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## Getting healthy and active

With chronic disease now contributing to more than 70 per cent of the disease burden and predicted to account for half of all deaths by 2020 – the time for action on reducing the prevalence of overweight and obesity in Australia is now.

To address this growing community concern, the District launched a new Healthy Lifestyle and Diabetes Prevention Clinic, developed by a multidisciplinary group of medical and allied healthcare professionals.



The clinic will provide a one-stop shop covering diet, activity and mental health for overweight adults, overweight women pre and post-pregnancy and those with chronic diseases.

The District's manager of childhood obesity prevention and management, dietitian Dr Kyra Sim (pictured), said the new clinic is just the beginning.

"There is only one 'cure' for obesity and that is prevention. We need to start in childhood, or before, when women and men are thinking about having a baby," she said.

"This clinic is for those who want to make healthier choices and sustain that change. It's about developing a holistic program with the patient, rather than for the patient."

In response to the Premier's priority to reduce overweight and obesity rates in children by five per cent by 2025, the District also is developing an obesity strategy, increasing the availability of healthy food in hospital eateries and investing in resources to improve the collection of patients' height and weight.

"We need to understand the best ways to capture and record height and weight measures and that includes giving clinicians the resources and skills they need to have meaningful discussions, where appropriate, about what a healthy weight is," said the District's director of nutrition and dietetics, Suzanne Kennewell.

Professor Ian Caterson, international expert on obesity, said more children than ever are above a healthy weight, putting them at risk of diabetes and other complex chronic conditions.

“We want to be able to recognise when someone is above a healthy weight and provide a range of options to help them address this issue and prevent disease. This means developing services and referral systems to help people at all ages,” he said.

The new initiatives sit alongside a number of NSW Health ‘Make Healthy Normal’ resources including a new Healthy Kids for Professionals website and the expansion of the Get Healthy telephone coaching service.

“There is no one solution to obesity. We need a multifaceted approach to prevent and manage overweight and obesity,” Dr Sim said.