

# MEDIA RELEASE



## Talk to your GP about weight loss; it just might save your life.

14 August 2019

**WA Primary Health Alliance is delighted to be named as the primary care partner in Cancer Council WA's new 13 Cancers LiveLighter® public education campaign which was launched today.**

WA Primary Health Alliance will be supporting GPs and front-line practice staff to ensure they can talk to patients about their weight, reflecting the importance of early intervention and management of overweight and obesity in general practice.

The campaign's focus is the contribution of sugary drinks to dangerous toxic fat around the organs which can trigger 13 types of cancer, a fact that is little known among the public.

It is targeting the whole community, but particularly the two thirds of Western Australian adults who are above a healthy weight and not active enough.

WA Primary Health Alliance CEO Learne Durrington said tackling WA's obesity and overweight epidemic needs a whole of system response, and the organisation's state-wide structure and strong partnerships provide an opportunity to shape a health system fit for the future.

"In addition to our new partnership with Cancer Council WA, we are also working with the WA Department of Health and Health Consumers' Council of WA in the State Obesity Collaborative to develop WA's Healthy Weight Action Plan," Ms Durrington said.

"With our leadership, the Action Plan has a clear focus on early intervention and management obesity in primary care.

"We all agree on the importance of resourcing GPs and their practice teams with education and clinical pathways for evidence-based treatment options and best practice advice."

It is well recognised that starting a conversation about weight management in a general practice setting can be challenging, particularly when the patient has come to see their GP about another condition."

"GPs tell us the first step in supporting patients to lose weight successfully is initiating conversations based on well planned, brief interventions," Ms Durrington said.

"GPs don't have to be clinical experts in weight management to be able to incorporate this into their routine consultations, and they don't need to spend a lot of time to make a difference."

WA Primary Health Alliance is working with key stakeholders to develop a quality and accreditation system for weight management programs and services, and a central resource where referrers and the public can access information on effective, evidence-based weight loss interventions.

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“We are confident that by partnering with GPs and their practice staff, Cancer Council WA, the State Government and the broader community, we can deliver better health, together.”

More information on the campaign is available at [www.livelifighter.com.au](http://www.livelifighter.com.au)

Find out more about how we support general practice [www.wapha.org.au/health-professionals/general-practice-support/](http://www.wapha.org.au/health-professionals/general-practice-support/)

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**About WA Primary Health Alliance:** WA Primary Health Alliance oversees the strategic commissioning functions of the Perth North, Perth South and Country WA Primary Health Networks (PHNs). The WA PHNs are three of 31 PHNs established by the Australian Government nationally to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for the community. We work across the WA healthcare system with doctors, allied health professionals, hospitals and service providers to improve the coordination of care for people who are at risk of poor health outcomes. For more information, visit [www.wapha.org.au](http://www.wapha.org.au)