



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

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**New Indigenous Campaign to focus on Healthy Living**

The Minister for Health and Ageing, Nicola Roxon today launched the national *Tomorrow People Starts Today* campaign to tackle obesity and chronic disease amongst Indigenous Australians.

*Tomorrow People Starts Today* aims to empower individuals to take action in relation to their health and make changes to ensure they can lead a longer and healthier life.

The campaign draws on the experiences and expertise of four key role models to encourage healthy eating and healthy living practices.

Celebrity Chef Mark Olive demonstrates healthy eating as the key to a healthy life, while public health expert Mick Adams provides details on health issues such as diabetes and what people can do to reduce their chances of developing such diseases.

Olympic silver medallist basketballer Rohanee Cox focuses on physical activity as a way to achieve good health, and *the Biggest Loser* contestant Pati Singe offers advice about motivation and inspiration.

*Tomorrow People Starts Today* is a component of the recently launched \$30 million *Measure Up* campaign, which encourages Australians to measure their waist to check if they may be at risk of developing life-threatening chronic diseases.

Obesity and chronic disease have played a significant role in the 17 year life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. In fact, Indigenous Australians bear a larger burden of the impact of chronic disease than non-Indigenous Australians.

According to 2006 AIHW figures, Indigenous Australians in 2005-06 were hospitalised for care for endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases – including diabetes – at three times the rate of non-Indigenous Australians.

While there has been some improvement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health over recent years, there are still many areas of concern and the *Tomorrow People Starts Today* campaign will begin to address some of these health issues.

Rather than the focus on waist measurement, *Tomorrow People Starts Today* is based on simple healthy eating and living messages and how these can benefit the individual, the family and the community as a whole.

The campaign includes radio and print advertising, posters, a consumer booklet and promotional items with all materials to be distributed through Aboriginal Medical Services throughout Australia.

*Tomorrow People Starts Today* is part of the Australian Better Health Initiative – a joint Australian, state and territory government program which aims to reduce the prevalence of risk factors for chronic disease, limit the incidence and the impact of these diseases and reduce morbidity and mortality rates.

The Rudd Government is serious about fighting obesity and chronic disease – but it is everyone's fight. Tackling obesity and chronic disease will require every one of us to make an effort.

More information on the campaign can be found at [www.australia.gov.au/tomorrowpeople](http://www.australia.gov.au/tomorrowpeople)

**For all media inquiries, please contact the Minister's Office on 02 6277 7220.**