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| **Universal vs. targeted policy approaches to address ethnic inequalities in obesity** |
| **Conference sub-theme addressed: Health equity**My published research has shown that immigrants to Australia are caught in the rising tide of Australian population obesity. It is important, therefore, that policy makers understand where universal responses are appropriate to achieve better health for the whole population; and where tailored and targeted policy responses are more likely to have an impact. In Australia, not all immigrants experience worse health or require specific policy responses. My presentation will make the case to explain when specific policy responses may be of benefit and how elements of the migration experience such as ethnicity, length of residence and age at arrival can be considered to maximise the likelihood of success of obesity prevention efforts. My presentation will summarise how neighbourhood disadvantage and geographic remoteness impact on ethnic inequalities in obesity and suggest what types of policy responses may be effective. Finally, my presentation will comment on the need for specific policy intervention in cases where there is intersecting or compounding disadvantage for immigrant ethnic groups or cohorts. For example, in cases where there is disadvantage arising from inequitable access to economic opportunities, social isolation, racism and discrimination, English-language proficiency or gender. For these groups, it is unlikely that a universal policy response will be sufficient. Investment in tailored and targeted responses is warranted to ensure that ethnic inequalities and inequities in obesity, as observed in other developed countries, do not become entrenched in Australia.**Relevant experience or practice:** PhD thesis on ethnic inequalities in obesity (including three published papers in international, peer-reviewed journals on the topic). Policy practitioner for over twenty years in the non-government and Government sectors in Australia.**Implications for health promotion:** An example of translation of research into recommendations for policy and practice**Implications for sustainable development:** Ethnicity and migration are important social determinants of health. |