



## **Productivity Commission interim report highlights the benefits of preventive health to Australia**

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The Productivity Commission's *Delivering Quality Care More Efficiently* interim report recognises that keeping Australians well is essential to both health and productivity. Its recommendation for a national prevention investment framework could give Australia a more consistent, better-resourced approach to preventive health.

“We welcome the recognition that prevention is a cornerstone of an efficient and fair health system. But if this framework is to work, it must reflect the full spectrum of what counts as evidence. Evidence is not only the product of million-dollar trials for marketable products. It also comes from lived experience, community wisdom, and real-world practice. We risk shutting out what matters most to people if we only privilege interventions with the most expensive forms of proof,” said CHF CEO Dr Elizabeth Deveny.

A prevention framework must be able to back new and emerging approaches, even before large-scale commercial studies exist. Without this, cost-effective and low-tech interventions, like community programs, culturally grounded health practices, or social supports such as pet ownership, may never be trialled at all.

“Consumers must be part of designing, delivering, and evaluating prevention initiatives. That means valuing community-defined outcomes alongside clinical and economic measures. These can and should carry equal weight,” said Dr Deveny.

The report also calls for regulatory alignment, better workforce screening, and more collaborative commissioning across health, aged care, and disability. CHF supports these reforms. They can cut waste and paperwork, free up resources, and give the workforce more time to deliver care in communities. Over time, that can build the productivity needed to support better services for everyone.

CHF also wants prevention funding to be stable and long-term. Too many strong community programs end when short-term funding runs out, wasting the benefits they have built.

“A well-designed prevention framework can help us invest in what works, in ways that are transparent, fair, and meaningful to the people it serves. We have the chance now to make prevention part of the everyday work of the health system, not just an add-on when budgets allow or elections are beckoning,” said Dr Deveny.

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