

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR HEART, STROKE AND VASCULAR HEALTH IN AUSTRALIA

**National Heart, Stroke and Vascular Health
Strategies Group**

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Preface

This strategy, prepared by the National Heart, Stroke and Vascular Health Strategies Group, aims to provide a blueprint for improving the cardiovascular health of Australians and reducing the prevalence of heart, stroke and vascular disease. It is intended to guide the National Health Priority Action Council, its member organisations and other key organisations in driving improvements in health services, with the goal of delivering better health outcomes through the National Health Priority Initiative in Cardiovascular Health.

The Strategy provides a policy foundation on which the National Health Priority Action Council can build a practical National Service Improvement Framework for heart stroke and vascular health and against which indicators and targets for measuring national performance can be developed.

Overarching aim

To improve the cardiovascular health status of the Australian population to be among the best in the world.

Specific goals and strategies are identified against each key arena of action in the strategy. In broad terms the Strategy aims to:

- *progressively reduce the inequalities in health outcomes associated with heart, stroke and vascular disease, particularly through a focus on preventive and management practices in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;*
- *improve the care and management of heart, stroke and vascular disease across the continuum of care, to optimise the outcomes by identifying and promoting proven interventions;*
- *support the dissemination and uptake of optimal preventive practices in relation to heart, stroke and vascular disease, and promote consistency in these practices; and*
- *enhance the role of consumers in maintaining and managing their own cardiovascular health.*

Reflecting this overarching aim, the strategy identifies seven areas where there is most potential for improvement. Within each area, the strategy outlines the magnitude of the problem as well as opportunities to address the problem. Priorities for national action focus on approaches that the existing evidence suggests are likely to be most effective.

The strategy aims to link in with and support existing systems of prevention and care of heart, stroke and vascular disease, as well as to initiate coordinated national action in a range of areas. The success of the strategy will depend on partnership and collaboration between a range of key parties within the health policy area, including governments, non-government organisations, service providers, community groups and professional bodies. A range of levers at different levels of government will assist in the implementation of the strategy.

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