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LABOR COMMITS TO STRONG START ON PREVENTION

AMA President, Dr Tony Bartone, said today that Labor has announced a comprehensive framework to re-energise a coordinated national preventive health strategy to keep Australians fitter and healthier and out of hospital.

Dr Bartone said the broad range of initiatives is welcome, but will ultimately require significantly greater funding to be truly effective for the long term.

“Investing in preventive health saves hundreds of millions of dollars in health costs and improves lives,” Dr Bartone said.

“The plans set out today, if implemented and funded properly, will help address many of the major preventable health problems in Australia and improve the health of the Australian population.

“The AMA has been campaigning for national strategies on obesity and alcohol, and Labor has committed to implementing these in government. There are currently no national strategies to tackle these significant health problems.

“The AMA has also been demanding urgent action on obesity, and the measures announced by Labor represent an important first step, but tougher and more robust actions are needed. It is disappointing that Labor did not take the opportunity to introduce a sugar tax.

“Labor has also committed to building on and extending existing policies to further reduce smoking.

“The promise of a National Alcohol Strategy is very welcome. The harmful misuse of alcohol destroys health, costs lives, and ruins individual and family life.

“We also support the measures to place limits on alcohol advertising to children.”

The AMA’s health policy wish list - *Key Health Issues for the 2019 Federal Election* - is available at <https://ama.com.au/article/key-health-issues-2019-federal-election>

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