



NATIONAL SPORTS PLAN

– PUBLIC CONSULTATION SUBMISSION – July 2017

Response by Confederation of Australian Sport for the Health, Education and Sport Physical Activity Collaboration.

Introduction:

The initiative of Minister for Health and Sport, Greg Hunt to establish a National Sports Plan is applauded and the organisations of the Health, Education, Sport Physical Activity Collaboration welcome the opportunity to contribute to the process.

The Australian Sports Commission, the Department of Health and the Minister's Office has previously been provided with the documentation and detailed briefings of work undertaken on many of the issues canvassed by this questionnaire. These entities have also been briefed on the ongoing work to build cross-sector collaboration across Health, Education and Sport over the past 3-4 years.

Harnessing the goodwill generated across national organisations from the Health, Education and Sport sectors should be a major objective of the National Sports Plan. There is already a solid understanding and appreciation of the major issues and of the perspectives of the kindred organisations that have been involved in discussions over recent years. This goodwill and understanding should be fostered and harnessed to ensure that progress can be made efficiently without the existing momentum being lost.

We believe that this opportunity and goodwill should be maximised by a complimentary cross-portfolio approach by Government rather than placing a vital national preventative health initiative under only one portfolio 'Sport' – which, with the greatest respect and deference, is arguably the least resourced and least influential of the three sectors within the highest levels of Government. Steps should be taken to ensure a collaborative approach between the Australian Government departments responsible for Health, Education and Sport and similarly a cross-departmental approach at State/Territory Government level is fostered.

We hope that this questionnaire process will consider the important work undertaken in recent years that demonstrates the significant contribution that sport makes to the nation from health, social and economic perspectives. We know that sport contributes in many ways but perhaps most importantly from a preventative health perspective is through the provision of Moderate and Vigorous Physical Activity which underpins the Australian Government's Guidelines for Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour.

Sport provides a significant proportion (around 50%) of all MVPA undertaken in Australia^{1,3} and the benefits of reducing Physical Inactivity levels by 15%² are estimated to produce an annual saving of \$434 million to the economy. This saving to the Australian economy should be used as a pool of

funds that can be utilised to build the system and structures that will ultimately be determined through this National Sports Plan process.

Once again on behalf of the Health, Education and Sport cross-sector collaboration we congratulate the Minister on this initiative and we look forward to working with the Australian Sports Commission and other agencies to develop the National Sports Plan.

Rob Bradley
Chief Executive Officer
Confederation of Australian Sport
For the Health, Education, Sport Physical Activity Collaboration

Previous Submissions and References:

We request that the following documents be considered as an integral part of this submission towards the development of the National Sports Plan. The documents have previously been presented to and discussed with senior representatives of the Australian Sports Commission and we request that these form part of the National Sports Plan planning process.

Today's response to the NSP Questionnaire does not seek to repeat all of the content of these supporting documents but will highlight and reinforce pertinent points.

References for inclusion:

1. Active Healthy Kids Australia (2014). *Is Sport Enough? The 2014 Active Healthy Kids Australia Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Young People*. Adelaide, South Australia: Active Healthy Kids Australia and Active Healthy Kids Australia (2016). *Physical Literacy: Do our kids have all the tools?*
2. Ananthapavan J, Magnus A, Moodie M, (2014) *The health and economic value of prevention: Assessing the benefits of reducing the prevalence of physical inactivity in Australia by 15%*. Prepared for the Confederation of Australian Sport by Deakin Health Economics. Melbourne, September 2014.
3. Confederation of Australian Sport (CAS). *Maximising the potential of Australian Sport*, Canberra, CAS 2014.
4. Telford, R. M., Olive, L. S., Cochrane, T., Davey, R., & Telford, R. D. (2016). Outcomes of a four-year specialist-taught physical education program on physical activity : a cluster randomized controlled trial, the LOOK study. *Int J Behav Nutr Phys Act*, 1–11.
5. Confederation of Australian Sport (2013). *Retaining the Membership of Women in Sport*, Canberra, 2013.
6. Confederation of Australian Sport - Budget Submission to the Australian Government March 2016: *A cross-sector approach to increasing the number of Australians meeting national physical activity guidelines by 15% over 5 years*.(Canberra 2016)
7. National Heart Foundation (2014) *Blueprint for an Active Australia*. Canberra.

Participating Organisations

The following organisations have participated in the cross-sector collaborative process which extends back to mid-2014.

Sporting Organisations

Confederation of Australian Sport
Archery Australia Inc
Disability Sports Australia
Athletics Australia
Badminton Australia
Australian Baseball Federation
Australian Baton Twirling Association
Bocce Federation of Australia
Bowls Australia Inc
Boxing Australia Inc
Australian Calisthenic Federation Inc
Australian Canoeing
Cycling Australia
Darts Australia
Deaf Sports Australia
Diving Australia Inc
Australian Dragon Boat Federation
Pony Club Australia
Equestrian Australia
Australian Floorball Association
Gaelic Football & Hurling Association of Australasia
Gliding Federation of Australia
Blind Sports Australia
Golf Australia
Gridiron Australia
Gymnastics Australia Ltd
Australian Handball Federation
Hockey Australia
Sport Inclusion Australia
Judo Federation of Australia inc
Australian Karate Federation Inc
Australian Lacrosse Association Ltd
Confederation of Australian Motor Sport Ltd (CAMS)
Motorcycling Australia Ltd
Orienteering Australia
Australian Parachute Federation Inc
Polocrosse Association of Australia
Rowing Australia Ltd
Australian Sailing
Australian International Shooting Limited
Skateboarding Australia Inc

Education Organisations

Australian Primary Principals Association
Australian Secondary Principals Association
Association of Heads of Independent Schools Aust
Catholic School Principals Association
School Sport Australia
Australian Council of State School Organisations
Australian University Sport

Health Organisations

National Heart Foundation
Australian Medical Association
Active Healthy Kids Australia
Kidney Health Australia
Australian Drug Foundation
Australian Mental Health Council
Alzheimers Australia
Diabetes Australia
Australian Health Policy Collaboration
Private Healthcare Australia
Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association

Arthritis Australia
Transplant Australia
Royal Far West
Stroke Foundation Australia

Sport (continued)

Synchronized Swimming Australia Inc
Table Tennis Australia

Sports Taekwondo Australia
Tenpin Bowling Australia Ltd
Touch Football Australia
Triathlon Australia
Australian Underwater Federation
Australian Volleyball Federation
Australian Water Polo Inc
Australian Waterski and Wakeboard Federation
Australian Weightlifting Federation Inc

Ski & Snowboard Australia	Committee of Sport and Recreation Officials (CASRO)
Softball Australia	Australian Olympic Committee
Special Olympics Australia	Australian Sporting Goods Association
Squash Australia Ltd	Sport Australia Hall of Fame (SAHOF)
Surf Life Saving Australia	Fitness Australia
Surfing Australia	
Swimming Australia Ltd	

Major Thrust of the Deliberations of the Cross-Sector Collaboration

The cross-sector collaboration from Health, Education and Sport has analysed the issues addressing individual personal health and wellbeing through Physical Activity. In particular the group has assessed the benefits of utilising the community sport system in combination with the school education system as a major component of the strategy. Sport is an integral, inclusive and traditional part of Australian society available across the nation through an extensive, established and scalable network.

The cross-sector collaboration has identified how the Sport, Education and Health systems can best interact and combine to provide the maximal outcome for individuals but also for achieving outcomes for the nation from health, social and economic perspectives.

It is noted that sport and physical activity provide a broad range of benefits to individuals but that undertaking regular Moderate and Vigorous Physical Activity (MVPA) is required to achieve physiological improvement to the cardiovascular system and muscular strength.

Provision of Moderate and Vigorous Physical Activity (MVPA)

The Australian Government's Guidelines for Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour require:

- One hour per day (420 mins per week) of MVPA required for Children 5-17yrs to meet the guidelines
- For Adults the MVPA requirement is 150 mins per week over at least 5 sessions
- Sport provides around 50% of MVPA undertaken in Australia ^{1,3}

Maximising Available Networks – Schools and Community Sporting Organisations

- 14.1m Australians participate in organised and non-organised sport each year (64% of pop'n – ABS,2013)
- MVPA is delivered through the Australian Health and Physical Education (HPE) Curriculum and through other organised and non-organised opportunities that occur in individual school environments.
- Dovetailing with Australia's 6,300 Primary Schools and 2,500 Secondary Schools is an extensive, established and scalable network of community sporting and active recreation organisations.

With Local Access to:

- 20,000+ Community Sports Clubs - from 90 differing sporting options
- 50,000+ Sport and active recreation access points – clubs, schools, tertiary institutions, private providers

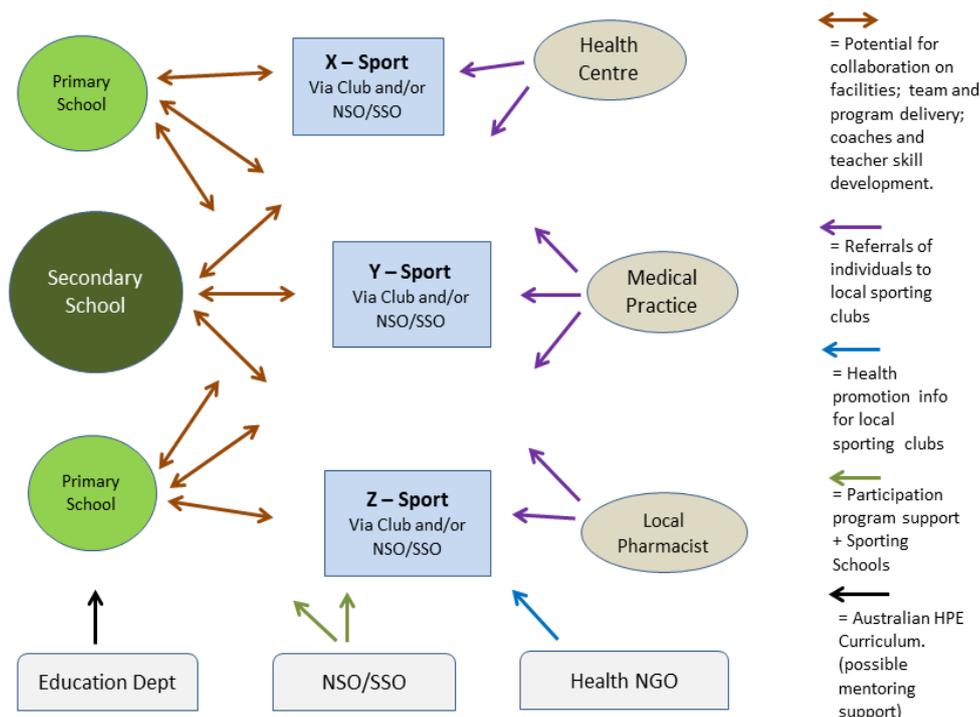
A Health, Education, Sport cross-sector delivery model

Achieving behavioural change and encouraging increased participation is more likely with:

- Multi-directional approach – from education, health and sport sources
- Consistent, targeted messaging – consistent across the 3 sectors

The following model is recommended as the basis for physical activity delivery at the local level.

Local Delivery Model



RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION:

The cross-sector collaboration highlights the following recommendations to underpin relevant areas of the National Sports Plan.

Actions required to achieve a 15% reduction in Physical Inactivity – seven (7) recommendations (May 2017)

National Policy Direction and Leadership

1. Establish a National Physical Activity Strategy

- As part of the Australian Government’s preventative health policy the National Physical Activity Strategy should be developed to provide policy direction with input from all key stakeholder groups.
- The proposed National Sports Plan should be developed as an integral component of the broader National Physical Activity Strategy.
- Enshrine a commitment to the target to reduce Physical Inactivity by 15% over 5 years

Program Investment

Investment in an integrated program of evidence based and targeted strategies to drive national and local change in physical activity in children, adults and at-risk population groups, including:

2. Building the capacity of current and future teaching staff

- **Primary Schools – by funding the national roll-out of the ‘Physical Education and Physical Literacy’ (PEPL) program⁴** to assist Teachers to maximise physical activity opportunities in the classroom and linking school and community sport (coordinated by Prof Dick Telford).
- **Secondary Schools – by provision of ongoing professional development and mentoring** to increase skill, competence and confidence levels of teachers of physical activity, particularly recent graduates and retrained/redeployed staff. Increasing the numbers of Health and Physical Education secondary school teachers suitably trained to meet shortfalls.

3. Targeted funding for community sport to increase quality and reduce financial barriers to participation

- Through funding and support for community sport clubs to ensure sustainability and enhance quality delivery of physical activity and skill development of volunteer personnel
- Ensuring participation in sporting activity is more affordable for families.
- Conduct research into the effectiveness of vouchers, rebates and other incentives to grow sports participation
- Building a Social Inclusion fund to support those who are financially disadvantaged.

4. Whole of community program targeting low SES community

- Through piloting a whole of community physical activity strategy in a targeted low socio-economic area with substantial evidence of low physical activity levels and high levels of preventable chronic diseases (coordinated by the Australian Health Policy Collaboration).
- Brimbank City Council in Melbourne’s western suburbs identified as a potential location.

5. Enhanced communication and referrals by medical and allied health professionals and the school system

- Through funding and development of a national Online Local Sports and Physical Activity Directory – to assist GPs with local sport referrals for their patients, and for use by allied health professionals, counsellors, school teachers and potentially members of the public.

6. Advocacy and consistent messaging of the benefits of physical activity

- Encouraging School Principals to be advocates for physical activity and providing resources to support this
- Development of consistent messages and approach across Education, Sport and Health sectors and across the broader community
- Providing useful advice and strategies for parents to encourage their children to be physically active.
- Identification of the specific Health promotion messages ensuring effective delivery through the system

7. Maximising access to and use of school and community sporting facilities

- Assistance to School Principals in building collaboration with external organisations to maximise the use of school facilities for mutual benefit.
- Coordination with Local Government to maximise the use of community facilities at the most reasonable cost
- To increase the availability of facilities, equipment and other resources to community groups and schools

Objectives of the Participation and Preventative Health pillars of the National Sport Plan.

1. Reducing Physical Inactivity and maximising the benefits of physical activity.

Participation and Prevention initiatives should be funded and supported based on their ability to meet objectives of the plan and KPIs should be required to demonstrate achievement of the following essential elements:

- A positive, encouraging, rewarding holistic experience for each individual
- Provision of MVPA levels of physical activity suited to the level of the individual
- Development of fundamental movement skills and knowledge that will enable effective and enjoyable participation (Physical Literacy)
- At every level the experience is delivered by trained, accredited, mentored and compassionate individuals
- Inclusion, connectedness and a welcoming environment is provided irrespective of the background of each individual
- Wellbeing and active lifestyle of the individual being a major theme of the experience.

Measurement:

- The essential elements listed above are all measurable by a metric approach or by personal interview with the end-user.

2. Establishing a Target for the Reduction of Physical Inactivity

It is recommended that a formal target for reducing physical inactivity be established by the Australian Government and that the National Sports Plan be allocated an important role in the achievement of that target.

Recommendation: Target a 15% reduction in Physical Inactivity over 5 years.

The study *Assessing the benefits of reducing the prevalence of physical inactivity in Australia by 15%*.² conducted by Deakin Health Economics for CAS emanating from COAG in 2009 and ultimately released in 2014, shows that an economic benefit of \$434m per year will be achieved if current Physical Inactivity compliance with the National Physical Activity Guidelines was improved by 15% from 43% compliance to 58%. This would have 3.3 million more Australians achieving the guidelines, avoid 3,000 deaths and avoid 10,000 new cases of disease each year.

From information recently presented at industry forums it appears that the ASC is leaning towards a target of 10% reduction of physical inactivity rates. This target appears to be reflective of the current World Health Organisation target (WHA 66.10) which indicates that *“IOC Member Nations have agreed on a voluntary global NCD target for a reduction of 10% in physical inactivity by 2025.”*

We suggest that the WHO target is based upon the broad diversity and extremes of national capacity across the globe. We believe that Australia however – being a well-resourced nation with excellent health, education and sport systems with established support and delivery networks that a 15% reduction target is achievable and more appropriate.

Participation

1. How should sporting organisations evolve the way their games are played or the products/variations they offer to ensure we get and keep more Australians active?

Much good work has already been done in this area and many sports and physical activity providers have modified their offerings to enhance recruitment and retention.

If the objective is to maximise the attraction for new participants and retain existing numbers then sporting options should be:

- Accessible, affordable and convenient
- Available at a range of competitive and non-competitive levels
- Enjoyable, inclusive and rewarding
- So that people want to come back for more

Modifications to maximise opportunities for all players to ‘touch the ball’ as often as possible and achieve success within the game – may be achieved by smaller sided games, modifying the rules eg: 20/20 Cricket and Rugby 7’s which have been successful adaptations.

A positive and enjoyable experience is essential. As Rob Nairn, CEO of the Australian Secondary Principals Association says, “The first exposure of children to physical education and sport is often at school. It must be ensured that this first experience is a positive one, to engage and recruit. If it is a negative experience the child will be turned off and will be reluctant and difficult to re-engage.”

If we look back to the objective of reducing physical inactivity by 15% this means increasing MVPA physical activity for 3.3 million Australians not currently meeting the guidelines.

Of these 3.3 million Australians there is a range of current physical activity levels ranging from:

- Zero – people undertaking no physical activity at all
- Some physical activity
- Physical activity levels approaching that necessary to achieve the PA guidelines

A question for Health policy makers is: “Where do we get our best bang for our Physical Inactivity investment buck?”

- Do we try to encourage the ‘zero’ PA group or are they too hard to convert?
- Would we be better off try to increase physical activity of all those who are already close to the PA guidelines threshold level?

The results of recent work undertaken in the United Kingdom are worth noting. Dr Justin Varney (National Lead for Adult Health and Wellbeing, Public Health England) during a 7 June 2017 presentation suggested that there is financial benefit to the health system gained by converting the ‘zero PA’ group to being relatively more active. This effectively keeps these individuals out of hospital and away the most expensive health treatment requirements for a longer period. Dr Varney says that reaching MVPA levels in activity is an essential requirement of their funded programs.

It is recognised that in terms of MVPA different individuals will have different physical exertion necessary for them to reaching MVPA levels ie: less intense activity required for obese and overweight people to reach the elevated heart rate of a moderate physical activity level.

In England this has led to the development of local walking groups and modified sporting activities such as ‘walking football’ where players may only move at walking not running pace.

From the Australian National Sport Plan perspective these ‘walking’ activities should be seen as a starting point along a physical activity pathway towards more normalised mainstream activity levels.

The broad menu of sporting and physical activity options available to individuals should be valued and promoted. Individuals, particularly children should be encouraged to gain their weekly ‘sport-related’ MVPA requirements from a range of sources that may include:

- Team sports
- Individual sports
- Lifestyle sports – eg: surfing, mountain biking
- Adventure sports
- Unstructured games and imitation play

Streamlining and coordinating the access to the variety of sporting options available through schools should be investigated to reduce duplication of effort and resources.

As the Australian Primary Principals Association says “Sporting organisations should look at collaboration and coordination of programs offered to primary schools. Competing for the limited time in schools for clinics and sport programs puts additional pressure on principals to make a decision on which gets the time. In the end, someone misses out or there is limited time and so it is a one-off event. Maybe there could be a focus on fundamental motor skills in the junior area, which could lead to later exposure to the specific skills.”

Physical literacy is also of vital important in this discussion. The education and sport sectors need to work together on the promotion of sports and physical activity and the development of physical literacy. The ASC should encourage and assist sports to have a focus on fundamental movement skills, particularly in the Sporting Schools program. The ASC could support sports that are committed to assisting teachers to deliver sports participation within their schools ensuring consultation with the School Principal.

To address the challenges with Sporting Schools while increasing participation opportunities the ASC may look to:

- Partner with sports that have large delivery capacity and reward sports that invest in broad-based participation.
- Reward and partner with sports that are looking to diversify their delivery models to attract a broader participation base.
- Balance government investment to reward sports that contribute their own resources as investment in growing an active community.

2. How do we make sport and physical activity part of everyone’s daily routine?

As the Australian Primary Principals Association says, “We need to change the thinking about physical activity and priority given to other curriculum learning areas. We need a collaborative promotion approach, targeting parents, businesses, employers and anyone working with children. The message needs to be consistent and simple; and modelled.”

A nationally consistent approach is needed that ensures the Australian public is receiving the same positive messaging about the importance of physical activity in their lives and where and how they can access it.

Australia has many natural advantages that should be used to ensure the system in place is embracing of everyone – no matter what age, stage, gender, ethnic, religious, ability or personal background a person comes from.

- Australia has a heritage and national pride in sport and physical pursuits
- Our climate is conducive to undertaking a wide range of sport and physical activities
- Our existing community sporting networks are in place with established support structures
- Volunteering is a strong, valued traditional part of our society

We should maximise these natural advantages to promote a healthy, active lifestyle and as the NSW Government says – ‘make healthy – normal’.

The essential elements of this strategy should include:

- Consistency of messaging and promotion of the benefits of sport and physical activity
- Promote lifestage linkages along the way to reinforce the benefits to those at their particular lifestage with strategies that will show individuals how to fit activity into the decisions/challenges they will face at that time:
 - Pre-school – (targeting parents)
 - Primary school age – (confirming fundamental movement skills)
 - Secondary school and late teen – coping with adolescence and the broader life choices coming up
 - Young adult – new to the workforce and establishing their career
 - Parents of young children – (encouraging physical activity of their children but not missing out themselves)
 - Older adults – (seeking out new options and regaining old skills and old acquaintances)
- Support for Community Clubs – 20,000 highly valuable community contact points that should be resourced and have facilities that ensure a positive, welcoming and inclusive experience for all participants.
 - Access to training and accreditation of all key positions within the club to ensure an efficient, effective organisation with quality programming.
 - Access to technology and systems that will enable effective contact in a fast changing communications environment and social media
 - Ensure a friendly, safe, positive family environment – the Australian Drug Foundation’s *Good Sports* program has been a highly successful program for behavioural change in sporting clubs.

The Good Sports program is a preventive health initiative implemented through voluntary community sporting clubs and assists clubs to be healthier, safer and family friendly. The core Good Sports program has been helping community sporting clubs to control the use of alcohol and to promote healthy behaviours for two decades. With a current reach of almost 8000 community sporting clubs and growing, Good Sports has the scope and experience to promote participation and significantly influence the strengthening and sustainability of grass roots clubs.

Clearly the school-age years are absolutely essential for establishing a lifelong habit of physical activity – this is explored more in Question 5.

3. How can sports better reach under-represented groups?

Effective communication between relevant organisations across the three sectors at Government and organisational level will ensure that under-represented groups are identified, communicated with and serviced appropriately.

Once identified the specific needs of the under-represented groups can be analysed and plans established to provide the necessary support and guidance. Liaison with the key groups at local community level is essential to ensure effective implementation of the plan and ongoing monitoring and reporting.

Preliminary meetings with the CEO's and senior representatives of a number of Primary Health Networks indicate that PHN's are very supportive of specific public health interventions and initiatives and would be encouraging of 'pilot' programs and ongoing monitoring.

A useful tool recommended for development in Question 8 would assist the guidance of members of under-represented groups to community sporting clubs and/or physical activity deliverers. Using an online Local Sport Directory a referral system utilised by Medical Practitioners, Allied Health Professionals could recommend and channel members of under-represented groups and/or individual patients to local sports clubs for inclusion in available programs.

A major investment is needed in community sporting clubs as they are the ultimate interface with members of the public who are the target of this preventative health initiative. Assistance is required for clubs to ensure they understand the benefits and value of the service that they provide to their members and users.

Recommendation: Targeted funding for community sport to increase quality and reduce financial barriers to participation

- Through funding and support for community sport clubs to ensure sustainability and enhance quality delivery of physical activity and skill development of volunteer personnel
- Ensuring participation in sporting activity is more affordable for families.
- Conduct research into the effectiveness of vouchers, rebates and other incentives to grow sports participation
- Building a Social Inclusion fund to support those who are financially disadvantaged.

As Touch Football Australia says, "Greater community development related funding should provide opportunities and incentives for sporting organisations to target disadvantaged groups. These should allow grassroots clubs to apply for grants to undertake local opportunities to build new programs, events or competitions."

Assistance with establishment of representative bodies to increase awareness of under-represented groups and their subsequent advocacy is an important consideration. For example: There is currently no national organisation responsible for advocating on behalf of Indigenous Australians with respect to sport.

A working group is currently seeking to establish the National Indigenous Sports Association and will hold the inaugural National Indigenous Sport Summit in Melbourne this October 2017. Indigenous sporting participation can be enhanced by the establishment of a national advocacy group to represent indigenous sport at all levels and receive input from state, regional and local levels of their community.

Recommendation: The Australian Sports Commission should provide financial support and guidance for national peak organisations advocating on behalf of under-represented groups to ensure their situation is known and understood and so that appropriate action plans can be developed.

As Deaf Sports Australia says, “Programs should be developed that sporting clubs and venues can conduct that will make the sport and the facility more inclusive and deaf friendly eg: Deaf Sports Australia – Active Deaf Sports Club program – provides accreditation to a club which has become deaf friendly.”

4. What is the role of non-traditional sport providers in helping to increase participation in sport?

Non-traditional providers of sport and physical activity should be fully considered and engaged in the current debate so that they understand the requirements of the National Sports Plan that is ultimately released and implemented.

It is essential that all of the user protections, quality control, sport specific accreditation and legal and statutory requirements are met by these entities as it is acknowledged that commercial providers may have a profit motive as a major driver of their activity.

Potentially non-traditional providers could play a key role in increasing the physical activity of children. If they can develop key motor coordination and fitness, then children will be more likely to consider more traditional sports. They also could deliver key messages around health and physical activity. Appropriate safeguards must be established.

5. How do we increase sport participation in the schooling years to maximise physical literacy and establish good habits for life?

Effective liaison with and support for the school system is an essential ingredient if the National Sports Plan is to achieve its objectives, particularly preventative health objectives.

The Australian Primary Principals Association suggests that, “Many school aged kids are not ready for sport participation due to delay in the development of fundamental motor skills. This can attributed to changes in family attitudes to physical activity, increase in screen time and the cost and commitment to organised sport. Kids are not getting opportunities before school to develop motor skills.” Further “Sport participation might need to have shorter seasons, a range of participation options and a fresh look at the costs associated with organised sport. Being active is competing with screen time.”

Essential ingredients of this part of the strategy include:

- Ensuring complete alignment and compliance with the HPE Curriculum
- Daily exposure
- Greater integration into the school day
- Maximising collaboration opportunities across parent/school/community sporting clubs/local health services
- Ensuring that all physical activity experiences are positive for the children
- Ensuring that School Principals are respected as the final arbiters on all programs and activities conducted at their school.

Providing support for School teachers, particularly Primary School teachers is essential to maximise the quality and frequency of physical activity and sporting opportunities during the school day.

The national roll-out of the '**Physical Education and Physical Literacy' (PEPL) program⁴** to assist Teachers to maximise physical activity opportunities in the classroom and linking school and community sport (coordinated by Prof Dick Telford) is highly recommended.

This program provides one Physical Literacy Coach for 8 local Primary Schools. The Physical Literacy Coach is responsible for working with and mentoring each Primary School teacher to improve their skills and confidence in identifying and providing opportunities for physical activity of their class. In addition the PL Coach seeks to access the resources and support of local community sports clubs along with those funds available through Sporting Schools Program to maximise opportunities within the school.

The PEPL program could be rolled out to all 6,000 Primary Schools at an affordable cost in the order of \$75m per year which would provide for 750 Physical Literacy Coaches to be employed across all jurisdictions.

The initial priority is seen in Primary Schools but the approach would work equally well and be equally valuable for Pre-school institutions and also Secondary Schools.

Recommendation: Build the capacity of current and future teaching staff

- **Primary Schools – by funding the national roll-out of the 'Physical Education and Physical Literacy' (PEPL) program⁴** to assist Teachers to maximise physical activity opportunities in the classroom and linking school and community sport (coordinated by Prof Dick Telford).
- **Secondary Schools – by provision of ongoing professional development and mentoring** to increase skill, competence and confidence levels of teachers of physical activity, particularly recent graduates and retrained/redeployed staff. Increasing the numbers of Health and Physical Education secondary school teachers suitably trained to meet shortfalls.

Recommendation: Maximise access to and use of school and community sporting facilities

- Assistance to School Principals in building collaboration with external organisations to maximise the use of school facilities for mutual benefit.
- Coordination with Local Government to maximise the use of community facilities at the most reasonable cost
- To increase the availability of facilities, equipment and other resources to community groups and schools

The concept of shared responsibility for children achieving the Physical Activity Guidelines.

ABS statistics indicate that only 19% of 5-17 year olds currently achieve the required 420 mins of MVPA each week. A horrendous statistic by any measure.

The cross-sector collaboration has explored the potential to promote a shared responsibility for children achieving 420 mins of MVPA per week. It is clear that lumping either Parents or the School system with the responsibility for 420 mins is not likely to be received well and is ultimately unachievable.

The concept of a shared responsibility for 420 mins MVPA time per week should be explored with Schools allocated 150 mins per week; Community Sport 150 mins; and Parents 120 mins.

The sharing of the responsibility is more achievable for each of the three groups and would also provide incentive for each group not to let the child down by failing to provide the MVPA requirement.

Prevention through physical activity

6. How do we ensure that the key benefits of sport and physical activity such as physical and mental health, personal wellbeing and community cohesion are promoted by governments and the community?

To effectively tackle this imposing challenge it will require strong and coordinated linkages between the three sectors: Education, Health and Sport. Over the past 3-4 years representatives of the three sectors have been working together to understand the major objectives and requirements of each, to identify their potentially available resources and assets and to draw linkages between them.

By combining the strengths of the Sport, Education and Health sectors in a collaborative way the task of reaching, engaging and converting 3 million Australians to achieve the Australian Physical Activity Guidelines will be maximised.

A major strength of this model is the enhanced ability of each sector to reach and directly communicate with targeted members of the Australian community relevant to them.

Achieving behavioural change and encouraging increased participation is more likely with:

- Multi-directional approach – from education, health and sport sources
- Consistent, targeted messaging – consistent across the 3 sectors
- All communicating parties being committed to the same outcomes

A national strategy, developed in collaboration with key stakeholders and organisations connected to children can be communicated and reinforced through individual organisations. We need government departments to drop the silo approach and provide funding and resources in a collaborative manner. It is everyone's responsibility to play their part and it should focus on policy and be bipartisan.

Work is already underway to extend the collaboration across State/Territory jurisdictions and to encourage a joint approach with the COAG Health Council, COAG Education Council and CASRO to maximise the breadth of understanding, buy-in and commitment.

This can be further expanded to include the individual PHN's who (from the CEO's we've met with so far) are prepared to look at ways of piloting and implemented joint initiatives to further these common population health goals.

The National Sports Plan should ensure that it maximises the opportunities to collaborate with each of the groups already involved in the discussions and be committed to ensure that no sector is left out in the final considerations.

The National Sport Plan should incorporate the 7 Priority Actions recommended by the Health, Education and Sport Cross-sector Collaboration.

7. How should we raise awareness of the benefits of sport to the Australian public?

Personal participation in sport at the community level contributes to improvements in physical and mental health, feelings of wellbeing, inclusion and connectedness.

Involvement in sport builds social capital within the community assisting individuals to develop useful and transferrable skills such as competitiveness, goal setting and self-discipline; empathy and understanding; relationships and team spirit. Sport assists in social integration - transcending race, religion, class and income.

Participating in sport should be a positive experience and it should be enjoyable and fun! Delivery of sport should ensure that every participant has a positive perspective of the activities they engage in so that they will want to keep coming back for more.

Word of mouth advocacy is the most powerful and my ensuring enjoyment and positive experience by those who do participate in sport then the positive messaging will flow on to others. Ensuring that current participants are strong advocates for sport/physical activity is an important ingredient and so it's important that they have the facts correct from the start.

Advocacy and consistent messaging of the benefits of physical activity should be collaboratively developed and be disseminated and promoted as broadly as possible. This will ensure that all sections of the community are receiving the same information in a consistent, positive and encouraging way. Suggested strategies for consideration:

- Equip current participants with the information/messages as they will be strong, passionate and effective advocates
- Encouraging School Principals to be assisted to be advocates for physical activity as they have influence with staff, students and parents. Training and resources are needed to support this process.
- Development of consistent messages and approach across Education, Sport and Health sectors and across the broader community
- Provide useful advice and strategies for parents to encourage their children to be physically active.
- Identification of the specific Health promotion messages ensuring effective delivery through the system ie: explaining how physical activity may contribute to preventing/reducing a specific illness or condition (for general population eg: cardio vascular disease or specific sections eg: high rates of kidney disease in indigenous communities)

We need to ensure that the promotion of sport is about physical and mental health and the broader benefits from being active, healthy and connected. We need to change the perception and attitude of some that sport is principally about winning and losing, medals and competition back to concentrating on the many benefits.

Recommendation: Advocacy and consistent messaging of the benefits of physical activity

- Encouraging School Principals to be advocates for physical activity and providing resources to support this
- Development of consistent messages and approach across Education, Sport and Health sectors and across the broader community
- Providing useful advice and strategies for parents to encourage their children to be physically active.
- Identification of the specific Health promotion messages ensuring effective delivery through the system

8. How do we use the reach and influence of sport to get more people active – especially people with sedentary lifestyles?

Some points made within the Q3 response are also relevant to this question.

As the Australian Primary Principals Association says, “This will need a multi-faceted approach. First it starts in the early years with a focus on physical literacy(fundamental motor skills), the primary years of physical activity and quality PE lessons at school, coordination of junior sporting organisations to engage families (and adults) beyond school, secondary programs that provide different pathways for kids to continue in sport participation. Post school support for young people to combine study, work and physical activity (or sport).”

It is recommended that a range of strategies are tested as a pilot program targeting a specific population known to have low physical activity levels. Brimbank City Council in Melbourne’s western suburbs has been identified as a potential location for a whole of community physical activity strategy. The Brimbank area is recognised as a low SES area with low physical activity levels and high levels of preventable chronic diseases. It is recommended that a similarly profiled community located in a regional or rural area also be tested.

Recommendation: Whole of community program targeting low SES community

- Through piloting a whole of community physical activity strategy in a targeted low socio-economic area with substantial evidence of low physical activity levels and high levels of preventable chronic diseases (coordinated by the Australian Health Policy Collaboration).

Recommendation: Enhanced communication and referrals by medical and allied health professionals and the school system

- Through funding and development of a national Online Local Sports and Physical Activity Directory – to assist GPs with local sport referrals for their patients, and for use by allied health professionals, counsellors, school teachers and potentially even members of the public.

Touch Football Australia suggests that, “Australian workplaces could be influenced or encouraged through Work Health and Safety Standards to formally promote and develop wellness and physically active environments. This would provide both education and improved opportunities for physical activities and sports in and via the workplace. Enabling sports to focus on developing programs in these markets could be useful.”

9. How do we ensure sport delivery bodies (e.g. Australian Sports Commission, State Departments of Sport and Recreation, National Sporting Organisations etc) and health promotion organisations work together as effectively as possible to improve population health?

Roles and responsibilities should be identified within the National Sports Plan. Ensuring a correct understanding of these responsibilities is essential and so too is the adequate resourcing of each respective party so that they can competently and completely implement their agreed role.

Establishing KPIs and reporting criteria should be part of the process as should be ongoing monitoring of achievement of the jointly agreed objectives.

It is essential that the leadership groups or peak bodies for each element of the plan are involved in the process to gain understanding and buy-in. For example: school leadership organisations like APPA and ASPA must be included so there is coordination and collaboration on relevant initiatives.

Recommendation: Establish a National Physical Activity Strategy

- As part of the Australian Government’s preventative health policy the National Physical Activity Strategy should be developed to provide policy direction with input from all key stakeholder groups.
- The proposed National Sports Plan should be developed as an integral component of the broader National Physical Activity Strategy.
- Target: Commit to the target of reducing Physical Inactivity by 15% over 5 years

The role of community sporting clubs, schools and local health services.

Throughout this document the role, responsibility and existing and potential future contribution of community sporting clubs and local school education and health organisations has been highlighted many times.

The enormous contribution that sport at community level must be recognised and appreciated. It must also be appreciated that the majority of community clubs operate entirely on the goodwill of its volunteer members – often a very small number of hugely committed individuals.

This proposal strongly recommends that no additional requirement be asked of community sporting organisations unless and until it is fully planned, communicated, agreed, prepared for and resourced in an ongoing and sustainable manner.

This comment is equally applicable to the components of the Education and Health sectors that form part of this proposal. Every entity is currently stretched to capacity from HR, financial and facility perspectives.

The Australian Government must find new resources, from wherever it decides most appropriate, to underpin the National Sports Plan to ensure its effectiveness, stakeholder buy-in and its ultimate success in achieving its sports promotion and preventative health goals.

To simply lump additional expectations or requirements on any element of the current structure – including clubs, schools and local health services – would doom the program to failure and would lose an enormous amount of goodwill and diminish any potential gain.

Performance

10. Should we be focusing on investment for maximum medal tally success or spreading our spend in support of more high performance athletes in a broader range of sports?

This question has not been discussed by the cross-sector group.

11. How can the AIS and state-based institutes of sport better support high performance athletes?

This question has not been discussed by the cross-sector group.

Integrity

12. What are the best arrangements for the Australian Government's sports integrity capability to ensure Australian sport is effectively protected against integrity threats.

This question has not been discussed by the cross-sector group.

CAS comment: CAS supports the current work of the Government through the ASC to ensure the highest levels of integrity in and around Australian sport.

Major Sporting Events

13. Should governments financially support major sporting events to ensure their viability and delivery and provide opportunities to Australian sports and athletes?

This question has not been discussed by the cross-sector group.

CAS makes the following comment:

CAS recommends that an important part of the process for governments deciding whether to invest in sporting events is to conduct a cost:benefit analysis.

The hosting of events can have significant and meaningful benefits for local communities that host events. Tourism advertising, branding, promotion and reputational aspects are legitimate considerations. A major consideration in the cost:benefit analysis is the direct and indirect financial contribution generated for the local economy.

For example: The Australian Masters Games is a national multi-sport event held once every two years. Typically each AMG event brings around 10,000-12,000 people to the host location for an 8-day period. These people are athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers and supporters – they compete across 50 sports and enjoy each other's company and explore the host location's built and natural features, its local produce and its ambiance. It is arguably the best possible way of promoting what a local area has to offer.

AMG's typically generate \$12-15m for the local economy representing a significant return on investment for the host State Government and/or local Government authority who are often major sponsors of and investors in the event.

On top of the economic contribution is the legacy of inspiration, enjoyment and connectedness that emanate from events such as AMG's. Many participants extend their stay in the host location or tour further afield following the event thus further increasing the impact.

Other types of events provide a range of benefits and Governments should consider these and other influencing factors to justify a decision to invest.

CAS believes that Governments should invest, where appropriate and where there is a sound financial case in sporting events, domestic and international, local and regional.

A percentage of events run at a loss, however, if Government support was removed these events would be risk of not being staged at all. Sound planning and partnerships between Government and the event hosts should minimise the potential of financial shortfalls.

Prioritisation of event investment should be guided by all facets of event delivery including but not limited to:

- Economic Impact
- Exposure
- Community sentiment, and
- Continuity
- Legacy (including participation and infrastructure outcomes).

14. How do we maximise the value of investment in major domestic and international sporting events?

This question has not been discussed by the cross-sector group.

15. How should governments prioritise investment in major sporting events?

Investment in major sporting events should not jeopardise funding committed for other elements of the National Sports Plan. In particular funding for Participation and/or Prevention strategies should not be diminished or traded off.

16. Should governments invest funding to attract major international sporting events to Australia?

Investment in major sporting events should not jeopardise funding committed for other elements of the National Sports Plan. In particular funding for Participation and/or Prevention strategies should not be diminished or traded off.

Governance

17. What should be the respective roles for national, state/territory and community sporting organisations to grow Australian sport?

Roles and responsibilities should be identified within the National Sports Plan. Ensuring a correct understanding of these responsibilities is essential and so too is the adequate resourcing of each respective party so that they can competently and completely implement their agreed role.

Roles within the sports system need to be properly defined by the government in key categories, and each sport then adopts and specifically outlines how its sport operates with those defined categories. Updating legislation to reflect good governance principles across sport at a national, state and local level would be helpful to represent the interlocking relationships that maximise investment and effectiveness.

18. How can sporting organisations (national, state/territory, community) better play a role in getting more Australians active?

Roles and responsibilities should be identified within the National Sports Plan. Ensuring a correct understanding of these responsibilities is essential and so too is the adequate resourcing of each respective party so that they can competently and completely implement their agreed role.

Establishing KPIs and reporting criteria should be part of the process as should be ongoing monitoring of achievement of the jointly agreed objectives.

Sporting Infrastructure

19. How can we better develop, utilise and maintain sporting infrastructure to support major events and participation growth?

High quality sporting infrastructure for fans and participants provides greater opportunities for deeper engagement, enhanced game day experience, growth in attendance and membership, increased participation, and increased revenues and financial sustainability. This is equally important for major events, minor events and ongoing local community participation and usage.

First and foremost there needs to be a strategic approach to sporting infrastructure investment. We can better develop sporting infrastructure by establishing a robust evidence base, including understanding the existing supply and assessing the future demand and strategic need for infrastructure. In the planning and development stage of sporting infrastructure, it is imperative to consider future preventative maintenance and life cycle cost obligations. The development of Asset Management Plans should be completed and contributions to a sinking fund should be undertaken to ensure sufficient funds are available to complete proper maintenance over the life of the asset.

The development of a consistent and strategic approach towards the development, utilisation and maintenance of sporting infrastructure will help support growth in major and minor events and in ongoing community participation.

We acknowledge local councils are largely responsible for the infrastructure that facilitate participation, and the lack of commonality across regions, can be detrimental to the planning, development and designs of facilities to maximise shared or multipurpose facilities. The ASC should strongly consider a mechanism to assist the industry in ensuring incentives and facilities are maximised to grow participation. Proximity to local schools and consideration of any school and/or local government facilities that could be shared should be included in the development and planning dialogue.

Multi-sports use should also be considered when developing facility plans, and supported by participant and population data and research. With many facilities across the country rapidly ageing, and the population growing, investment must be made to ensure the safety of participants as well as the inclusiveness of everyone, particularly women and girls.

The major aspects impacting on maximising the usage of existing facilities includes a lack of female facilities of suitable quality and cleanliness, adequate drainage and irrigation and adequate lighting to permit potential 24-hour facility use.

Representation of sporting bodies' volunteers on local council sporting/recreation working groups is worthy of consideration. This would assist with planning and funding processes, and ensure local decision making is made by those from the respective sporting communities, local schools and networks.

Sources of funding, including a national good causes lottery

20. Given governments have limited budgets how should they allocate funding across high performance and community sport?

The benefit of reducing Physical Inactivity levels by 15% is estimated to provide an annual saving of \$434 million² (Deakin Health Economics). This saving to the Australian economy should be used as a pool of funds that can be utilised to build the system, structures and priorities that will ultimately be determined through this National Sports Plan.

The combined contribution to sport of National and State/Territory Governments is \$1.3b per year compared to the economic impact of sport providing over \$23b³. This 17:1 return on investment to Government should provide it with the budgetary space to contribute fully towards improvement in the provision of sport and in particular to the achievement of the preventative health target of reducing Physical Inactivity by 15%.

Touch Football Australia says “From an overarching and social welfare perspective, Government funding should be linked to prevention, education and health. This holistic approach should be adopted to reduce preventable illness, minimising the burden on the healthcare system. Every dollar spent on sport has a significant reduction in the amount spent on healthcare. In this case, the desired approach would be to fund high performance and participation at the same levels.”

21. Do you support the introduction of a national good causes lottery to increase the funding available for Australian athletes and to increase participation in sport?

There is no doubt that additional sources of revenue are required to support Australian Sport as a whole and to ensure the component parts of Australian sport are sustainable and successful into the future.

The cross-sector group did not discuss this point specifically and the following comment is made on behalf of CAS only.

CAS believes that if a Lottery is established to support Australian Sport then the revenues should be directed to support the Participation and Preventative health aspects of the National Sports Plan equally as those directed to the Olympics or other High Performance purposes.

22. What other forms of non-government revenue could be used to help Australian athletes and increase participation in sport?

This point was not discussed by the cross-sector group.

CAS’s view on this point is that additional sources of revenue are required and that a range of measures should be considered including:

- CAS supports the call from the AMA and other leading groups for the introduction of a Sugar Tax.
- CAS supports the proposal to establish a tax on Sports Betting targeted at the point of consumption
- CAS would like to see greater access for community sporting organisations to philanthropic funds. CAS believes that barriers and limitations to sport accessing tax benefits currently available to charities should be removed. CAS is currently advocating a proposal that would

categorise sports as the equivalent of Health Promotion Charities which, if adopted by the Australian Government, would provide new access to a range of benefits of charitable status including FBT exemption.

- CAS would like to see funding for further research into the effectiveness of vouchers, rebates and other incentives to grow sports participation

Conclusion

The development of the National Sports Plan is an important step forward not only for the Australian sporting industry but for all those organisations with an interest in building an active healthy nation.

Acknowledgement is made of the contribution of the many collaborating organisations from across the 3 sectors who contributed generously to this response.

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The enormous contribution that sport at community level must be recognised and appreciated. It must also be appreciated that the majority of community clubs operate entirely on the goodwill of its members and volunteers – often a very small number of hugely committed individuals.

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The Australian Government must find **new** resources, from wherever it decides most appropriate, to underpin the National Sports Plan to ensure its effectiveness, stakeholder buy-in and its ultimate success in achieving its sports promotion and preventative health goals.

To simply lump additional expectations or requirements on any element of the current structure – including clubs, schools and local health services – would doom the program to failure and would lose an enormous amount of goodwill and any potential gain.

CAS together with the organisations participating in the cross-sector collaboration on physical activity welcomes this opportunity to contribute to the National Sports Plan. We look forward to working with the Australian Sports Commission, the Minister and his office and other stakeholders to develop and implement the plan.

If you require any further explanation or information on the issues raised in this response please do not hesitate to make contact.