



Inquiry into the Australian National Preventive Health Agency (Abolition) Bill 2014

June 2014

The Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) is the national association of the dietetic profession with over 5500 members, and branches in each state and territory. DAA is a leader in nutrition and advocates for better food, better health, and wellbeing for all. DAA appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the Inquiry into the Australian National Preventive Health Agency (Abolition) Bill 2014 by the Community Affairs Legislation Committee.

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DAA interest in this consultation

DAA is the national association of the dietetic profession. The interests of dietitians derive from training in three dominant areas of practice i.e. individual case management of medical nutrition therapy (clinical care), community and public health nutrition, and food service management.

The (APD) program is the foundation of DAA as a self regulated profession with 98 percent of eligible members participating in the program. Approximately 20 percent of Accredited Practising Dietitians are working in community health and public health. Their efforts are directed at a variety of nutrition issues, including preventing or providing early intervention to address the increasing burden of diet related chronic disease affecting Australians.

Key messages

DAA considers that the remit of the Australian National Preventive Health Agency has been too narrow. Regardless of where the responsibility may rest in future, the Australian government must establish food and nutrition policies, and provide mechanisms, to address the broad spectrum of nutrition issues including nutrient deficiencies (e.g. iodine, folate), diet related chronic disease, food security, and nutrition in vulnerable groups in the community.

A more concerted effort must be made to implement the Australian Dietary Guidelines to support the growth and development of children, healthy adults, and strong older Australians for the well being of individuals and productivity of the nation.

Effective programs must be implemented to prevent the unacceptable prevalence of diet related chronic disease in Australia¹. Obesity, cardiovascular disease, cancer, gastrointestinal disorders, and diabetes result in reduced quality of life for Australians, and a high price for health care^{2,3}.

References

1. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Premature mortality from chronic disease. AIHW Bulletin no. 84 Cat. No. AUS 133. Canberra: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2010.
2. Crowley S, Antioch K, Carter R, Waters AM, Conway L, Mathers C. The cost of diet-related disease in Australia: a discussion paper. Canberra: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 1992.
3. Access Economics. The growing cost of obesity in 2008: three years on. Canberra: Diabetes Australia, Access Economics, 2008.