



Kevin Humphries MP

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Healthy Lifestyles

Minister for Western NSW

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday January 20th 2014

NSW GOVERNMENT UNVEILS STATE'S FIRST STRATEGY TO REDUCE ADULT OBESITY

Minister for Healthy Lifestyles, Kevin Humphries, today launched the first stage of the NSW Government's comprehensive five year strategy to reduce overweight and obesity levels in the state.

Mr Humphries said the *NSW Healthy Eating Active Living Strategy: Preventing overweight and obesity in NSW 2013-2018* represents the first time in NSW there has been a specific strategy to address adult overweight and obesity levels.

"In 2008, the economic impact in NSW of obesity alone was estimated by Access Economics to be \$19 billion. In our communities and in our workplaces there are too many people who are overweight or obese," Mr Humphries said.

"Through the *NSW Healthy Eating Active Living Strategy* the NSW Government will deliver a record investment in promoting healthy lifestyles, with more than \$136 million to be directed in to evidence-based programs that target chronic diseases and obesity.

"We want to help give people the tools to take ownership of their own health and wellbeing and stay healthy and out of hospital by promoting healthy eating, physical activity and the maintenance of healthy weight in children and adults.

"Australia is experiencing unprecedented overweight and obesity levels and NSW, as Australia's most populous state, is no exception. In 2012, around half the adult population (49.7 per cent) in NSW were overweight or obese, while in 2010, 22.8% per cent of children between 5 and 17 years of age were overweight or obese."

Mr Humphries said the first component of the strategy – highlighting the free Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service (Get Healthy) through a series of inspiring personal success stories – will focus on supporting adults to make lifestyle changes to improve their healthy eating and levels of physical activity to help reach and maintain a healthy weight.

Get Healthy is a free telephone-based service staffed by qualified health coaches who provide information and ongoing, personalised support designed to help individuals achieve their weight loss goals.

Over the past few years more than 25,000 NSW adults have accessed the Get Healthy service, with people who complete the program losing on average 3.9 kilos in weight and 5 centimetres off their waist.

“This time of year many of us have made New Year’s resolutions to make better choices that will help us feel healthier and happier. This service will help make those resolutions happen by supporting people to set goals and work towards achieving them,” Mr Humphries said.

“The Get Healthy service is one tool the NSW Government is using to tackle the state’s high rates of obesity, with the strategy encompassing a wide range of programs and initiatives which will be expanded or implemented throughout the year.”

Among the stories selected to promote the Get Healthy service are Ian Corbridge who climbed Mt Kilimanjaro and Wendy Brownwell who lost 36 kilograms, both after using the Get Healthy service.

“Getting started was the hardest thing to do. But once I made that phone call to the Get Healthy Service, they supported me through little steps at first, helping me to eventually do things I never thought I could do or do again,” said Mr Corbridge, who signed up after seeing the ad on TV.

“Through using the service, I can finally keep up with my kids. I feel healthier than ever and proud of how I look. I also want to transfer what I learnt onto my kids so they will be able to make the right choices when they grow up” said Wendy Brownell, who phoned the service following the birth of her third child.

Getting Healthy starts with a phone call to 1300 806 258 or by logging onto the website www.gethealthynsw.com.au