



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

3 December 2018

Hon Roger Cook MLA
Deputy Premier; Minister for Health; Mental Health
13th Floor Dumas House
2 Havelock Street
WEST PERTH WA 6009

Dear Deputy Premier

IMPROVING SUGAR LABELLING

The AMA (WA) wishes to draw your attention to added sugar labelling at the upcoming Australia and New Zealand Forum on Food Regulation.

The World Health Organization recommends that no more than 10 per cent of energy intake come from 'free' or added sugars. On any given day, close to half of adult Australians and six in 10 children exceed this recommendation. As you know, this comes at a considerable cost to the health system via contributions to obesity, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, some cancers, depression, fatty liver disease, and dental problems.

The AMA (WA) supports a range of measures to improve dietary habits. Providing people with clear and easy to understand information about what is in the packaged foods and beverages they consume is an important part of these efforts. Australian consumers deserve to be able to quantify, monitor and reduce their consumption of added sugars, but current labelling does not facilitate this.

During recent consultation on the matter the AMA advocated for:

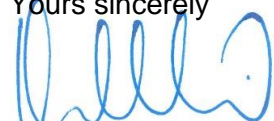
- Clearer labelling of added sugars in the ingredient list (Option 3); and
- Inclusion of added sugars in the Nutrition Information Panel (Option 4).

It is understood that the food and beverage industry have invested significant resources into fighting these improvements, lobbying both Federal and State Parliamentarians around the need to maintain the status quo. It makes sense that they want to avoid the accountability that improved food and beverage labelling will create.

Added sugar labelling will be on the agenda at the upcoming Australia and New Zealand Forum on Food Regulation meeting. This is an important opportunity for WA to show a real commitment to reducing obesity and improving eating habits through support for improved food labels. It is vital that information about added sugars is displayed on the ingredient list and on the Nutrition Information Panel.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further. Thank you for your ongoing work to improve the health of all West Australians.

Yours sincerely



DR OMAR KHORSHID
PRESIDENT