NEW SOUTH AUSTRALIAN INITIATIVE TO TACKLE OBESITY

A new study to monitor eating and exercise trends and tackle obesity is underway at Flinders University.

Health Minister John Hill said the Physical Activity and Nutrition Observatory: Research And Monitoring Alliance (PANORAMA) program will monitor nutrition and physical activity trends in South Australia and around the world.

“Research and evaluation are vital tools in helping to understand some people’s unhealthy eating patterns and sedentary lives,” Minister Hill said.

“Poor nutrition and low levels of exercise are linked to a number of preventable chronic conditions, and currently over half of South Australian adults are overweight or obese.

“This has serious implications for individuals, our communities, our health system and the State’s economy.

“By gaining a better understanding of why people are overweight we will be able to target our healthy lifestyle programs more effectively to reduce obesity and improve health in South Australia.”

PANORAMA Directors Prof Lynne Cobiac (Nutrition and Dietetics) and Prof John Coveney (Public Health) from Flinders University will manage and lead the project.

“Our role involves regularly compiling reports and updates regarding physical activity, nutrition and weight status in South Australia.” Professor Cobiac said.

“We will work closely with SA Health to support policies and evidence-based programs to improve nutrition, increase physical activity and reduce obesity throughout the state.

“We will also establish an expert advisory team to assist with technical and strategic advice on physical activity and public health nutrition monitoring, research, evaluation and data management.”

The State Government is funding the PANORAMA program with $1 million over three years.

The advisory team will include key researchers within the School of Medicine, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, School of Education and the University of South Australia’s School of Health Sciences.