

# Pre-Budget Submission to Treasury

For consideration in the 2022-23 Federal Budget

## Building on the work of the Health, Education and Sport cross-sector Collaboration on Physical Activity

Presenting



## ***Get Sport 2030 Back on Track***

Cost effective measures to boost sport's ability to come back in a post-covid world



Canberra, November 2021

## Cost effective measures to boost sport's ability to come back in a post-covid world

### Introduction:

The Confederation of Australian Sport (CAS) welcomes the opportunity to make this submission to the Federal Government for consideration in the 2022-23 Federal Budget and beyond.

CAS is the independent, not-for-profit industry organisation supporting the work of Australia's 90 National Sporting Organisations (NSO) with a particular emphasis on community level sport. Our mantra is 'Sport for All'.

Since 2014 CAS has been working with over 80 national organisations across Health, Education and Sport to build collaboration for a cross-sector approach to promoting the benefits of sport and physical activity from a preventive health perspective. By example these collaborating organisations included the National Heart Foundation, Australian Primary Principals Association, Australian Secondary Principals Association and the Australian Health Policy Collaboration.

CAS on behalf of the Health, Education and Sport Cross-sector collaboration has made previous submissions to the Australian Government for consideration including to:

- Pre-Budget Submissions to Treasury in 2016, 2018 and 2021
- Consultation process for the development of the 'National Sport Plan' released in 2018
- Consultation process for the 'National Preventive Health Strategy 2021-2030'<sup>26</sup> released 13 Dec 2021 which incorporates 'Increasing Physical Activity' of one of the seven Focus Areas.

The National Sport Plan *Sport 2030* is a good plan, broadly supported by the industry but this Plan will not realise its potential because key elements of *Sport 2030* are not being adequately supported by the Federal Government through Sport Australia. Essential elements of *Sport 2030*'s 12-year horizon were only funded for the first 2 years. With the runway to the 2032 Brisbane Olympics shining a light on the important contribution of sport - Let's **Get Sport 2030 Back on Track!**

CAS acknowledges the contribution made to sport by the Federal Government via Covid-19 assistance programs such as Job Keeper but highlights the financial hardships and participation reduction felt by 85% of organisations across the sector. Sport Australia's research<sup>16</sup> in 2020 found *Sports are anticipating significant reductions in non-HP key revenue streams (membership and commercial revenue), which if ongoing would place Sports in acute financial distress.* Further research by the Australian Sports Foundation released 21 September 2021 *The Impact of Covid-19 on Community Sport* update shows the extreme pressure being felt at community level by 85% of organisations, with over '9,000 clubs at risk of going under', 'over 40% showing large reductions in participation and volunteers.'

Federal Government Funding for Sport Participation and physical activity has been severely hit with a reduction from \$41m in 2018-19 to \$24m in 2021-22 (a 42% decrease).

The overall funding deficit of *Sport 2030* has been counterproductive and in many instances has stalled effective program development and prevented important gains from being consolidated and embedded within sport. These are the essential gains that ensure future sustainability for community organisations and private providers, particularly when trying to recover from the covid-19 pandemic.

In recent months CAS has taken the opportunity to speak directly with NSOs about the importance of Government funding for sporting infrastructure and program development which is encapsulated by a series of [Case Studies](#) (click the link for 3 minute video clip). The order of initiatives presented in this proposal represents the ranking of priority given by NSO/NSOD CEOs in a Survey undertaken in November 2021.

This submission proposes a number of cost effective measures that will **Get Sport 2030 Back on Track** for achieving Australia's *Sport 2030*<sup>7</sup> Vision to be the "world's most active and healthy sporting nation".

**Requested Government Investment:** **\$291m in 2022-23**

## SUMMARY OF COST EFFECTIVE MEASURES-

The following Cost Effective measures will contribute to achieving objectives within the National Preventive Health Strategy 2021-2030 and the National Sport Plan – *Sport 2030*.

### 1: Increased support for National Sporting Organisations (NSOs and NSODs) Participation funding following the covid-pandemic

- Enable NSOs and NSODs to revitalise community level sport through a capacity building post-Covid Revitalising Participation Fund
- Budget: \$25m per year for 4 years

### 2: Building the Physical Literacy capacity of School teaching staff

- Primary Schools – by funding the national roll-out of the ‘Physical Education and Physical Literacy’ (PEPL) program 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 .
- Budget: \$15.5m per year for 4 years

### 3: Re-committing to the support of Community Sport Infrastructure

- Re-commit to Community Sport Infrastructure with the re-establishment of a suitable fund.
- Recognising the strategic long-term objective to revitalise existing, declining infrastructure and towards the building of new infrastructure where emerging priorities are located.
- In conjunction and partnership with State/Territory jurisdictions undertake a national audit of current community sporting facilities and needs analysis for future facility requirements.
- Budget: \$200m per year for 4 years

### 4: Increased support for Coaching and Officiating Development

- Provide NSO/NSODs with access to the Sport Australia Learning Centre at no cost by reallocating some of the Sport Australia funding allocation.
- Budget: \$0

### 5: Reducing financial barriers to sport participation in disadvantaged communities and embed social prescribing into the Primary Health Care system

- Embedding Social Prescribing into the Primary Health Care system
- Establish a ‘Tackling Inequalities Fund’ to ensure participation in sporting activity is more affordable for families, particularly those from low SES communities.
- Budget: \$50m per year for 4 years

### 6: Removing the monopoly of the Australian Sports Foundation – allowing sporting organisations direct access to the benefits of charitable status

- Remove the current monopoly that the Australian Sports Foundation has on providing tax-deductibility on donations to sport.
- Implement required legislative change to enable sporting organisations to access the benefits of charitable status and support the education process for community sport.
- Budget: \$200,000 per year for 3 years

### 7: Support the National Indigenous Sports Foundation to guide relationships and maximise opportunities for indigenous peoples through sport

- Support for the work of the NISF will provide a greater understanding and inclusion of the needs of indigenous Australians generating benefit to indigenous sportspeople and the broader community.
- Budget: \$200,000 per year for 3 years

**Total Government Investment requested in 2022-23: \$290.7m (\$1.16b over 4 years)**

## PRIORITY ACTIONS EXPLAINED

### 1: Increased support for National Sporting Organisations (NSOs and NSODs) Participation funding following covid-pandemic

#### Why is this measure essential?

Building committed, sustainable and supported community sporting organisations and clubs is essential to achieving the stated objectives of Australia's Long Term National Health Plan, the National Preventive Health Strategy 2021-2030<sup>26</sup> and the National Sport Plan *Sport 2030*.<sup>7</sup>

Enshrined within these Federal Government plans is the target to reduce Physical Inactivity by 15%.

An important part of this strategy is to provide a comprehensive menu of sporting opportunities catering to a broad cross-section of the community. In an environment of diminishing corporate sponsorship opportunities and pressure on the existing volunteer structures the support of Government funding has never been more important.

New, innovative, inclusive programs catering for broad community needs will not readily occur without Government funding support. Participation program funding is more effectively and efficiently provided at national level through NSO/NSODs for use across Australia rather than expecting smaller scale, fragmented inputs from the jurisdictional level to filter through.

Recent examples of how effectively Federal Government funding can be applied is highlighted in the following **Case Studies** presented as short 3 minute video vignettes. A highlights summary is also provided:

#### [Case Studies summary](https://www.sportforall.com.au/case-studies/)

<https://www.sportforall.com.au/case-studies/>

The recent implementation of these community-facing Participation programs shows that even smaller NSOs/NSODs are able to achieve highly effective and important outcomes with relatively modest resources.

As stated earlier Research from Sport Australia<sup>16</sup> and the Australian Sports Foundation indicates around 85% of sporting organisations have been severely impacted by Covid-19 and require assistance to quickly rebuild their capacity to deliver desired physical and mental health outcomes, employment outcomes and their important contribution to community development.

“Redressing the barriers to encourage sport participation throughout the community will require both investment and action from all levels of governments, the sport industry and the establishment and strengthening of new and existing partnerships to achieve the vision proposed in Sport 2030<sup>20</sup>.”

Government funding to National Sporting Organisations (NSOs and NSODs) in the form of a grants program will facilitate regeneration and participation growth at community level.

This measure would partially redress the reduction from \$41m in 2018-19 to \$24m in 2021-22 (a 42% decrease) by the Federal Government from the current Sport Australia budget that was allocated to programs that specifically support Participation.

#### **Restoring Sport Australia – ‘Move It Aus’ funds:**

Unfortunately, the 2020/21 Federal Budget released in October 2020 removed the funding of important Physical Activity and Participating funds that Sport Australia promoted under the banner “Move It Aus”.

Removing funding for programs after only one or two years is incredibly frustrating and counter-productive. NSOs and NSODs spend a huge amount of their limited resources applying for and gearing up for new

government programs. In the case of the Active Ageing program, for example, this required a whole new approach, research and thinking to provide quality initiatives with a preventive health focus.

For the program to be de-funded after only 2 years means that most of the program benefit and infrastructure was lost, trained staff drifted away, the important trust, goodwill and energy of the volunteer networks needed for a successful program was undermined and confidence in the system was diminished.

The **Move It Aus** Participation initiatives were extremely valuable and underpinned the thrust of trying to get more Australians active. Participation at grass-roots level is a vital part of an NSO/NSOD's future success and this pool of funds must be reinstated as a matter of urgency.

Whether or not the Program names remain the same is irrelevant what is most important is that the target areas of support including Active Ageing are re-instated.

### **Establish the National Sporting Organisation – post-Covid Revitalising Participation Fund**

Enable NSOs and NSODs to revitalise inclusive community level sport through a dedicated post-Covid Revitalising Participation Fund. This funding is in addition to the funds allocated through Sport Australia for NSO/NSOD Participation investment which was \$17.6m for 2021-22.

The Participation Fund would provide funds for the development and implementation of programs that will increase the numbers of Australians participating in sport and improve the access to and quality of the experience.

**Proposal:** Allocate an additional fund of \$25m per year for 4 years to assist all National Sporting Organisations implement specific community participation growth initiatives.

### **Proposed Use of the Funds by NSOs and NSODs**

Capacity building and professional development initiatives which may include:

- Development and implementation of targeted Participation programs
- Capacity building through the employment and training of key staff
- Building on inclusive practices
- Needs assessment, program and resource development
- Coaching and officials education, accreditation and professional development
- Training and support for Club management and operations including Volunteer support
- Assisting sport to develop program offerings that will be flexible in format and access to maximise convenience for participation by time-poor individuals
- Assistance to Clubs to ensure financial sustainability and quality delivery over the long term

### **Principal users of this measure**

National Sport network including:

- NSOs and NSODs (approx. 90)
- State Sporting Organisations (over 700)
- Community sporting clubs (over 20,000 aligned to NSO/NSODs)

National Health network (a range of organisations operating at national, state and/or local levels)

- Health Promotion Organisations including highly respected organisations dealing with chronic conditions impacted by obesity and overweight and mental illness.

### **Budget: \$100m over 4 years**

## 2: Building the Physical Literacy capacity of school teaching staff

### Why is this measure essential?

The first exposure of children to physical activity and sport is often delivered in the school environment. As Rob Nairn (Executive Director of the Australian Secondary School Principals Association) says, “It is essential that a child’s first experience of physical activity 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.”

Establishing the skills, knowledge and enjoyment that will lead to a lifelong habit of physical activity in our children is an essential ingredient of this proposal. To achieve this goal it is necessary to ensure that school teachers, particularly at Primary School level are strongly supported professionally so they have the skills and confidence to maximise opportunities for delivering physical activity as an integral part of the school day.

**The ‘Physical Education and Physical Literacy’ (PEPL)<sup>17</sup> program has achieved outstanding results and this proposal recommends steps be taken to fund a national roll-out of the program over the next 4 years.**

The PEPL program builds on the earlier work of Professor Dick Telford’s LOOK randomised control trial which showed four major effects on Primary School aged children:

- Improved NAPLAN results in numeracy (13 points) and reading/writing (8-10 points).
- Reduced insulin resistance indicating lowered risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes
- Reduced cholesterol levels indicating lowered risk of developing cardiovascular disease
- Enhanced bone development in girls indicative of reduced risk of developing osteoporosis

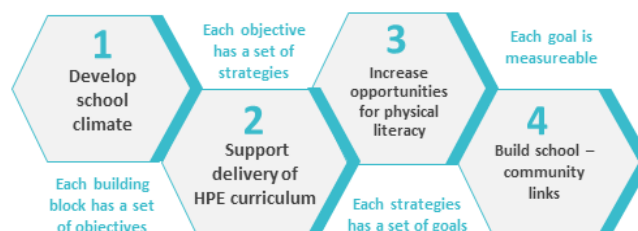
“Changing habitual physical activity levels requires a sustainable, long-term solution....and development of *physical literacy*, the competence, confidence, and motivation children require to be more physically active now and to enjoy a lifetime of physical activity,” says Professor Dick Telford.

The Physical Education Physical Literacy (PEPL) project is an evidence-based sustainable support system designed to assist primary schools to create a physically active school climate, increase opportunities for physical activity, and to enhance delivery of effective physical education and sport.

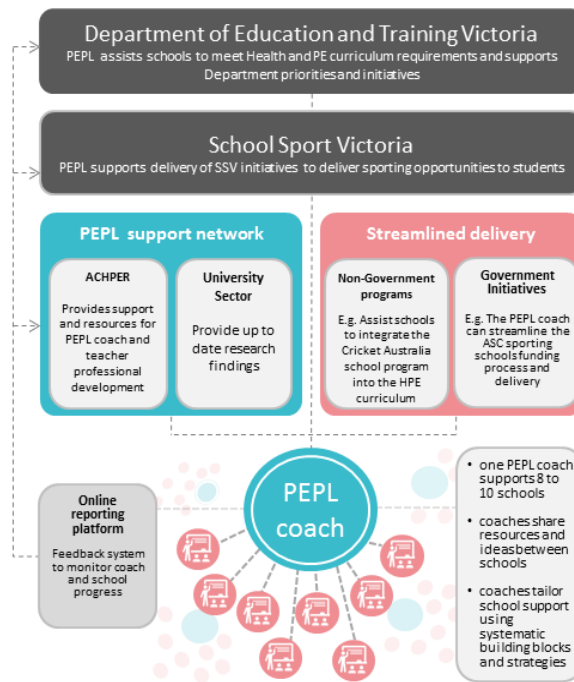
The PEPL approach is made up of four building blocks which are targeted in sequential order:

1. Development of a PEPL school climate
2. Enhanced physical education
3. Increased student physical literacy opportunities
4. Build school-community sport links

Role of the PEPL Coach:



The system is guided by a **PEPL coach**, an experienced physical educator working in a network of schools who tailors school specific strategies designed to work through each building block. The PEPL coach is not tasked with any unsustainable personal teaching load; instead he or she adopts a coaching role across a network of schools, working with the school principals, specialist HPE teachers, classroom teachers and community organisations.



### Core principles

The PEPL project is designed around a series of core principles:

- Providing students with well-conducted PE (which includes sport education) and opportunities to develop physical literacy will improve psychological and physical health as well as their academic achievement and long-term enjoyment of physical activity
- Delivering quality PE requires a sustained program of in-school professional development for the classroom teachers
- A school climate of physical activity can be achieved through collaborative leadership of the principal, PE specialist, and classroom teachers
- Physical literacy can be enhanced by school-community sporting interaction, especially with the collaboration of Sporting Schools and ACHPER (professional association for PE teachers)
- All of the above can be facilitated by the PEPL Approach

This program provides one Physical Literacy Coach for a cluster of 8-10 Primary Schools in a designated local area. 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 progressively rolled out over 4 years across all jurisdictions to 5,000 Primary Schools at an affordable cost of \$48m over that period which would provide for 500 Physical Literacy Coaches to be employed across all jurisdictions.

The cost of implementing one cluster for one year is around \$120,000 and so a progressive roll-out in selected areas could be established in the first instance.

As it will take some time to source and train Physical Literacy Coaches the proposal is to roll-out this program progressively across all jurisdictions to achieve maximal coverage after 4 years.

During this period it is also likely that economies of scale will be identified and also alternative sources of revenue to support the program and so significant cost savings are possible over the roll-out period.

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

Successful trials have been conducted in Victoria (2017-18) and in South Australia and the ACT in 2021 in primary schools and the Minister may be interested to learn more of the results through a detailed presentation by Professor Telford.

Preliminary results in the current random control trial being held in selected Queensland Child-care centres have produced very encouraging results including increased physical activity of children under 5, improvements in expressive vocabulary and increased motor control.

### **Building the capacity of current and future Secondary School teaching staff**

**A major need has been identified for the ongoing professional development and mentoring of Secondary School teachers with responsibility for the provision of physical activity and sport.**

This includes teachers employed to teach the HPE curriculum but also includes those individuals who deliver sporting, active recreation or other organised physical activity sessions under the school's auspices.

The requirement is 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 who are suitably trained may also be considered to meet shortfalls.

Two approaches are proposed for funding:

- 1. Professional development of existing secondary school teachers:**
  - PD course to be developed with supporting tools and resources in Year 1
  - Progressively rolled out to teachers from 500-700 secondary schools per year for 4 years targeting those most in need for the earliest intervention.
  
- 2. Provision of ongoing professional mentoring to increase skill, competence and confidence levels of teachers of physical activity, particularly recent graduates and retrained/redeployed staff.**
  - Identification and enlisting of suitable mentors in Year 1
  - Development of program and supporting tools and resources prior to commencing roll-out.
  - Target of 600 teachers mentored over the 4 year period
  - Progressively rolled out to teachers from 200 secondary schools per year for 4 years

### **Budget: \$62.2m over 4 years**

- National roll-out of PEPL program \$48m over 4 years
- Professional development of existing secondary school teachers @ \$1.8m over 4 years
- Provision of ongoing professional mentoring to secondary school physical education teachers @ \$12.4m over 4 years



### 3: Re-committing to the support of Community Sport Infrastructure

#### Why is this measure essential?

Over many years advocacy of Ministers for Sport at Australian Government and at jurisdictional level urged support for providing Community Sporting Facilities that were functional, well maintained, safe and that catered for all users in order to encourage physical activity and maximise the use of the facilities for the benefit of the user and the broader community.

In May 2018 the Federal Budget allocation announced to the Community Sport Infrastructure Grant Program (CSIGP) was \$30m. This was subsequently increased to \$100m in the lead-up to the 2019 Federal Election.

It is understood that the program was dramatically oversubscribed with over 2,000 applications received seeking total funds in excess of \$400m. Clearly there is a significant, unmet need for financial support for Community Sporting Facilities.

#### A Long Term, Strategic Approach and Commitment is needed:

Ongoing and continuing support for Community Sporting Infrastructure and Facilities is essential and should be budgeted for every year.

CAS recommends that commitment be made to establishing and funding a strategic, long term, coordinated approach to maintaining existing community sporting facilities and to identifying areas of need for new facilities.

#### National Audit of Existing Sporting Facilities:

- Conducting an audit of existing sporting facilities would require collaboration between the Australian and State/Territory Governments, and also liaison with Local Government as a major provider of such facilities.
- Once the National Sporting Facilities Audit is completed a needs assessment could be undertaken to establish the physical and financial requirements of maintaining the facilities at an acceptable standard. This assessment should ideally encapsulate existing facilities and also new facilities required for emerging priorities.
- This assessment would inform Government of the level of resourcing required.
- Set a timetable for resource allocation
  - Assess the lifecycle of the facilities and plan to assist in the upgrade/refurbishment/ improvement to ensure the facilities do not fall into disrepair and remain functional, accessible, attractive and relevant for ongoing use.
  - Establish a future schedule of works that will occur at a logical point in the facility's lifecycle to minimise downtime and inconvenience to facility users.

#### Example:

**Moruya Tennis Club** – a small community tennis club on the south coast of NSW - originally laid 5 synthetic tennis courts in 1990 with an expected lifespan of the synthetic material being 15 years. 28 years later the courts had not been replaced, they had been patched multiple times and were arguably unsafe and virtually unplayable.

Under the proposed system – the synthetic surfaces would have been identified for replacement after say Year 12 with a schedule to replace them 3 years later. This information and knowledge would have given confidence to the Club members and administration. Planning to manage the upgrade/renovation period could be put in place to ensure a smooth transition and minimise downtime.

This planned, proactive approach will benefit all involved at Club level and ensure that confidence in and use of, the facilities is maximised.

### **Who Conducts the Audit and Who establishes and monitors the repair/refurbishment schedule?**

- The National Sporting Facilities Audit could be undertaken as a joint project of the Australian Government with State/Territory Governments – with access to required expertise from local government and building/planning authorities.
- The process should be as independent as possible to ensure an accurate and unbiased information.
- The analysis and assessment would not need to be massively detailed and could follow a proforma process initiated by the club involved. Generally photographs provide sufficient basic information on the condition of candidate facilities.

### **Benefits of this Proposal**

There are a number of important benefits to this proposal:

- **Comprehensive coverage of community sporting facilities** – maximising the percentage of facilities that are considered for support. Not relying on whether the Club had an effective 'Grant writer' available to them.
- **Strategic Planned Approach** – assessment of the total picture through the National Sporting Facilities Audit will allow a planned, measured and strategic approach to maintaining facilities at optimum levels into the future.
- **Partnership at National and Jurisdictional levels** – maximising the use of available funds and allowing all parties to contribute
- **Fair and Unbiased** – all facilities have the same chance of being included and assisted with an independent, unbiased set of operating principles and system.
- **Proactive with advanced timeframes** – the program will identify community needs into the future, commit to them and allow for all users and stakeholders to prepare in advance and minimise downtime.
- **Flexible to accommodate new priorities** – the system can accommodate the emergence of new priorities or needs in a fair and unbiased way

### **Principal users of this measure**

This solution has benefits for:

- Community Sports Clubs (over 20,000 clubs aligned to the 90 NSO and NSODs)
- Sport and active recreation access points (over 50,000) – clubs, schools, tertiary institutions, private providers
- Members of community sporting clubs and casual/social users of community sporting facilities (14.1 million)

### **Budget: \$200m per year for 4 years**

Suggested Budget allocation of \$200m per year allocated as:

- \$100m for refurbishment/upgrade of existing facilities
- \$100m for new facilities in emerging or priority areas

## 4. Increased Support for Coaching and Officiating Development

### Re-allocation of Sport Australia resources is required

National Sporting Organisations would greatly benefit from access to support for their Coaching and Officiating development programs.

In 2016 Sport Australia (then operating as the Australian Sports Commission) 'retired' the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme (NCAS) and the National Officiating Accreditation Scheme (NOAS) and ceased any pretence of support for coaching and officiating programs.

In 2021 Sport Australia announced that it had prioritised Coaching and Officiating as a 'new Strategic Pillar'. Sport Australia advised NSO/NSODs that it will provide a resource to support NSO Coaching and Officiating programs and would establish the Sport Australia Learning Centre to provide an on-line interface for the programs and databases of NSOs.

Unfortunately, it has now come to light that the access to the Sport Australia Learning Centre will come at a steep set-up cost and be followed by a large annual user fee(s) thereafter.

It is clear that the high level of ongoing fees to be charged by Sport Australia will ensure that many of Australia's 90+ NSOs will not be able to afford to take part.

This situation is clearly to the detriment of Australian sport and of the grass-roots sporting community.

This important service could be provided by Sport Australia through a re-allocation of existing resources.

**Funding required:** To provide the proposed \$20,000 per year service to each NSO (x 90 NSOs) will cost \$1.8m per year.

By reducing the Sport Australia FTE count by 23 the cost of providing this important service can be met.  
 $\$1.8\text{m} / \$80,000 \text{ (est. salary)} = 22.5 \text{ staff.}$

Reduction of Sport Australia FTE head count =  $489 - 23 = 466$  (reduction of 4.7% head count)

### Principal users of this measure

This solution has benefits for:

- Community Sports Clubs (over 20,000 clubs)- from 90 x NSO and NSODs
- Coaches and officials from community sporting clubs
- Beneficiaries: Members of community sporting clubs and casual/social users of community sporting facilities (14.1 million)

### Budget: \$0m per year

Paid for by Sport Australia internal cost re-allocation.

## 5: Reducing financial barriers to sport participation in disadvantaged communities and embed social prescribing into the Primary Health Care system

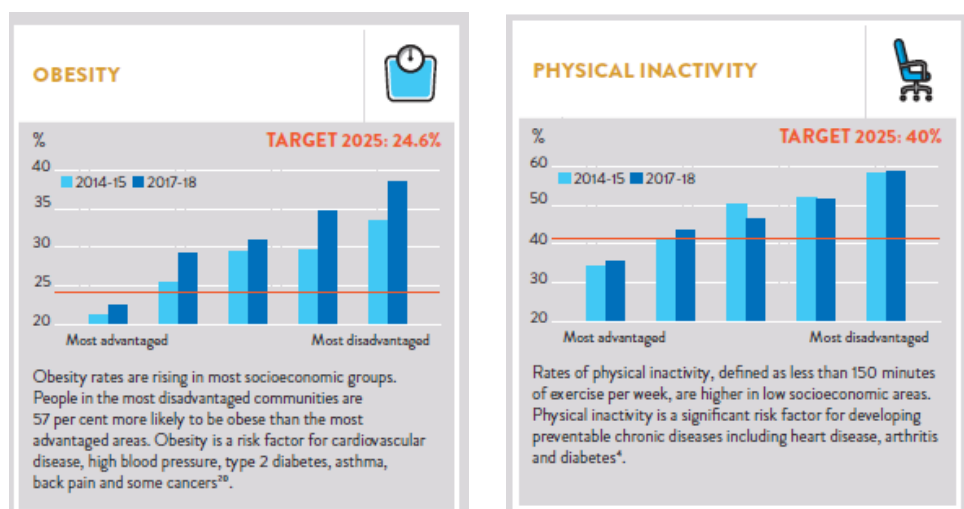
*There is a growing concern that health inequities in Australia will increase in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>24</sup> Improving access to evidence-based interventions that are effective across social strata is likely to increase physical activity participation among disadvantaged groups and contribute to reductions in health inequities.<sup>23</sup>*

### Why is this measure essential?

*Alarmingly the gap between low and high SES communities is widening.*

Participation in physical activity and sport is being adversely affected by a range of factors including high costs and challenges of access and equity and now exacerbated by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. This is particularly so in low SES and other disadvantaged communities. Currently less than 20% of children and only 43% of adults are achieving the Government’s Physical Activity guidelines.

*Australia’s Health Tracker by Socio-Economic Status<sup>21</sup>* – released in July 2021 reports that people living in the most disadvantaged communities are 57% more likely to be obese than the most advantaged. The charts below shows that rates of physical inactivity and obesity increase as the levels of disadvantage increase. Alarmingly the gap between low and high SES communities is widening, particularly for obesity.



People living in areas of greater disadvantage experience additional barriers to participation and have lower supply of quality exercise facilities and supports than those living in affluent areas.<sup>4</sup>

There are two measures the Federal Government can support to make sport and physical activity more accessible and affordable for all members of the Australian community:

- 1. Embed Social Prescribing of Sport into the Primary Health Care system**
- 2. Establish a “Tackling Inequalities Fund” available to low SES communities**

These measures have been successfully implemented internationally over many years including in New Zealand (Green prescriptions) and the United Kingdom (Together Fund).

These measures will support people with a wide range of social, emotional or practical needs focussing on improved mental health and physical wellbeing.

## Embedding Social Prescribing within the Primary Health Care system

The Federal Government is strongly encouraged to implement social prescribing of physical activity (with sport as a major component) as a Primary Health Care measure. The WHO says that “Physical activity counselling and referral in primary health care is (cost) effective and a ‘best buy’ strategy for increasing physical activity levels<sup>19</sup>.”

The promotion of sport as an important physical activity option is an essential component when instituting social prescribing within the primary health care system. Social prescribing is often as much about mental health as physical health and involves attracting and welcoming people who want to become involved and engaged.

Potential benefactors include people with mild or long-term mental health problems, people with complex needs, people who are socially isolated and those with multiple long-term conditions who frequently attend either primary or secondary health care.

Examples of successful systems internationally include New Zealand’s *Green Prescriptions* and the systems adopted in Denmark and the UK.

The *National Preventive Health Strategy 2021-2030*<sup>26</sup> specifically mentions Social Prescribing twice under *Achievements by 2030*:

- (p39) Enhanced referral pathways to community services to improve health and wellbeing are embedded in the health system at a local level with a focus on self-care support (e.g. social prescribing).
- (p57) Healthcare professionals are trained and supported to provide advice and support to patients to promote physical activity and to engage in social prescribing (connecting patients with community services to improve health and wellbeing)

Australia is well positioned to implement a highly successful system given the strong local networks including Local GP and counselling services, allied health professionals, members of the Exercise Science and Sport Association (ESSA) and the 20,000 NSO affiliated community sport clubs.

The following Social Prescribing policy options are advanced by the Mitchell Institute, Victoria University *Policy evidence brief no. 2020-03. Supporting physical activity promotion in primary health care.*<sup>10</sup>

### Policy Option 1:

Physical activity promotion in primary health care could target insufficiently active patients through routine screening of patients for physical activity levels, advice from a GP, nurse or potentially other health professional and a referral to appropriately trained practitioners for physical activity counselling.

- Based on the evidence that five sessions of physical activity counselling can effectively increase physical activity, a health care plan could provide for referral for up to five physical activity sessions with an accredited health professional for physically inactive individuals.
- Additional physical activity health workforce capacity could be provided through expansion of the eligibility criteria for provision of physical activity (counselling) under the Medicare Benefits Schedule.

### Policy Option 2:

Uptake, implementation, and sustainability of physical activity promotion in primary health care could be supported by the following:

- A greater focus on the importance of physical activity in medical training
- Inclusion of Accredited Exercise Physiologists/physical activity counsellors in primary care settings could be supported through practice incentive payments or targeted infrastructure funding.
- A national promotion program could be implemented through Primary Health Networks, for which dedicated funding would need to be ensured, to provide implementation guidelines and incentives to primary health care clinics.

### **Policy Option 3:**

To reduce inequities in physical activity, a proportionate universalism approach could be applied to physical activity promotion in primary health care.

- To encourage students from disadvantaged communities to train as Accredited Exercise Physiologists/physical activity counsellors, targeted additional scholarships and tuition waivers could be provided.
- Postgraduate Accredited Exercise Physiologists/physical activity counsellors could be encouraged to locate to disadvantaged areas through incentive arrangements based on medical placements, programs and schemes available to medical school students
- Digital and telephone delivery of physical activity advice and counselling provided to increase the reach of physical activity advice and for those living in rural and remote areas.

### **Establish a 'Tackling Inequalities Fund' to address the cost of sport participation in low SES communities**

Steps to reduce the cost of participation for all members of the population need to be investigated and implemented, particularly for those from disadvantaged sectors. Many individuals and families struggle to pay for sport participation with estimates for children ranging from \$1,000-\$5,000 per year taking into account club fees, coaching fees, travel, equipment and competition fees.

The ***Tackling Inequalities Fund (TIF)*** would provide assistance to become active or more active for individuals and families living in areas of low SES areas, culturally diverse communities, disabled people and those with long-term health conditions.

The TIF fund could operate as a voucher system in a similar way to the NSW Active Kids program administered effectively by Service NSW.

Modelled on the "Tackling Inequalities Fund" implemented in the UK a dedicated pool of funds should be made available to facilitate the participation of those from low SES communities to access sport and physical activity options within their local communities.

Additional measures for consideration for the General Public may include personal tax deductions, rebates to sporting clubs, subsidies to sporting associations or other equitable measures. A number of Australian States/Territories have trialled voucher or rebate schemes in recent years and a preliminary assessment of the effectiveness of these strategies is extremely encouraging.

Preliminary research from the 2018 NSW Government 'Active Kids' program significantly increased children's physical activity levels and these increases continued over a six-month period. The Active Kids voucher program shows promise as a scaled-up intervention to increase children and adolescents' physical activity participation from 4.0 to 4.9 days per week over a six month period<sup>11</sup>.

A similar level of take up and effectiveness is anticipated for the Tackling Inequalities Fund.

### **Principal users of this measure**

#### **At Risk Populations:**

- Low SES communities
- Indigenous Australians
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities (CALD)
- People with mild or long-term mental health problems, socially isolated and those with multiple long-term conditions

**Budget: \$200m over 4 years**

## 6: Removing the monopoly of the Australian Sports Foundation – allowing sporting organisations direct access to the benefits of charitable status

### Why is this measure essential?

Currently the Australian Sports Foundation has a monopoly on providing tax deductibility on donations made to Australia's sporting organisations of all levels. This is an issue that continues to cause great consternation among the leaders of the nation's National Sporting Organisations.

After 35 years since the creation of the Australian Sports Aid Foundation in 1986 only 3.7% of the 70,000 community sporting clubs and organisations across Australia access the benefits of DGR status under the current system.

At a time when the future sustainability of community sport in Australia is under extreme pressure representatives of over 40 NSOs and NSODs have sought the commitment of the Australian Government to take the necessary steps to provide direct access to the benefits of charitable status to compliant community sporting organisations.

By creating the Australian Sports Foundation in the first instance and by providing DGR status to it the Federal Government and Treasury have therefore agreed to forego any taxation revenue from donations made to Sport. So essentially Treasury has already calculated and provided for 100% of donations to sport and we question why all of these donations need to be made through the ASF?

In the submission to the Federal Treasurer, Minister for Finance, Minister for Sport and Assistant Minister for Finance (responsible for charities) dated 14 February 2020 it was demonstrated how community sporting organisations can meet the four designated criteria for Charitable Status under the Charities Act 2013 (Cth).

The submission seeking sport's access to the benefits of charitable status is provided directly and proposes the necessary measures be considered by the Federal Government that may include:

1. **Amending current legislation to recognise Sport** within the Charities Act 2013 (Cth):
  - Acceptance within Part 3 - Definitions of Charitable Purpose clause 12 (1) (a) Advancing Health and/or (k) Any other beneficial purpose ..., and
  - Reversing the ATO Tax Ruling TR2011/4 to remove the wording that specifically refers to Sport as a 'Not Recognised' purpose; or,
2. **Creating a new category within the legislation** that specifically references and includes community sport as an approved purpose.

In the words of two National Sporting Organisation CEOs:

*"This will arguably be the most important, visible and significant demonstration of Government support for community sport in over 30 years."* Neil Dalrymple (CEO Bowls Australia)

*"Providing DGR status to community level and club sport will raise the status of sport in the minds of the public equivalent to those of other charitable and social service organisations that already receive DGR status. The success of sport in Australia is built on grassroots clubs and participants at an equal level of importance as other DGR group are to their causes and purpose"* (Cam Vale – CEO Baseball Australia)

### Concerns about the performance of the Australian Sports Foundation (ASF)

Concerns expressed by representatives of NSOs and NSODs.

- 5%-6% of each donation to sport is retained as a commission by the ASF essentially for providing the donor with a tax deductible receipt.
- One sporting organisation reports that the ASF charged it \$12,000 for one donation.

- Sporting organisations believe they are equally capable of issuing compliant tax deductibility receipts.
- Questionable claims about amounts raised by the ASF when it is actually the individual sporting entity that raises the funds. The ASF withholds funds from sport rather than contributes to them. The 2016 ASF annual report states *“Our new five-year strategic plan has been finalised and we are excited about the opportunity to achieve further dramatic growth in funding for sport. ... the “Road to 100” has just begun, as we set our sights on raising \$100m a year for sport within 5 years.”*
- *Since 2016 and now after the 5 years since the ‘Road to 100’ five-year target of \$100m was set – in 2020 the ASF managed \$43.7m in donations – withheld \$2.6m of the donations and was short by \$56m (less than half) of its target.*

After 35 years since the creation of the Australian Sports Aid Foundation and with only 3.7% of the 70,000 community sporting clubs and organisations currently accessing the services of the ASF it is time to allow sporting organisations the opportunity to generate local donations and funds directly. It has been extremely problematic requiring supporters to donate through a third party instrument that they assume to be a government body that then withholds part of their donation as a commission or a tax.

This measure should cost the Federal Government no more than it has already budgeted because it has already granted the ASF the rights to provide a tax deduction on all donations made to all eligible Australian sporting organisations.

The fact that only \$44m is claimed as a tax deduction by current participants of ASF fundraising represents a large saving to the Government and perhaps that is why the Federal Government is as yet unwilling to provide the tax benefits of charitable status directly to Australia’s not-for-profit sporting organisations.

### Principal users of this measure

National Sport network including:

- NSOs and NSODs (approx. 90)
- State Sporting Organisations (over 700)
- Community sporting clubs aligned to NSOs (over 20,000)

### Budget: total \$600,000 over 3 years

- To be used to inform and educate eligible sporting entities on the administrative processes required for access and implementation.



## 7: Support the National Indigenous Sports Foundation to guide relationships and maximise opportunities for indigenous peoples through sport

### Why is this measure essential?

Indigenous Australians continue to make a significant contribution to our nation's sport at all levels and yet their voice is seldom heard.

The National Indigenous Sports Foundation (NISF) has been formed to play an important role in the improvement of opportunities for indigenous people in and through the sport. *'Sport has an important place in the lives of Indigenous Australians and is an essential link between a 'healthy body and healthy mind,'* says the Hon Ken Wyatt, Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians.

Federal Government support for the work of the NISF will facilitate strong relationships with NSOs/NSODs and provide a greater understanding and inclusion of the needs of indigenous Australians.

This greater understanding and advice can be incorporated into the Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) of NSOs/NSODs and other relevant stakeholder groups to provide an effective implementation of the measures within each RAP and in improving conditions for indigenous people participating in sport.

#### Two key objectives within the NISF Constitution:

- To act as a national voice and health promotion advocate of the health and wellbeing benefits of sport and recreation representing ATSI communities throughout Australia;
- To encourage, create, promote and advance opportunities for improving health and wellbeing outcomes for indigenous communities and individuals through sport and recreation.

#### Broad Areas of Focus

The following broad areas of focus will be used to guide the NISF's work initially:

- Advocacy
- Planning
- Policy Development
- Promotion
- Communication
- National Network
- Recognition
- Pathways

#### Building the Foundation – NISF's Initial Work

The following important steps will lay the foundations for NISF's future work.

- Strategic Planning – to take the priorities identified by the Indigenous Sports Summit and mould these into a coherent plan.
- Establishing a communication network with indigenous representatives across the nation who are committed to the advancement of indigenous sport.
- 'Where and how does indigenous sport operate?' - scoping exercise of Indigenous Sport –
  - Mapping where and how indigenous sport currently exists in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas.
  - Building a database and contact list of existing programs, facilities and resources
- Accessing the knowledge and data to promote the preventive health contribution that sport makes to indigenous peoples
- Investigating the broadening of pathways for indigenous athletes, coaches, officials and administrators to strive and achieve national selection.
- Developing a plan for recognising the significant achievements of indigenous sports people – such as a National Indigenous Sports Awards, an Indigenous Sport Museum or Hall of Fame.
- Employing management capacity to ensure efficient functioning of the organisation
- Organisational sustainability - developing and implementing the initial NISF Fundraising Strategy

## **Building Sustainability - Friends of the NISF**

In addition to achieving the preliminary foundation goals listed above the NISF will proactively build support from a range of sources essential for future success.

- **Indigenous Sportspeople:** the NISF will seek support and endorsement from current and former Indigenous sportspeople across the sporting spectrum.
  
- **Individual and Organisational support:**
  - Corporate Australia
  - Philanthropic entities
  - Sporting and community organisations
  - Individuals from the broader community

## **Sustainability Outcome**

Federal Government support of the NISF in the foundation stage will lead to greater organisational sustainability in the medium to long term.

## **Principal users of this measure**

This solution has benefits for the broader Indigenous community of 800,000 across Australia including:

- Members of the Indigenous community in metro, regional and remote locations

National Sport network including:

- NSOs and NSODs (approx. 90)
- State Sporting Organisations (over 700)
- Community sporting clubs aligned to NSOs (over 20,000)

**Budget: \$200,000 per year for 3 years**

## Participating Organisations

Since 2014 the following organisations have participated in the cross-sector collaborative process.

### **Sporting Organisations**

Confederation of Australian Sport  
Archery Australia  
Artistic Swimming Australia  
Athletics Australia  
Badminton Australia  
Baseball Australia  
Australian Dragon Boat Federation  
Bocce Federation of Australia  
Bowls Australia  
Boxing Australia  
Australian Calisthenic Federation  
Paddle Australia  
AusCycling  
Deaf Sports Australia  
Disability Sports Australia  
Diving Australia Inc  
Equestrian Australia  
Australian Karate Federation Inc  
Australian Lacrosse Association Ltd  
Gaelic Football & Hurling Association  
Gliding Federation of Australia  
Blind Sports Australia  
Golf Australia  
Gymnastics Australia  
Australian Handball Federation  
Hockey Australia  
Sport Inclusion Australia  
Judo Australia  
Motor Sport Australia  
Motorcycling Australia  
Orienteering Australia  
Australian Parachute Federation  
Polocrosse Association of Australia  
Rowing Australia Ltd  
Sailing Australia  
Shooting Australia  
Snow Australia  
Softball Australia  
  
Special Olympics Australia  
Squash Australia Ltd  
Surf Life Saving Australia  
Surfing Australia  
Swimming Australia Ltd

### **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  
UniSport Australia

### **Health Organisations**

National Heart Foundation  
Australian Medical Association  
Active Healthy Kids Australia  
Kidney Health Australia  
Australian Drug Foundation  
Australian Mental Health Council  
Dementia 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)**

Table Tennis Australia  
Taekwondo Australia  
Tenpin Bowling Australia  
Touch Football Australia  
Triathlon Australia  
Australian Underwater Federation  
Volleyball Australia  
Water Polo Australia  
Australian Waterski and Wakeboard Federation  
Australian Weightlifting Federation Inc  
Committee of Sport and Recreation Officials  
(formerly CASRO/MSRM) – made defunct 2020  
Australian Olympic Committee  
Australian Sporting Goods Association  
Sport Australia Hall of Fame (SAHOF)  
Fitness Australia

## Contact:

We have pleasure in submitting this proposal for consideration and we are available to answer any questions and provide additional information on request.



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