

It's time to remove sugary drinks from the workplace!

It's true that to achieve real change people have to be motivated and that no one strategy will be a "cure all" but it's also true that helping people make better choices is a valuable step towards helping reduce rising rates of obesity and type 2 diabetes.

The availability of sugary drinks like soft drinks, sweetened fruit juices and flavoured milks is one such area that is beginning to be targeted in the fight against obesity and, we believe, one that needs to be more seriously supported in Western Australia.

The World Health Organisation has recently removed the sale of sugary drinks at its headquarters and – admirably – even committed not to serve them at official functions.

While their staff may still choose to go out and buy these products during work hours and bring them to work – this decision to reduce supply is important, reducing impulse buying and helping educate people about what constitutes a healthier choice.

News reports suggest other US organisations have, or are readying to, adopt such a policy and New Zealand has previously removed sugary drinks from all hospitals.

We believe it's now time for more West Australian and Australian organisations to do the same and we have now committed to this approach also.

Research is powerful and has repeatedly shown regular consumption of sugar sweetened beverages is linked to a greater risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

These drinks are also associated a higher risk of other health issues including heart disease, gout, tooth decay, bone erosion, and more.

With research also showing nearly half of all Australian children drink sugar sweetened beverages every day, we need these type of interventions to ensure the health of our future generations – our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

It's not good enough to fund research; we need to act on the findings.

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