



## Reducing obesity and related healthcare costs in Australia

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The George Institute  
for Global Health Australia

### **Facts:**

- Overweight and obesity is estimated to have cost the Australian economy \$8.6 billion in 2011-2012.
- The latest statistics show almost two in three Australian adults (63%) were overweight or obese.
- 28% of Australian adults are obese, a figure projected to rise to 35% by 2030.
- Overweight and obesity is the second-leading risk factor contributing to the disease burden in Australia.

### **Project Cycle:**

2018-2021

### **Partners:**

The George Institute for  
Global Health, Australia

UNSW Sydney

University of Sydney, Australia

### **Supporters:**

The George Institute for Global Health

National Health and Medical Research  
Council (NHMRC), Australia

The Heart Foundation, Australia

### **Background:**

- Excess weight is associated with a wide range of debilitating, chronic and life-threatening conditions. This leads to many serious but avoidable complications, premature mortality and significant healthcare costs.
- With levels of obesity forecast to increase, the disease burden and healthcare costs are expected to worsen in the future.

### **Aims:**

- The overall goal of this four-year project is to generate evidence-based recommendations to reduce obesity, improve health outcomes and reduce the use of healthcare resources among Australian adults.
- The program will quantify the impact of excess weight on reducing life expectancy in Australian adults, relative to their healthy counterparts, in order to determine key areas of need.

### **Methods:**

- The program will develop a health economic model to evaluate interventions that prevent the progression of weight gain, obesity-related co-morbidities and premature mortality.
- The model will be informed by Australian-specific longitudinal data of over 250,000 individuals aged 45 years and over with linked health administrative and costs data.

### **Impact:**

- This research has found that overweight and obese adults aged 20-69 years in Australia have a lower life expectancy than their healthy counterparts. For adults with excess weight aged 20-39 years, the impact is as high as 8-10 years of life lost for both men and women.
- The program will lead to the development of a health economic model that is designed to inform healthcare policy decisions through provision of evidence on long-term health and cost outcomes.

### **Contact:**

To find out more about the obesity program and its principal investigator Dr Thomas Lung or The George Institute for Global Health, please contact: Julia Timms on +61 410 411 983 or email [jtimms@georgeinstitute.org.au](mailto:jtimms@georgeinstitute.org.au)

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