



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AFFECTS OBESITY RATES

The Geelong Osteoporosis Study has recently published a study showing that the socioeconomic status of women affects their weight and lifestyle.

Ms Sharon Brennan, PhD student with the Geelong Osteoporosis Study, studied a sample of 1100 women from the Barwon Statistical Division that had been selected at random from the electoral rolls.

“Women who live in more socially disadvantaged areas in the Geelong region are at a greater risk of being overweight and having less healthy lifestyles,” Ms Brennan said.

“Living in a more disadvantaged area means that women are 40% more likely to be overweight or have a waist circumference over 80cm.”

“Compared to more affluent women, those that live in disadvantaged areas are 24% more likely to smoke, be 60% less physically active, and be twice as likely to consume larger portion sizes of food and fewer pieces of fruit on a daily basis.”

The study also showed that blood pressure is higher in women from socially disadvantaged areas, along with the use of prescription medicine.

“Interestingly, though, nearly twice the number of women from affluent areas consume more than the recommended guidelines for consumption of alcohol compared to those in disadvantaged areas,” Ms Brennan explained.

This study was awarded a highly commended certificate during the Smart Geelong Research and Innovation Expo.

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For more information please contact Kate Nelson on 5226 7707