

# COMMUNIQUE

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## NATIONAL PREVENTIVE HEALTH STRATEGY: EXPERT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING - 6 NOVEMBER 2020

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The Minister for Health, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, has committed to the development and implementation of the National Preventive Health Strategy (the Strategy). An Expert Steering Committee (the Committee) was formed in September 2019, to provide advice to the Department of Health on the development of the Strategy.

The Committee, chaired by Ms Tania Rishniw, Deputy Secretary, Department of Health, includes experts across the public health, research, health promotion, medical, allied health and nursing fields.

The development of the Strategy, including public consultation, were put on hold at the end of March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The department resumed work on the Strategy in July 2020 and subsequently, public consultation was held from 28 August – 28 September 2020. This process involved the release of the Consultation Paper which outlined the key themes from consultations held to date, as well as what the Strategy will aim to achieve and conceptually, how this might be done.

The fourth meeting of the Committee was held on 6 November 2020 via videoconference.

### MEETING CONSIDERATIONS

The two main topics for discussion were the analysis of the public consultation, and the development of the draft Strategy.

The Committee heard there were 333 submissions to the public consultation, and there was broad support for the Strategy. The following factors underpinned the public's support:

- the shift from treatment to prevention;
- the evidence-based approach;
- a focus on life-course;
- acknowledgement of the social determinants of health;
- the focus on early years;
- the commitment to those with greater needs; and
- the stated intention to rebalance funding towards prevention.

The main factors that respondents in the public consultation identified as needing further consideration were the inclusion of mental health, and strengthening of the social and economic determinants of health and climate change. There was also a strong focus to have a clearer connection between the vision, aims, goals and the Framework for Action in the Strategy.

The Committee discussed the draft structure for the Strategy and the approach to several components of the Strategy, including the targets, focus areas and mobilising a prevention system.

The Committee was advised a draft version of the Strategy would be available for public consultation in late 2020-early 2021, with the aim to launch the Strategy in March 2021.

### NEXT STEPS

The following next steps were agreed:

- The department will seek out-of-session feedback from the Committee on the draft Strategy.
- Public consultation on the draft Strategy will commence in late 2020-early 2021.