



**THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP**  
**Minister for Health and Ageing**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Keeping People Well – Focus On Prevention**

Preventative health care will get a boost in the 2008-09 Budget as the Rudd Labor Government focuses on keeping Australians healthy and out of hospital.

Preventable chronic illnesses including obesity, cardiovascular disease, cancer and type 2 diabetes and other effects of alcohol, drugs and smoking impose a huge toll on our community. They also impose a significant cost on our health system.

The National Preventative Health Strategy will have an initial focus on tobacco, alcohol and obesity.

The lifestyle risk factors of obesity, tobacco and excessive consumption of alcohol are driving the current growth in preventable chronic diseases.

The fight against the effects of alcohol, tobacco and drugs includes:

- \$53.5 million to implement the National Binge Drinking Strategy to reduce binge drinking and its associated harms around the nation.
- Closing an existing loophole on the excise on alcopops. The consumption of these drinks by young people has exploded in recent years. By increasing the price of these drinks, they will become less attractive to young people.
- An additional \$15 million to help reduce the health problems caused by tobacco smoking and to reduce smoking rates among young people, as well as \$14.5 million over four years to tackle smoking in Indigenous communities.
- 'Ice' users will be encouraged to quit using the drug through a national education and marketing strategy.

The fight against obesity consists of a range of measures to help Australians avoid preventable chronic illnesses, including:

- \$20.8 million in grants for community sport and recreation facilities;
- \$22.2 million over four years to support safe participation in water and snow activities;
- \$1.7 million over four years to encourage successful community initiatives to tackle obesity;
- \$4.5 million over five years for guidelines on nutrition and physical activity for early childhood settings; and

- \$12.8 million over four years to fund a pilot Kitchen Garden Program, based on the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program, in 190 schools nationally.

**Media inquiries only: Sean Kelly – 0417 108 362**

**For all other inquiries please contact the Minister's office – 02 6277 7220**