



Ms Hannah Pierce
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Dear Ms Pierce

Thank you for providing a copy of the Public Health Association of Australia WA (PHAAWA) Election Platform. I am pleased to provide the following information, addressing each of the areas raised by the PHAAWA.

1. Increase investment in public health prevention and promotion for a sustainable future health system

A key 2017 election commitment of the McGowan Government was the Sustainable Health Review (SHR). After an extensive process, the SHR Final Report was released in April 2019, and my Government endorsed its eight enduring strategies and 30 recommendations for change in the Western Australian health system. These recommendations will drive a cultural shift to focus on prevention and community care supported by a modern hospital system.

Notably, the McGowan Government supports the SHR recommendation for five per cent of total health expenditure to be spent on prevention by 2029.

In relation to mental health promotion and mental illness prevention, in 2018 we released the WA Mental Health Promotion, Mental Illness, Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Plan 2018-2025. The Prevention Plan focuses on activities relating to mental health promotion and primary prevention of mental illness, alcohol and other drug issues.

The McGowan Government supports rebalancing its investment in mental health to achieve a sustained increase in the proportion spent on mental health promotion and mental illness prevention. Under a re-elected McGowan Labor Government, the Mental Health Commission (MHC) will establish a clear and transparent definition and description of mental health promotion and mental illness prevention activities to benchmark, measure and achieve this commitment. We will ensure the MHC works with national and international experts and consumers to identify effective mental health promotion and mental illness prevention initiatives that are evidence-based. This will build on existing mental health prevention actions, such as the world class *Thrive at Work* pilot to improve mental and emotional wellbeing in the workplace. A re-elected McGowan Labor Government will also provide sustained funding for public education campaigns.



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A re-elected McGowan Labor Government will maintain Healthway's activities, funded at no less than the current level with indexation.

2. Introduce a minimum unit price for alcohol

As outlined in the SHR, a key preventative health priority is reducing harmful alcohol levels, which are risk factors for many chronic conditions. The McGowan Government endorsed the SHR recommendation to reduce harmful alcohol use by 10 percent by July 2024.

A re-elected McGowan Labor Government will maintain a comprehensive approach to reducing the level of alcohol-related harm in WA, including continued support for:

- the successful *Alcohol. Think Again* campaign,
- school-based education,
- the ban on alcohol advertising on State-government operated transport,
- support for community based AOD prevention coordinators, and
- prevention research.

We will also focus attention on preventing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) with a commitment to Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing and actions that include education and training to address alcohol and pregnancy among Aboriginal Youth.

In 2020 my Government initiated an 'Inquiry into the Impact of Kimberley Region Liquor Restrictions during Covid-19 to Support Western Australia's Recovery'. This Inquiry seeks to establish the contribution of restrictions to alcohol availability to the health and wellbeing of the Kimberley region population during the period of the State of Health Emergency response to COVID-19 pandemic and the recovery period thereafter. The findings of this Review will be released and considered in the second quarter of 2021.

In national forums since 2017, the McGowan Labor Government has played a pivotal role as a leading voice advocating for effective, mandatory pregnancy warnings on alcohol products at the Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation. This leadership has seen agreement for these warnings to appear on all alcohol beverages by 31 July 2023.

Similar leadership on alcohol harm minimisation at the national level has seen the McGowan Government call for tax reforms on alcoholic beverages, so that these products are taxed on a volumetric basis, which is an effective means to reduce levels of alcohol consumption and related problems including deaths, crime and traffic accidents.

3. Introduce an immediate ban on advertising of unhealthy food and drinks on State-owned assets

Western Australia has shown leadership in encouraging and supporting Western Australians to make lifestyle changes in areas that include healthy weight management and obesity prevention.

The SHR sets the target for WA to have the highest percentage of population with a healthy weight of all States in Australia within a decade, a target endorsed by the McGowan Government. As outlined in the SHR, priority will be placed on halting the rise in obesity and reducing harmful alcohol levels, which are risk factors for many chronic conditions.

Since being elected, the McGowan Government has ensured the continued funding of the *LiveLighter* campaign and a re-elected McGowan Labor Government will continue this 'home

grown' campaign that has now been adopted in most Australian states and territories and is recognised internationally as an exemplar for public health campaigns.

The McGowan Government has overseen renewed support and bolstered compliance with the Healthy Options policy over the last four years, which ensures that anyone attending a WA Government health service can access healthy options when purchasing food or beverages. The Department of Health has revised and improved tools and resources to support health services and has created a new self-auditing tool. Vast improvements have been made across the system.

As your members will be aware, many of the levers to support healthy weight are beyond the action of the State Government. Consequently, the McGowan Labor Government demonstrated national leadership by successfully advocating for a National Obesity Strategy with the Commonwealth and other States and Territories.

The McGowan Government introduced the State's first Western Australian *Healthy Weight Action Plan 2019-2024*, developed to help WA respond to rising rates of obesity. The Action Plan was the result of collaboration between the WA Department of Health, WA Primary Health Alliance, Health Consumers' Council (WA) and over 1,000 stakeholders. It was developed with a focus on the existing consumer journey, to identify gaps and barriers in the health system. Initiatives of the Action Plan include:

- improving links between primary health care services and WA hospitals,
- driving local initiatives through partnerships with community groups,
- providing clear referral pathways and information on quality assured programs for GPs,
- improving access to weight management and intervention training for health professionals, and
- changing how we talk about weight to reduce stigmatisation of obesity.

A re-elected McGowan Labor Government will:

- continue to implement the *Healthy Weight Action Plan 2019-2024*,
- establish a cross-government working party to consider the issue of advertising of unhealthy foods and beverages on WA Government assets, and
- develop a Walking Strategy, with the aim of helping to address a range of risk factors for ill health including unhealthy weight, which will also complement the McGowan Government's WA Cycling Strategy.

4. *Raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility to 14 years*

The fact that we have any juveniles behind bars remains a concern. The McGowan Government has invested in a range of initiatives to reduce the incarceration of children in Western Australia, particularly Aboriginal children, including:

- the Kimberley Juvenile Justice Strategy (KJJS), which responds to the multiple and complex reasons contributing to Aboriginal young people's offending in a holistic and collaborative manner. The KJJS applies a co-design and place-based approach to developing local solutions to local issues alongside Aboriginal communities and includes a Youth Engagement Night Officer night patrol program established in Halls Creek through the Olabud Doogethu Justice Reinvestment Project,
- Youth Engagement Programs delivered by the Department of Justice's Youth Justice Teams and the Aboriginal Legal Service of WA, which provide tailored wrap around support to children appearing in the Children's Court,
- Metropolitan Youth Bail Services and assistance relating to regional bail support,

- Invested \$20.4 million to implement Target 120, a cross-agency early intervention strategy for at risk young people aged 10-14 years,
- the Barndimalgu Court, which focuses on Aboriginal family violence offenders in Geraldton and provides an example of the use of alternative strategies to support improved outcomes for Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system and their families, and
- the West Pilbara plan, in which the State Government works with Aboriginal elders, community members and providers in and around Roebourne to address intergenerational disadvantage.

In addition, a re-elected McGowan Labor Government will deliver the following initiatives that contribute to reduced youth engagement with the justice system:

- the Olabud Doogethu Halls Creek Justice Reinvestment will offer therapeutic, diversionary options in pre-sentence orders, culturally appropriate drug and alcohol services and mentoring on country,
- establish the Broome Aboriginal-led Specialist Family Violence Court, co-designed with the community a specialist family violence court, similar to the Barndimalgu Court in Geraldton,
- Better Beginnings Program - Kimberley - \$1 million to support the growth of the award winning Better Beginnings program to enhance children's literacy and education attainment. Additional funding will support the delivery of the program more equitably to regional communities, particularly remote Aboriginal communities, and
- \$18m commitment to supporting PCYCs across the State.

We will continue to work through the Council of Attorneys-General Age of Criminal Responsibility Working Group, which was established in February 2019 to examine whether the minimum age of criminal responsibility should be raised from 10 years of age. The Working Group identified the need for further work to occur regarding the need for adequate processes and services for children who exhibit offending behaviour. This work is continuing through a multi-agency response, including from the justice and community sectors. The balance between the rights of children to be nurtured and supported as they develop and the protection of the wider community from criminal behaviour is central to our considerations here in Western Australia.

5. Keep the current restrictions on electronic gaming machines in WA

WA Labor has a long held opposition to pokie machines in Western Australia.

A re-elected McGowan Government will not support expansion of gambling to include keno or pokies.

6. Act on climate change, with a target of net zero emissions by 2050

The McGowan Government is committed to a cleaner and more resilient future for Western Australia and has been focused on addressing the challenges of climate change. That is why we delivered the Western Australian Climate Policy, which underscores our commitment to work with all sectors to achieve net zero emissions for Western Australia by 2050.

The WA Climate Policy sets out the McGowan Government's plan for a climate-resilient community and a prosperous low-carbon future while creating unique opportunities to develop low-carbon jobs and new industries including:

- \$21 million for an Electric Vehicle Strategy,

- more than \$100 million towards the 100 megawatt big battery,
- \$15 million for the WA Carbon Farming Strategy and Land Restoration Program,
- \$3.1 million for the Climate Science Program for improved climate change projections,
- \$15 million Renewable Hydrogen Fund, plus \$13 million funding to support the fledgling industry, and
- \$19.2 million Clean Energy Future Fund.

The McGowan Government has already made significant investments in conservation and the environment that also supports new jobs and regional development.

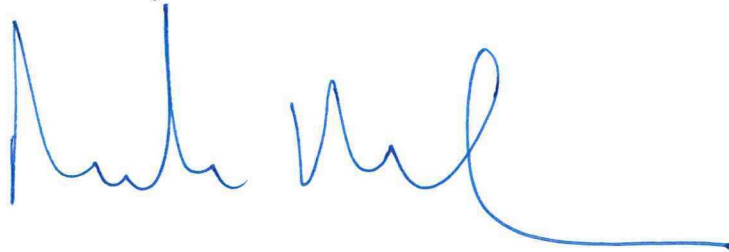
- committed more than \$60 million on environmental conservation and rehabilitation projects as part of the WA Recovery Plan, creating more than 1,000 conservation jobs across the state, and
- started delivering a visionary commitment of 5 million hectares additions to the conservation estate over 5 years, which will improve protection of the environment and deliver Aboriginal ranger jobs and increased tourism opportunities.

In addition, we initiated the Climate Health WA Inquiry, which was one of the key priorities of the SHR's Final Report. It is the first statutory inquiry anywhere in the world focused on the health impacts of climate change. In December 2020, the McGowan Government released the Climate Health WA Inquiry Final Report and endorsed its recommendations in principle.

Key findings of the Inquiry include recognition that climate action is necessary for health system sustainability and that the benefits of change far outweigh costs when health is factored in. This Report sets a blueprint for the next 10 years of the WA health system's capability to adapt to climate change and better protect the health of the community, and to support health services to do more to reduce emissions and waste without compromising the quality of patient care.

In conclusion, I would like to thank PHAA, its members and partner organisations for the work that has been done to highlight public health as a priority issue in Western Australia and look forward to working with you all in the future.

Yours sincerely



Mark McGowan MLA
PREMIER; WA LABOR LEADER

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