



## Submission to the Royal Australasian College of Physicians: March 2018

### ACTION TO PREVENT AND REDUCE THE IMPACT OF OBESITY ACROSS THE LIFE COURSE: DRAFT POSITION STATEMENT ON OBESITY

The Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) on the document *Action to prevent and reduce the impact of obesity across the life course: Draft RACP Position Statement on Obesity* (Draft Position Statement). ACEM thanks the RACP for the comprehensive *Evidence Review* document (the Evidence Review).

ACEM is the not-for-profit organisation in Australia and New Zealand responsible for training emergency physicians and advancing professional standards in emergency medicine. The practice of emergency medicine is concerned with the prevention, diagnosis and management of *acute* and *urgent* aspects of illness and injury among patients of all ages presenting with a spectrum of undifferentiated physical and behavioural disorders.<sup>1</sup> As the peak professional organisation for emergency medicine, ACEM has a vital interest in ensuring the highest standards of emergency medical care are maintained for all patients. Fellows of ACEM (FACEMs) are specialist emergency physicians working in emergency departments (EDs) across Australia and New Zealand.

ACEM commends the RACP on the Draft Position Statement and supports the document, particularly its trans-Tasman focus and application. ACEM also welcomes the emphasis on co-designing obesity interventions with priority populations, such as with Indigenous communities in New Zealand and Australia, and with people with lived experience of mental illness. In addition, ACEM agrees that a Health in All Policies<sup>2</sup> approach is critical for mitigating the social, cultural and economic disparities that drive non-communicable diseases in under-served populations, especially those that attenuate the macro drivers of obesity and obesogenic environments. As per the Evidence Review, in the Draft Position Statement ACEM recommends more strongly emphasising urban planning and design as a strategy to address overweight and obesity, increasing access to green spaces in urban environments to promote physical activity, and improving availability of nutritious food,<sup>3</sup> especially in regional, rural and remote communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback to the RACP. Should you require clarification or further information, please do not hesitate to contact the ACEM Policy Officer Shelley Cogger on (03) 9320 0444 or via email at [shelley.cogger@acem.org.au](mailto:shelley.cogger@acem.org.au).

Yours sincerely,

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<sup>1</sup> Australasian College for Emergency Medicine. Policy on standard terminology (P02). Melbourne: ACEM; 2014.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization. Health in all policies: Helsinki statement. Framework for country action. Geneva: WHO; 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Planning Institute of Australia. Planning for health communities (Position Statement). Barton: PIA; 2016. Northern Sydney Central Coast Health Promotion Service. Urban Planning 4 Health Guide. Northern Sydney Central Coast Health Promotion Service.