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## Public Health announcement from Health Ministers Council – “hooray”

**Ministers take a long-term view at the same time as wrestling with the immediate issues**

“It is a major step forward in health to have the Australian Health Ministers place public health and prevention on the table with hospitals and waiting lists,” according to Michael Moore the CEO of the Public Health Association.

A key point identified by Ministers in their press statement is:

- *Focusing the system on prevention.*

“For the last decade there has been an unhealthy obsession with hospitals and hospital waiting lists to the exclusion of other priorities,” he added.

“For too long the expenditure on public health has remained stagnant at below 2% (AIHW 13Feb2008) of the overall expenditure on health. At the same time as they have wrestled with the immediate problems of hospitals and waiting lists it is obvious that Ministers have also taken a long term view and given public health interventions an appropriate priority. It is time to apply increased funding now so that there can be better outcomes in the long term.”

“The sort of vision and leadership that has come from Federal Health Minister Nicola Roxon has been sorely needed for some time,” he said. “We now have State and Territory Ministers in a position where they are at least willing to pay attention to some of the long term solutions that are part and parcel of public health.”

“The Public Health Association welcomes the fact that the Ministers have embraced public health as a collaborative approach with other health spending. We now look forward to working with governments for better health outcomes.

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*The Public Health Association of Australia is a non-party-political organisation with a membership drawn from more than 40 health-related professions. The Association makes a major contribution to health policy in Australia and has branches in every State and Territory.* [www.phaa.net.au](http://www.phaa.net.au)

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