

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Launceston workers walk to work with Active Launceston

Launceston Mayor Albert Van Zetten today celebrated national Walk to Work Day by joining walk-to-workers who walked from Inveresk into the city before enjoying a free, healthy breakfast.

Mr Van Zetten said walking was a simple activity yet the majority of Australians don't do it enough.

"This is obviously one of the key reasons more than half of all Australians are currently overweight or obese," he said.

"National Walk to Work day is the perfect time to stop making excuses, to do something good for yourself and develop a new healthy habit of regular physical activity."

WTWD is held annually to remind all Australians regular walking is a good way to avoid obesity and illnesses such as high blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, arthritis and cancer. By 2025 approximately of 4.6 million Australians are expected to be obese.

Access Economics estimates productivity losses due to obesity at \$3.6 billion and a further \$2 billion in health costs per annum, while the combined financial costs of the obesity related 'big three' is \$19.5 billion dollars a year (diabetes \$3 billion; cardio vascular disease \$13.1 billion; and cancers \$3.4 billion).

Meanwhile, nearly 24 per cent of Type 2 diabetes and more than 21 per cent of cardio vascular disease is caused by obesity.

Pro Vice Chancellor Teaching and Learning at the University of Tasmania Gail Hart said Walk to Work day was the perfect opportunity to remind people that every step counted.

"You don't have to walk all the way to work, just part of it," she said.

"And you don't have to just walk to work on Walk to Work day.

“If you live some distance away from your work, try taking public transport for some of the way and walk the rest.

“Or if you have to drive to work, use the Inveresk Park and Walk car park as we did today.

“Taking the stairs instead of the lift is another good option.”

Active Launceston is a community project to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Launceston through increased participation in physical activity,

The project is led by the University of Tasmania with support from the Launceston City Council, the Education Department, The Examiner newspaper and the Trim and Fit International Association for All.

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