talley
President
The Royal Australasian College of Physicians



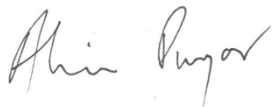
Associate Professor Ian Fraser
Chair
Victorian State Committee



Lucinda Hancock AN
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Nutrition Australia



Stephen Bendle
Executive Manager – Advocacy
YMCA



Alice Prior
Campaign's Manager
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