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Preventative Health Taskforce Secretariat
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Re: Australia: the healthiest country by 2020

SHine SA Inc (Sexual Health information networking and education South Australia), formerly the Family Planning Association of SA, is the lead sexual health agency in South Australia providing one to one clinical and counselling services as well as community and workforce education programs, research, clinical practice training, resource development and community participation programs. SHine SA recognises the relationship between alcohol, smoking, obesity and sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.

SHine SA congratulates the Rudd Labor Government, Minister Roxon and the Department of Health and Ageing for initiating this important taskforce. SHine SA was involved through SHFPA as a partner with PHAA and ARHA in the development of a Call to Action and an Evidence paper for a national sexual and reproductive health strategy and is available from <http://www.shinesa.org.au/index.cfm?objectid=BDFB8DDC-FF31-9633-9CA4CFBA405DE75F>

A hard copy of our sexual health fact sheets are appended to this letter and can be downloaded from <http://www.shinesa.org.au/index.cfm?objectid=BC190704-F5C8-7600-6735FCEDEA17E89D> Specific reference is made to evidence in the fact sheets in relation to each of the issues below. SHine SA also completed the consultation and research for a Sexual Health Strategy for SA for the Department of Health in May 2007.

Obesity

SHine SA supports education, prevention and early intervention in the area of obesity as this is a major factor underpinning infertility and low fertility in men and women leading to erectile dysfunction in men and to the need for in-vitro fertilisation, as well as contributing to relationship and family breakdown and mental illness. See Fact Sheets 2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15,).

Smoking

Smoking has a significant impact on fertility in men and women. Smoking during pregnancy is a major contributor to low birth weight (under 2500gm) either due to dysmaturity or prematurity. There is a significant relationship between low birth weight, hospitalisation during infancy and childhood, failure to thrive, learning difficulties, and the development of chronic diseases in later life. See Fact Sheets 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17)

Alcohol

Alcohol intake during pregnancy can lead to foetal alcohol syndrome which is characterised by mental retardation and various degrees of learning and other difficulties. Alcohol is associated with erectile dysfunction. Alcohol is a major factor in relationship violence including sexual violence. Alcohol is often associated with risk taking behaviour leading to unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. See Fact Sheets 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14.

Prevention taskforce

SHine SA believes that the focus of health care in Australia should be comprehensive Primary Health Care with an emphasis on early intervention, prevention and education. A prevention task force that is not acute clinical medicine oriented would ideally lead this prevention approach.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kaisu Värttö', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kaisu Värttö

Chief Executive Officer