

2021 Preventative Health Introduction

Section One : The Current Health of Australians

How healthy are we?

Australians are living longer than ever before, but half of us are living with at least one chronic condition, which can affect the quality of our lives, as well as those of our families and carers. Chronic conditions are Australia's leading cause of ill health and have serious implications for the health system. Many of these chronic conditions are linked to lifestyle factors such as overweight and obesity, insufficient physical activity, tobacco smoking and alcohol use but there are signs of positive behaviour changes, particularly among young Australians.

What is health?

Good health is important—it influences not just how we feel, but how we go about our everyday lives. Health is more than the presence or absence of disease; it incorporates our physical, mental and social wellbeing.

Our health and wellbeing can be influenced by many things, but generally depend on two main aspects:

- determinants—the many, interrelated factors that influence our health
- interventions—things we do to improve our health or to prevent ill health, such as being immunised against diseases or visiting a doctor or hospital when we are unwell.

Section Two: What is Preventative Health

What is prevention?

The World Health Organization defines prevention as 'approaches and activities aimed at reducing the likelihood that a disease or disorder will affect an individual, interrupting or slowing the progress of the disorder or reducing disability' (WHO 2004).

Within this broad definition there are some more specific characterisations:

- *primary prevention*, which reduces the likelihood of developing a disease or disorder
- *secondary prevention*, which interrupts, prevents or minimises the progress of a disease or disorder at an early stage
- *tertiary prevention*, which halts the progression of damage already done.

An important part of disease prevention is health promotion. This describes activities which help individuals and communities to increase control over the determinants of their health. Health education and social marketing can be used to promote health, as can policy and structural changes such as taxation, legislation and regulation.

Programs that promote and protect health, and prevent illness, are undertaken by many agencies (Figure 8.1). All 3 levels of government (federal, state and local), along with non-government organisations, academia, the private sector and community groups fund and carry out prevention activities.

Section Three: Chronic Conditions

What are Chronic Conditions?

<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/chronic-conditions/about-chronic-conditions>

Why are Preventative Health Measures to address Chronic Conditions Important?

<https://preventioncentre.org.au/chronic-disease-and-systems/the-burden-of-chronic-disease/>

Section Four: Prevention

Does prevention work?

Well-planned prevention programs have made contributions to a better quality of life and increased life expectancy. In recent decades there have been major improvements in tobacco control, road trauma and drink-driving, skin cancers, immunisation, cardiovascular disease, childhood infection diseases, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and HIV/AIDS control (National Preventative Health Taskforce 2009).

Successful prevention reduces the personal, family and community consequences of disease, injury, and disability. It allows for the better use of health system resources, producing a healthier workforce, which in turn boosts economic performance and productivity.

Why is Prevention Important?

<https://preventioncentre.org.au/chronic-disease-and-systems/the-case-of-prevention/>

Section Five: Improving our Health.

How can we improve our health?

<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-health/australias-health-2018-in-brief/contents/what-can-we-improve>

What is the Australian Government doing to encourage Preventative Health Initiatives?

<https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/boosting-preventive-health-research-initiative>

More examples on the next page.....

Funding programs

Prevention activities

Australia has a long history of implementing health promotion campaigns. Some well-known educational and behavioural campaigns from the past include:

- *Life. Be in it*, beginning in the mid-1970s, with the animated character 'Norm' promoting a healthy active lifestyle
- *Slip Slap Slap*, beginning in 1981, protecting against an increased risk of skin cancer
- the *Grim Reaper* campaign, beginning in 1987, to increase HIV/AIDS awareness
- the National Heart Foundation's *Tick* endorsement program, beginning in 1989, to promote healthy eating
- *Every cigarette is doing you damage*, beginning in 1997, as part of the National Tobacco Campaign to reduce smoking
- *Go for 2 & 5*, beginning in 2005, with 'Vegie-Man' encouraging increased consumption of fruit and vegetables.

Notable policy and regulatory activities have included free milk for school children, fluoridated water, polio and other mass vaccinations, fitted seat belts in motor vehicles, addition of folic acid to bread-making flour for the healthy development of babies early in pregnancy, iodised salt to prevent thyroid gland problems and tobacco plain packaging.

Qld Government - Find Your Happy Healthy Campaign

<https://www.healthier.qld.gov.au/>

Source Links for Sections (for reference, you don't need to click on these):

Section One –

Source: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-health/australias-health-2018-in-brief/contents/how-healthy-are-we>

Section Two –

Source : https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/6c8ffb4a-a0f6-49f8-9b05-01f2157b822c/8_1-health-prevention.pdf.aspx

Section Four

Source : https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/6c8ffb4a-a0f6-49f8-9b05-01f2157b822c/8_1-health-prevention.pdf.aspx)

Section Five –

Source : <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/preventive-and-public-health-research-initiative>