

Media Release

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Olympian Kelly Cartwright joins VicHealth's H30 Challenge to urge Victorians to stop sipping on sugar this summer

VicHealth's H30 Challenge has today announced Paralympic gold medallist and 2015 Dancing with the Stars contestant, Kelly Cartwright, as an ambassador for the 2016 campaign.

Now in its second year, the H30 Challenge calls on all Victorians to swap sugary drinks for water for 30 days in order to help break unhealthy habits, and reap the rewards and health benefits from reduced consumption of sugar and empty calories.

Soft drinks and other sugary beverages like sports drinks are the number one contributor of added sugar to Australian diets¹. Just one standard 600ml soft drink contains up to 16 teaspoons of sugar – which then takes more than four kilometres of exercise at a walking pace to burn off². The H30 Challenge an easy way to cut out excessive sugar consumption and empty kilojoules

Ms Cartwright will lend her support to the H30 Challenge to help raise awareness of the negative effects sugary drinks have on a person's overall health and wellbeing.

"Our over-indulgence in sugary drinks is negatively affecting our national health. It's shocking to think that Australia – a nation long seen as the sporting capital of the world – now has two thirds of its population overweight. We need to take charge of it – and start making small, incremental lifestyle changes to reverse the trend," Ms Cartwright said.

VicHealth CEO, Jerril Rechter said she was thrilled to have Ms Cartwright on board to help spread this important message in the community.

"We all know that too much sugar is bad for your health, it increases the risk of tooth decay and can lead to weight problems. Water is readily available, costs less, provides your body with hydration and is kilojoule free – so it's a win for your body and your wallet. Challenge participants have got nothing to lose and everything to gain," Ms Rechter said.

Ms Cartwright, who is expecting her first child in late December, will participate in the Challenge in February, where she will document her progress online through her personal social media channels.

The 2016 H30 Challenge follows on from the significant success of last year's inaugural campaign. Nearly 16% of Victorians drink sugary drinks daily and 60 per cent of last year's H30 Challenge participants reported being more likely to reduce their intake of sugary drinks after completing the Challenge.

¹ VicHealth, 2015, *Ten reasons to switch sugary drinks for water: number 6*, VicHealth Infographic.

² VicHealth, 2015, *Ten reasons to switch sugary drinks for water: number 5*, VicHealth Infographic.

³ Department of Health 2014. *Victorian Population Health Survey 2011-12, survey findings*. State Government of Victoria, Melbourne.

Far from a fad-diet, VicHealth's H30 Campaign has many resources to ensure motivation levels stay at an all-time high. Participants can choose their own start date and will receive emails, SMS notifications and great prize incentives for participation.

To participate in VicHealth's H30 Challenge, and to see how much better you feel in just 30 days – visit www.h30challenge.com.au.

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