



The National Preventive Health Strategy 2021-2030 – what does it mean for Australians?

What is prevention?

Prevention includes taking steps to keep people healthy and well and to avoid the start of illness, disease or injury. Prevention is a part of our daily habits and actions. For example:

- hand-washing helps to prevent the spread of infectious diseases
- a nutritious diet and regular physical activity not only improves our physical health, but also our mental health and wellbeing
- wearing a hat and applying sunscreen protects against the development of skin cancer
- getting vaccinated helps build our immune system.

Australia has a strong and successful health system, but we need to ensure that there is an equally strong prevention system for our future. Our current health system mainly focuses on treating people once they are already unwell. This Strategy aims to keep people healthy and well in the first place by making changes to the health system overall and the environments around us. This will help all Australians live in good health and wellbeing for as long as possible. This Strategy includes several sections that describe what Australia needs to do over the next 10 years to improve the health and wellbeing of all Australians at all stages of life through prevention. These are:

- four overarching aims that describe what the Strategy is intending to achieve. These aims include targets that will allow us to measure and track the progress of the Strategy (more detail on page 9)
- seven principles that need to be considered in all actions that are implemented to enhance prevention in Australia (more detail on page 10)
- seven enablers that are critical to shift the health system focus to prevention (more detail on page 35)
- seven focus areas that require stronger and better-coordinated action to reduce the risks of poor health and wellbeing (more detail on page 48).



Aims

- All Australians have the best start in life
- All Australians live in good health and wellbeing for as long as possible
- Health equity is achieved for priority populations
- Investment in prevention is increased



Principles

- Multi-sector collaboration
- Enabling the workforce
- Community participation
- Empowering and supporting Australians
- Adapting to emerging threats and evidence
- The equity lens
- Embracing the digital revolution



Enablers

- Leadership, governance and funding
- Prevention in the health system
- Partnerships and community engagement
- Information and health literacy
- Research and evaluation
- Monitoring and surveillance
- Preparedness





Focus areas

- Reducing tobacco use and nicotine addiction
- Improving access to and the consumption of a healthy diet
- Increasing physical activity
- Increasing cancer screening and prevention
- Improving immunisation coverage
- Reducing alcohol and other drug harm
- Promoting and protecting mental health



What will this Strategy achieve?

This will be a strategy for all Australians, no matter who they are or where they live

 Aim	 Target	What does this mean?
All Australians have the best start in life	Target: The proportion of the first 25 years lived in full health will increase by at least 2% by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This target means that the average young person will have more time where they are healthy and not affected by illness, disease or injury. This will be achieved by increasing the prevention of risk factors for chronic conditions, injuries and infectious disease, as well as improving factors that protect and promote good health and wellbeing in childhood.
	Target: The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies with a healthy birthweight will increase to at least 91% by 2031	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This target means that a greater proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies will be born at a healthy birthweight. A healthy birth weight gives babies the best chance of a healthy start to life and avoids the health risks and complications that are linked with low birthweight.
	Target: The proportion of the first 0-4 years of life lived in full health will increase by at least 3.5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This target means that the average child will have more time where they are healthy and not affected by illness, disease or injury. The first 1000 days of life determines good health and wellbeing later in life.
All Australians live in good health and wellbeing for as long as possible	Target: Australians have at least an additional two years of life lived in full health by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This target means that the average person will live an extra two years where they are healthy and not affected by illness, disease or injury. This means Australians will have more time spent being healthy, allowing them to thrive in the community and enjoy time with family and friends.
Health equity is achieved for priority populations	Target: Australians in the two lowest SEIFA quintiles will have at least an additional three years of life lived in full health by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These targets aim to improve the overall health and wellbeing of particular populations that unfairly experience poorer health compared to the general population.
	Target: Australians in regional and remote areas will have at least an additional three years of life lived in full health by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By increasing the amount of healthy years of life for people within these communities, their health will be on a level that is closer to other Australians by 2030.
	Target: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have at least an additional three years of life lived in full health by 2030	
Investment in prevention is increased	Underpinned by: Investment in preventive health will rise to be 5% of total health expenditure across Commonwealth, state and territory governments by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This means that over the next 10 years, more money will be invested to keep Australians healthy and well. Increasing investment to 5% will significantly increase the amount of prevention activities that can be implemented across Australia, making it easier to stay healthy.

What is the initial focus?

In the 2021-22 Budget it was announced that \$1.9m would be put towards the initial implementation of the Strategy. The Australian Government is currently prioritising the following pieces of work:

- developing the **Blueprint for Action** to guide implementation of the Strategy
- creating an evidence-based **Prioritisation Framework**
- analysing the current **public health workforce** profile to determine the growth levels, training opportunities, development pathways and areas of unmet demand
- developing a **national consumer engagement strategy**, and
- developing a **national health literacy strategy**.

These initial activities will provide more balance to the health system by strengthening the focus on prevention and building systemic change over a 10-year period.

