



## **STRONGER ACTION ON OBESITY PREVENTION NEEDED**



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

**15 May 2020**

The Burden and Cost of Excess Body Mass in West Australian Adults and Children report released yesterday by the WA Health Department presents worrying new evidence on the impacts of obesity in WA, the Australian Medical Association (WA) said today.

"The report highlights the significant costs excess body mass has on WA's economy and our health system," AMA (WA) President Dr Andrew Miller said.

The report reveals that more than 9 per cent of all hospitalisations are attributable to excess body mass and that excess body mass is responsible for more than 8 per cent of all deaths in WA.

The report forecasts that unless the growth of overweight and obesity in WA is stemmed, by 2026 hospitalisations due to excess body mass will rise by 54 per cent and the costs to the WA health system will rise to \$610 million.

"The figures in the latest report are extremely worrying," Dr Miller said.

In 2018, just over 70 percent of West Australian adults and one in four children were estimated to be living with overweight or obesity.

The AMA (WA) has consistently advocated for strong public health policy and campaigning including for the LiveLighter campaign.

"It is vital that the WA Government commits to strong public health policy and obesity prevention strategies. Many chronic health conditions, including cancer are related to weight and obesity. These conditions have significant impacts on individuals, communities and the WA economy," Dr Miller said.

"We need strong action on obesity prevention, especially with relation to junk food advertising, he said.

"The AMA (WA) has consistently called for the State Government to ban junk food advertising on public transport. This would significantly reduce the exposure young people have to fast food advertising, which is directly linked to an increase in kilojoule consumption."

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