

Healthy Food Environment Policy Index (Food-EPI) Australia – Progress update 2019

New South Wales (NSW) Government

Policy information (July 2016 – December 2018)



Actions taken (July 2016 – December 2018) by the New South Wales (NSW) Government in relation to the recommended policies from the 2017 Food Policy Index report

Progress against meeting recommended action	Related recommended policy action
<p>The <i>Healthy Food and Drink in NSW Health Facilities for Staff and visitors Framework</i> (<i>the Framework</i>)</p> <p><u>Implementation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Health supports staff and visitors to make the healthy choice the easy choice by offering more healthy food and drink choices in its food outlets. The <i>Framework</i> was launched in 2017, providing best-practice guidelines for NSW Health facilities to use in working towards providing health food and drink in their food outlets. It applies to outlets that sell food and drink, including cafes and cafeterias, kiosks and coffee carts, vending machines, convenience stores and newsagencies. • The <i>Framework</i> was informed by the evidence-base and extensive consultation. It is closely aligned with the Australian Dietary Guidelines concepts of core (everyday) and discretionary (occasional) foods, and is complimented by the use of portion limits and the Health Star Rating (in place of more complex nutrition criteria) for some products. The Food and Drink Benchmark underpins the <i>Framework</i> and includes the following key elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 75% <i>Everyday (healthy) food and drink choices</i> ○ 25% <i>occasional (unhealthy) food and drink choices</i> ○ <i>Smaller portions and use of a Health Star Rating cut-off of ≥ 3.5 for some foods</i> ○ <i>No sugar sweetened drinks</i> • More information on the <i>Framework</i> can be found here: https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/health/Pages/healthy-food-framework.aspx • Statewide materials and tools to support implementation include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A toolkit that includes commercial guidance for the translation of the <i>Framework</i> into retail lease requirements and a Ready Reckoner that translates the Food and Drink Benchmark into specific examples of meals, snacks, and drinks that can be sold https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Theal/Publications/hfd-toolkit.pdf ○ An online food and drink look up tool containing around 12,000 branded and non-branded products: the <i>Healthy Food Finder</i>, for use by local health district staff and retailers to determine if a food or drink product meets the Food and Drink Benchmark https://www.foodfinder.health.nsw.gov.au/ ○ Healthy Food Information Service - a helpline, phone and email support service for implementers 	<p>Food provision (NSW4) Monitoring and intelligence (NSW1) Food promotion (NSW2) Food labelling (NSW3)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Training for health promotion officers, property managers and nutrition/dietetic staff in implementing and monitoring the <i>Framework</i> ○ An IT enabled monitoring and reporting tool: Population Health Intervention Management System (PHIMS-Nutrition) to support implementation and evaluation <p><u>Monitoring and evaluation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A comprehensive evaluation framework has been established in accordance with the NSW Government Program Evaluation Guidelines. The <i>Framework</i> evaluation is a comprehensive two-year program of work that includes the assessment of policy development, implementation process and impact. ● To monitor implementation, a state-wide IT system has been developed for NSW Health facilities providing an easy to use and standardised approach for local health districts to monitor and report on progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monitoring is undertaken against the achievement of a set of key practices which are illustrative of the Food and Drink Benchmark four focus areas: availability, product quality, product size and marketing. ○ NSW Health facilities monitor and report on implementation in their food outlets at least once a year to enable statewide reporting. ○ As of August 2018, 99 per cent of food outlets had removed sugar-sweetened drinks with no nutritional value from sale. 	
<p>The revised NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Strategy was launched in 2017 and was informed by a comprehensive evidence report and a consultation process. It is closely aligned with the Australian Dietary Guidelines concepts of core (everyday) and discretionary (occasional) foods, and is complimented by the use of portion limits and the Health Star Rating (in place of more complex nutrition criteria) for some foods and drinks. ● All NSW government primary and secondary school canteens are required to meet the Strategy by the end of 2019. The NSW Government is working closely with the Association of Independent Schools and Catholic Schools NSW, which are strongly encouraging their schools to achieve the Strategy. ● Extensive support mechanisms (available to both government and Independent/Catholic schools) are in place to achieve this including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A NSW Menu Check Service to provide free menu assessments and recommendations for schools to achieve the Strategy. ○ A telephone Secondary School Support Service 	<p>Monitoring and intelligence (NSW1) Food provision (NSW5)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A Primary School support network, via the Health promotion teams in local health districts ○ NSW Health partnership with non-government organisation, <i>Healthy Kids Association</i>, to deliver resources and training for canteen managers, food industry and Local Health District health promotion officers. ○ An online program called 10 Steps to a Healthy Canteen that provides practical advice for canteen managers seeking guidance on becoming a healthy canteen. ○ A Healthy School Canteens website that houses information on the Healthy School Canteen Strategy for a range of audiences including canteen managers, principals and parents. https://healthvschoolcanteens.nsw.gov.au/ ○ An online food and drink look up tool containing around 12,000 branded and non-branded products, the <i>Healthy Food Finder</i>, for use by local teams and retailers to determine if a food or drink product meets the Strategy. https://www.foodfinder.health.nsw.gov.au/ 	
<p>Sport and Recreation</p> <p>The NSW Office of Sport has committed to implementing the same approach at the NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy in their 11 Sport and Recreation Centres. This work is progressing.</p> <p>The Finish with the Right Stuff program is funded by the NSW Ministry of Health under the NSW Healthy Children Initiative and managed by the NSW Office for Preventive Health. The Program http://www.rightstuff.health.nsw.gov.au/ aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage children aged 5 to 16 to consume water as a drink of choice, rather than sweetened drinks, while participating in community-based sports ● Encourage community based sport clubs to provide and promote healthy food and drink items at their canteen. <p>The program is in its fourth sports season and has clubs participating from both summer and winter sports. Over the last 24 months, the program has recruited 300 clubs and associations of which 262 have healthy food items and offer water as a drink of choice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recruited clubs are from 16 different sporting codes, across 88 Local Government Areas and 15 Local Health Districts including 71 per cent from regional NSW. 	<p>Food provision (NSW4) Food retail (NSW10)</p>
<p>Get Healthy at Work registered businesses have now developed a Workplace Health Program Action Plan targeting Healthy Eating.</p> <p>Resources have also been updated to align with the <i>Healthy Food and Drink in NSW Health Facilities for Staff and Visitors</i> resources and incorporate the Health Star Rating system – to ensure a consistent approach across NSW settings.</p>	<p>Food provision (NSW11)</p>

<p>Menu labelling</p> <p>NSW Health continues to work with other jurisdictions implementing menu-labelling legislation to progress a uniform approach. NSW has been instrumental in the work led by the COAG Health Council that includes actions to enhance and better align menu labelling approaches across jurisdictions.</p> <p>Health Star Rating</p> <p>NSW is the first jurisdiction to incorporate the Health Star Rating (HSR) front-of-pack labelling system into policies and programs. The HSR is a component of healthy food provisions policies in school canteens and health facilities. An evidence-based cut-off of 3.5 stars is used to make it easy for implementers to find healthy options of some foods (and replaces the need to look at nutrition information in the Nutrition Information Panel). Use of the HSR also ensures a consistent approach in the market and for consumers who operate in multiple settings including supermarkets, schools and health facilities. The <i>Healthy Food Finder</i> tool enables implementers of these policies to look up foods and drinks that meet the policies and includes HSR information for around 12,000 products. https://www.foodfinclerhealth.nsw.gov.au</p>	Food labelling (NSW3)
<p>Healthy built environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most regional plans in NSW recognise the need to protect important agricultural land from land use conflict to help keep fresh food available locally. http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plans-for-your-area/regional-plans • The Regional Plan for Sydney: A Metropolis of Three Cities and the five district plans across greater Sydney include a strategy and actions to promote local access to healthy fresh food and to support local fresh food production. https://www.greatersydney/metropolis-of-three-cities 	Food retail (NSW6)
<p>Routine height and weight measurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Health is implementing best-practice routine height and weight measures for all children (0-17 years) who attend a NSW health facility (including oral health clinics). This initiative will improve routine growth monitoring of all children and the identification and management of children above a healthy weight. This initiative is supported by: • Growth Assessment in Children and Weight Status Assessment in Adults guideline and the Nutrition Care Policy Directive • Performance Measure in Local Health District Service Performance Agreements • eMR data extracts • Information and training • Website (Healthy Kids for Professionals) • The international evidence on the effectiveness of measuring children’s height and weight in education settings is not strong and for this reason, NSW Health is focused on routine growth assessment in health settings. NSW proposed this 	Monitoring and intelligence (NSW8)

<p>model of measuring children’s height and weight in health settings as an alternative best-practice benchmark for this area of work. More detailed information on this approach is available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Health also conducts an annual population telephone survey which provides self-reported height, weights and risk factor data. 	
<p>The NSW Office of Preventive Health, funded by the NSW Ministry of Health, provides a state-wide service focussed on reducing lifestyle related risk factors that can result in chronic disease. The objectives of the NSW Office of Preventive Health are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the planning, implementation, support and evaluation of priority state-wide preventive health programs; • Report on outcomes of NSW priority-funded preventive health programs, including economic analysis; • Facilitate preventive health research and knowledge translation into policy and practice; • Support the NSW local health district-based health promotion workforce to deliver key state-wide preventive health programs; and • Provide high level evidence-based advice to the Ministry of Health on matters relating to delivery of preventive health programs and strategies. 	Funding and resources (NSW7)

Appendix

Definitions

- **Food:** refers to food and non-alcoholic beverages. It excludes breastmilk or breastmilk substitutes.
- **Food environments:** the collective physical, economic, policy and socio-cultural surrounding, opportunities and conditions that influence people’s food and beverage choices and nutritional status.
- **Government:** includes any government departments and, where appropriate, other agencies (i.e. statutory bodies such as offices, commissions, authorities, boards, councils, etc). Plans, strategies or actions by local government are not included, although relevant information can be noted if relevant.
- **Government implementation:** refers to the intentions and plans of the government and actions and policies implemented by the government as well as government funding for implementation of actions undertaken by non-governmental organisations, academic institutions, private companies (including consultants), etc.
- **Healthy/unhealthy food:** Categorisation of foods as healthy / unhealthy are in accordance with the Australian Dietary Guidelines (i.e. core and discretionary foods). Where it is not clear which category to use, categorisation of foods should be informed by rigorous criteria or the use of a nutrient profiling model.
- **Policy actions:** A broad view of “policy” is taken so as to include all government policies, plans, strategies and activities. Evidence of policy implementation takes consideration of the whole policy cycle, from agenda-setting through to policy development, implementation and monitoring. Policy progress may include, *inter alia*:
 - Evidence of commitments from leadership to explore policy options
 - Allocation of responsibility to an individual/team (documented in a work plan, appointment of new position)
 - Establishment of a steering committee, working group, expert panel, etc.
 - Review, audit or scoping study undertaken
 - Consultation processes undertaken
 - Evidence of a policy brief/proposal that has been put forward for consideration
 - Preparation of a regulatory or economic impact assessment, health impact assessment, etc.
 - Regulations / legislation / other published policy details
 - Monitoring data
 - Policy evaluation reports