

19 March 2019

Committee Secretary
Education, Employment and Small Business Committee
Parliament House George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000
Email: EESBC@parliament.qld.gov.au

Re: Nutrition Australia Qld Health and Wellbeing Queensland Bill 2019 submission

Thank-you for providing Nutrition Australia Qld with the opportunity to provide comment on the Health and Wellbeing Queensland Bill 2019.

As a key, not for profit, community based, organisation, Nutrition Australia Qld's core business is prevention and since our establishment in 1994, has worked collaboratively with the Queensland government to improve the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders. Our expertise lies in healthy eating and empowering the community with the knowledge, skills and confidence to prepare healthy and appealing food.

Nutrition Australia Qld commends the government on the proposed establishment of the Statutory Body – Health and Wellbeing Qld.

Nutrition Australia Qld notes the recognition in the Health and Wellbeing Queensland Bill 2019 Explanatory Notes that reducing health inequity is key to improving the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders. Nutrition Australia Qld would like to offer the following recommendations and comments in response to the Health and Wellbeing Queensland Bill 2019.

Recommendation 1- Governance

Part 3, Division 2

It is recommended that the board include the breadth of experience (or access to the breadth of experience) which include the fields of infrastructure and planning, education and risk and assurance management.

The infrastructure and planning industry play a crucial role in the development and planning of healthy and active cities.¹ Children achieve about 40% of their activity in free time so it is important that neighbourhood environments are family-friendly. This includes parks, trails and open spaces that provide opportunities for sport and unstructured play. Networks of high quality walking and cycling paths help increase physical activity for children and their families while encouraging activity throughout life.² In addition, maintaining well-planned communities through pedestrian-friendly

neighbourhoods, and accessible open spaces for recreation and leisure, will support young adults, their friends, partners and families to live well.²

The education industry including those with knowledge and expertise in early education and care (ECEC), school age care, vocational and tertiary education industries. The education industry can support Queenslanders to adopt and embrace healthy lifestyles from the early years through to young adulthood. The education industry has the ability to reach not only children and students, but the wider community as well such as families, teachers and other support personnel. By engaging with those in the vocational and tertiary education industries, Health and Wellbeing Queensland can support a recommendation from the Senate Enquiry into obesity in Australia which states that the Commonwealth Department of Health work with organisations responsible for training medical and allied health professionals to incorporate modules specifically aimed at increasing the understanding and awareness of stigma and blame in medical, psychological and public health interventions of overweight and obesity.³

Risk management, quality assurance and accounting – to ensure that the activities including funded activities to external providers are of the highest quality and meeting the requirements and goals set out by Health and Wellbeing Queensland.

Recommendation 2 - Creating Supportive Communities

Part 2, Division 2

Queensland is a diverse population and our communities are unique. Initiatives should focus on responding to the needs of target communities and building on existing strengths and capacity to improve health and wellbeing outcomes. Nutrition Australia Qld encourages Health and Wellbeing Queensland to take an approach which focuses on targeting regions and areas within Queensland that demonstrate *need, ability and capability*. There is a need to have a whole of community focus which includes engaging with all stakeholders in the region (eg. Early Childhood Education and Care, child health nurses, Hospital and Health Services, local councils, local retailers, schools, Playgroups etc) to have a maximum impact and reduce chronic disease risk factors.

Previous experience of Nutrition Australia Qld's projects have identified increased uptake of initiatives in non-metropolitan areas. This has been evident in a previous 3 year early years project (LEAPS) funded by the Queensland Government – Department of Health and the current Department of Education funded Taste.Texture.Variety nutrition project for families of 0-3 year olds, where 61% of the wait list is within non- metropolitan areas.

Health inequity and the social determinants of health

Nutrition Australia Qld notes the recognition in the Health and Wellbeing Queensland Bill 2019 Explanatory Notes that reducing health inequity is key to improving the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders.

Nutrition Australia Qld supports the focus on efforts to reduce health inequity to improve the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders. A collaborative and multi-sectoral approach to funding and interventions which address the social determinants of health such as education, employment, social inclusion, housing and socioeconomic status has the potential to reduce health inequity and improve outcomes.

The need to address health inequity is highlighted when we consider the impact that experiences and environment during early childhood has. A child's physical, social and cognitive development influences their wellbeing and physical and mental health throughout life.⁴ The Australian Early Development Census highlights the growing number of children with additional health and developmental needs (AHDN). At the time they start full time school, 14% of Queensland children are developmentally vulnerable on two or more of the five domains which predict later health, wellbeing and academic success.⁴ To address health inequity and give children the best start to life, Nutrition Australia Qld encourages Health and Wellbeing Queensland to be cognisant of the social determinants of health in performing its functions.

Yours sincerely



Mr Mikael Wedemeyer – Chairperson Nutrition Australia Qld

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Reference List

¹ Queensland Government. Our Future state. Available:

<https://www.ourfuture.qld.gov.au/assets/custom/docs/gov-objectives.pdf?c> . Accessed 19 March 2019.

² Queensland Government. Chief Health Officer Report CHO report.

https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Obesity_epidemic_in_Australia/Obesity/Final_Report . Accessed 19 March 2019.

³ Commonwealth of Australia. Final report. Obesity epidemic in Australia.

https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Obesity_epidemic_in_Australia/Obesity/Final_Report . Accessed 19 March 2019.

⁴ Australian Government. Australian early development census (AEDC). Available: <https://www.aedc.gov.au/data-users/early-developmentinstrument/2015-early-development-instrument>.

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