



Kevin Humphries MP

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Healthy Lifestyles

Minister for Western NSW

MEDIA RELEASE

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HEATHCOTE'S PUSH TO BECOME THE HEALTHIEST COMMUNITY IN NSW

An initiative to turn the Heathcote electorate into the healthiest in NSW by empowering local residents to take their health and wellbeing into their own hands has been launched today by the NSW Minister for Healthy Lifestyles, Kevin Humphries.

Mr Humphries today joined Member for Heathcote, Lee Evans, in Engadine to launch the 'Healthy Heathcote' initiative, which will see hundreds of local residents join together to make a commitment over the next year to eat less and exercise more.

Over the next 12 months, participants will have access to activities such as walking, yoga, bowling, healthy cooking classes and complimentary gym classes. Information about activities will be provided through SMS alerts, a dedicated website and emails.

"Australia is experiencing unprecedented overweight and obesity levels and NSW, as Australia's most populous state, is no exception," Mr Humphries said.

"The most recent statistics show that around half the adult population (49.7 per cent) in NSW are overweight or obese, while 22.8 per cent of children between 5 and 17 years of age are overweight or obese.

"By being part of this innovative program the people of Heathcote have made a commitment to improve their health and wellbeing and work towards becoming the healthiest community in NSW."

The concept was created by Member for Heathcote, Lee Evans, after he realised his own poor diet and lifestyle choices were making him feel tired and run down.

"Like many people, Lee works very hard and has at times found it difficult to juggle work with adequate exercise and healthy eating," Mr Humphries said.

"Lee wanted to turn this around and decided the best way to do it was to get his entire electorate on board so they can all support and motivate one another towards a healthier, more active life.

"While the program is being supported by the Diabetes Council of Australia, The Cancer Council and The Heart Foundation, the great thing about this initiative is that it is about the community taking ownership of their own health and supporting one another to realise their weight loss and healthy living goals.

“My challenge to the residents of Heathcote is that in 12 months’ time I want you to be able to say that ‘one year ago we had issues with high rates of overweight and obesity, but we are now one of the healthiest and active communities in NSW’.

“This is a fantastic initiative and I congratulate Lee on the huge amount of work he has put in towards leading his electorate towards a healthier and happier future.”

Mr Humphries said since coming into government the NSW Liberals & Nationals have led the nation when it comes to healthy lifestyles initiatives, including the recently launched *NSW Healthy Eating Active Living Strategy: Preventing overweight and obesity in NSW 2013-2018*, which represents the first time in NSW there has been a specific strategy to address adult overweight and obesity levels.