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## TIME FOR DOCTORS TO WALK THE TALK

A new campaign is pushing Queensland doctors to the frontline of the war on obesity.

Launching AMA Queensland's *Walk the Talk* campaign today, President Dr Chris Zappala said doctors needed to 'do as they say' when it comes to promoting a healthy lifestyle.

"Obesity and its associated diseases remain our greatest health challenge but many doctors face the same barriers to regular exercise and healthy eating as their patients," Dr Zappala said.

"Our patients need us to do more than just hand out health advice; doctors need to lead by example, to walk the talk.

"We need to prove that a busy lifestyle is not incompatible with a healthy lifestyle."

Dr Zappala said patients could be sceptical of taking lifestyle tips from doctors who don't look as though they follow their own advice<sup>i</sup>.

"We want AMA members to take care of themselves, inspire their patients and create happy, healthy workplaces," he said.

Queensland doctors are being urged to sign up to a six-week *Walk the Talk* challenge through the [10,000 Steps](#) website.

Participants aim to take 10,000 steps per day, as recommended for an active lifestyle.

Mackay gynaecologist Dr Bill Boyd, 63, is one of the first to sign up – and he's doing it with gusto!

On Sunday 13 March, he will begin a 340 kilometre walk from Cairns to Townsville.

"I'm carrying four or five extra kilos myself, so I'm hoping to burn some of that off along the way as well as setting an example for my patients and colleagues," Dr Boyd said.

AMA Queensland's five-year *Health Vision* rates obesity as the state's top health problem, with the number of obese Queenslanders expected to hit 1.5 million by 2020.<sup>ii</sup>

The association has called for the State Government to support fresh food initiatives, fund bariatric surgery for extreme obesity cases and ban fast-food outlets from opening near schools.

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<sup>i</sup> Puhl RM, Gold JA, Luedicke J and DePierre JA. 2013. The effect of physicians' body weight on patient attitudes: implications for physician selection, trust and adherence to medical advice. *International Journal of Obesity*, **37**: 1415-1421

<sup>ii</sup> Chief Health Officer's *Health of Queenslanders* 2014 report