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## **Urgent investment into public health needed to prevent deaths**

By not funding public health prevention and intervention Australians will continue to die from preventable deaths says Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) CEO Michael Moore.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) [Cause of Death statistics 2014](#) released today, a total of 16 668 deaths could have been avoided in 2014. Among people who died between 45 and 74 years of age, 46.9% of deaths were considered to be potentially avoidable.

“Preventable deaths are caused by a range of issues with the worst effects found amongst socio-economically disadvantage populations such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and rural and remote communities. These groups have difficulty accessing medical and other health services and are suffering the consequences,” said Mr Moore.

“The Government has a duty to provide adequate healthcare to all Australians regardless of their socio economic status. People will continue to die preventable deaths unless further action is taken to reduce health inequities and inequalities.”

“PHAA calls on the Government to increase funding for public health activities including prevention, promotion and protection as a human right. As prevention only receives [1.7% of the health budget](#), increased investment in public health will address health inequality and reduce preventable deaths.”

The ABS statistics also show the leading cause of death to be Ischaemic heart diseases attributing to 13.1% of all deaths recorded in 2014.

“Major contributors in the leading causes of death are tobacco, alcohol and junk foods high in sugar and salt. Urgent funding needs to be given to public health initiatives that reduce the harm these contributors have on overall health and life expectancy,” said Mr Moore.

“The evidence is clear. Now is the time for the Government to seriously invest in health prevention. More prevention will equal less preventable deaths and a healthy community,” Mr Moore concluded.

For more information see PHAA Health Inequities Policy:

<http://www.phaa.net.au/documents/item/691>

**For further information/comment:**

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