



### Blueprint for an Active Australia – 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

The Heart Foundation is pleased to announce the forthcoming release of its leading national advocacy document for physical activity – *Blueprint for an Active Australia*.

In recent months, we have engaged with over 50 authors from the previous (2<sup>nd</sup>) edition to conduct a rapid update of the evidence and statistics in relation to physical activity and what actions we need nationally and more locally to see Australia become a more active nation.

This publication is the result of collaboration between the Heart Foundation and Australia's leading experts on physical activity. It presents an irrefutable and urgent case for change and presents evidence-based actions that can form the basis of a community-wide approach to address the major public health problem of physical inactivity.

Heart disease remains the single leading cause of death in Australia with one death every 28 minutes. More than 620,000 Australians report that they currently have heart disease. Physical inactivity contributes over 20% of the burden of heart and blood vessel disease in Australia and so investing in solutions to Australia's rising inactivity levels should be a national priority. The good news is that physical activity can reduce heart disease risk and the burden of a range of other chronic diseases, as well as improve mental health. We also have good knowledge of the evidence-based initiatives investment that will work best to increase physical activity levels.

The Australian National Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines recommend that an adult should accumulate 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity (such as brisk walking) per week, or 75 to 150 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity per week. The guidelines also recommend that the time spent in prolonged sitting be minimised and that long periods of sitting be broken up as frequently as possible. Our children and young people require one hour of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity per day to meet guidelines.

Australia is not doing well in meeting these guidelines. Nearly six in ten adults, three quarters of seniors and over eight in ten children and

young people are not active enough for good heart health. This ranks Australia among the world's most inactive nations.

The *Blueprint for an Active Australia* summarises the compelling evidence for action to increase levels of physical activity in Australia. It outlines a holistic approach to solving Australia's inactivity problem, including initiatives such as:

- investing in walking as the most prevalent and popular physical activity that is accessible to most Australians
- building and supporting healthy and active environments that create spaces and places for walking, cycling and recreational physical activity for people of all ages
- incorporation of physical activity programs in schools, workplaces, health care and aged care settings
- the delivery of affordable and accessible physical activity programs for the prevention and management of heart disease and other chronic diseases
- increasing support for sporting and active recreation clubs and facilities,
- public education about the benefits of physical activity and to motivate participation

Overcoming the many barriers to physical activity requires a response across society, led by governments and implemented at a community level. At the federal level the Heart Foundation is calling for the Australian Government to fund development and implementation of a National Physical Activity Action Plan to implement the actions in the *Blueprint for an Active Australia* and commit to an active and healthy future for all Australians.

The action areas in this document provide a blueprint for change towards an Australia that better reflects the healthy, fit and outdoors-loving image that is so often portrayed as representing the culture of this country.

Expected release is late April 2019. Visit [www.heartfoundation.org.au/blueprint](http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/blueprint) to access a digital copy.