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## **Greens committed to tackling obesity by taxing sugary drinks**

A 20% price increase for sugary drinks is a great step forward by the Greens to tackling Australia's obesity problem especially for children, says Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) President Professor Heather Yeatman.

"PHAA has long supported taxing of unhealthy commodities as part of multipronged and comprehensive approaches to improving the public's health. The UK announced their tax in March 2016 and PHAA have been advocating for a similar commitment from Australian political parties," said Professor Yeatman

Earlier today, the Greens released their plans to implement a price increase of 20% on sugar sweetened drinks, which they predicted would result in a 12% drop in consumption. The tax would be paid by producers or importers not retailers.

"Bipartisan support is needed for this tax to make an impact on the obesity problem in Australia. Other major parties have a chance to use the Green's policy as a springboard and implement a sugar tax as part of their comprehensive nutrition prevention policies," said Professor Yeatman.

Earlier this week Labor announced they will commit \$10 million to introduce a National Nutrition Framework which will expand the Health Star Rating to help Australians make healthier food choices.

"Nutritionists, public health advocates and dietitians have been calling for a National Nutrition Policy for years to set a clear comprehensive vision to improve nutrition for all Australians. Preventative health measures like a sugar tax on soft drinks and Labor's Nutrition Framework are key to lowering Australia's obesity rate and maintaining a healthy population," said PHAA CEO and President of the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) Michael Moore.

"Not only will a sugar tax tackle obesity, the income generated from the levy could be invested in public health initiatives including preventive programs and initiatives to ensure nutritionally desirable foods are affordable and available for disadvantaged groups," said PHAA CEO Michael Moore.

"We all know eating too much sugar, salt and fat is bad for you. However, our food supply does not reflect healthy choices being the easy choices. The Greens and Labor are committed to making a stand on obesity and improving public health. Yet bipartisan support is needed to make real change to the health of our population and target the overall public health for the country," concluded Mr Moore.

For more information: <http://www.phaa.net.au/about-us/SIGs/food-nutrition>

### **For further information/comment:**

Sophie Brown PHAA (Heather Yeatman and Michael Moore comment)

0421 749 608