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FUNDING BOOST AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR PREVENTION WELCOMED

The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) has welcomed the major emphasis and new funding for prevention in the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) health funding arrangements.

PHAA President Professor Mike Daube said, "This is terrific news for health as well as health systems. We are especially pleased that the Commonwealth is putting new money into prevention and Indigenous health, where it is desperately needed."

Reports on the new funding arrangements show that the Commonwealth will put an extra \$450 million into preventive programs and \$800 million into Indigenous health.

Professor Daube said, "We welcome especially not only this new funding, but the emphasis on making the States accountable, by monitoring progress in areas like smoking and obesity trends. There must also be rigorous controls to ensure that the money is properly spent, on the basis of expert advice, and that it is not simply used by States to cover work they are already doing."

"This is a landmark change in health funding. For many years prevention has received only 2% of national health spending, but these announcements signal that at last the prevention Cinderella has a place at the health funding ball."

"We know what can and should be done to reduce preventable deaths and diseases – and also what should not be done. This significant investment in prevention by the Australian Government will improve health and help to reduce the growing burden on health and hospital systems across the country," said Professor Daube.

For further information/comment:

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