

# HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT POLICY INDEX (FOOD-EPI) – AUSTRALIA 2021

Victorian Government

Summary of current government policy action to 30 June 2021

Policy details

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## 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 should not be included, although relevant information can be noted in the 'context/comments' sections.
- **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.
- **Nutrients of concern:** salt (sodium), saturated fat, *trans* fat, added sugar
- **Policy actions:** A broad view of "policy" is taken so as to include all government policies, plans, strategies and activities. Only current policy actions are considered, generally defined as policy activity of the **previous 12 months** (except where otherwise specified). Evidence of policy implementation takes consideration of the whole policy cycle, from agenda-setting, through to policy development, implementation and monitoring. A broad view of relevant evidence was taken, so as to 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

## Policy area: Food Labelling

Good practice statement for this domain: There is a regulatory system implemented by the government for consumer-oriented labelling on food packaging and menu boards in restaurants to enable consumers to easily make informed food choices and to prevent misleading claims

### Indicators in this domain by level of government:

| Policy area: Food labelling  |         |   |
|--|---------|---|
| National   | Federal | State/Territory                                     |
| NAT_LABEL1: Ingredient lists/declarations                            |         | ST_LABEL1: Nutrition labelling in fast food outlets |
| NAT_LABEL2: Labelling added sugars                                   |         |   |
| NAT_LABEL3: Labelling fats and oils                                  |         |   |
| NAT_LABEL4: Regulatory system for health claims                      |         |   |
| NAT_LABEL5: Regulatory system for nutrition content claims           |         |   |
| NAT_LABEL6: Front-of-pack nutrition labelling: healthiness indicator |         |   |
| NAT_LABEL7: Front-of-pack nutrition labelling: health warnings       |         |   |
| NAT_LABEL8: Nutrition information on alcoholic beverages             |         |   |
| NAT_LABEL9: Nutrition labelling in fast food outlets                 |         |   |

## Details on State/Territory-level indicators in this domain:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <h3>ST_LABEL1 Nutrition labelling in fast food outlets</h3>   |  |
| <p><i>Good practice statement</i></p> <p>Consistent, interpretive, evidence-informed nutrition labelling at point-of-purchase is applied by all major quick service restaurant chains, which clearly informs consumers regarding the energy content and nutrient quality of foods and meals on sale</p> |  |
| <p><b>Definitions and scope</b></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick service restaurants: In the Australian context this definition includes fast food chains as well as coffee, bakery and snack food chains. It may also include supermarkets where ready-to-eat foods are sold.</li> <li>• Labelling systems: Includes any point-of-sale (POS) nutrition information such as total kilojoules; percent daily intake; traffic light labelling; star rating, or specific amounts of nutrients of concern</li> <li>• Menu board includes menu information at various points of purchase, including in-store, drive-through and online purchasing</li> <li>• Includes endorsement schemes (e.g., accredited healthy choice symbol) on approved menu items</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Context</b></p>   | <p>In each state where regulations apply (ACT, NSW, SA, VIC, QLD), chain food companies with a minimum number of outlets in the state/nationally and who sell standardised ready-to-eat food/drink items must display the kilojoule content of each standard menu item on all menus, drive through menu boards, tags and labels that display the name or price of menu items. The display must be clear and legible. The statement, “The average adult daily energy intake is 8700kJ,” must also be prominently featured. In these states (except Victoria), other chains/food outlets are allowed to provide this information on a voluntary basis, but must follow the provisions of the legislation. As a result, national companies will in some cases implement menu labelling changes in all of their stores across Australia (<a href="#">ref</a>). However, there is the need for auditing in some jurisdictions for this to continue to be implemented consistently (<a href="#">ref</a>).</p> <p><i>National Review of fast-food menu labelling schemes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A review of the fast-food menu labelling schemes was conducted in 2018 and included 2 roundtable discussions with stakeholders. The summary report for this work is available at the Food Regulation website (<a href="#">ref</a>). Views on additional information and interpretative information were sought as part of the consultation.</li> <li>• In June 2018, the then Australian and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation agreed for further targeted consultation to be undertaken to develop policy options that aim to improve and strengthen fast food menu labelling in Australia.</li> <li>• Between October and December 2018, a co-design process was used to work with public health and industry stakeholders on possible solutions for five key issues: legibility; business coverage and equity; electronic menus; combination meals; multiple serve items.</li> <li>• In August 2019, the Forum agreed that nationally consistent menu labelling is desirable for food industry, public health organisations and government. The Forum agreed the most effective way would be to develop a food regulatory measure under the Food Standards Code, with the development of a Ministerial policy guideline (in line with best practice regulation) as a first step.</li> <li>• Australian and New Zealand stakeholders were invited to respond to the Public Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement to inform the development of policy guidance and effective policy framework for consistent menu labelling (<a href="#">ref</a>) (consultation opened 8 April and closed 3 June 2021).</li> </ul> |

**Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

**Kilojoule Labelling Scheme**

- The *Food Amendment (Kilojoule Labelling Scheme and Other Matters) Act 2017* came into effect in Victoria on 1 May 2018 requiring certain large chain food outlets and supermarkets to display kilojoules for unpackaged, ready-to-eat foods and non-alcoholic drinks on their menus, and food tags as well as to display the statement 'the average daily adult energy intake is 8,700 kJ'. (Further details can be found here: [\(ref\)](#))
- The scope of the new Victorian laws is broadly consistent with legislation already in place in other states in line with the Forum of Food Regulation Ministers endorsed *Principles for Introducing Point-of-Sale Nutrition Information in Standard Food Outlets* [\(ref\)](#).
- Monitored and enforcement activities for this legislation are undertaken (as part of the Victorian *Food Act 1984* by Victorian local council environmental health officers and in some circumstances Department of Health Food Safety Unit.
- Compliance activities (investigation and enforcement as required) are routinely undertaken in response to complaints about food labelling more generally that is not compliant with the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (noting the self-substantiated health claims component of Standard 1.2.7 presents difficulties for enforcement).

**Other**

- Also refer to ST\_RETAIL4 for details of the Healthy Choices Food and Drink guidelines that specify that food retailers are encouraged to label food and drink options according to the traffic light system as a way to influence consumers to select healthier choices.

## Policy area: Food Promotion

Good practice statement for this domain: There are comprehensive regulations to reduce the exposure of children (<18 years) to the promotion of unhealthy food and beverages (and related brands) across all media and in public spaces

### Indicators in this domain by level of government:

| Policy area: Food promotion |  |  |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| National                    | Federal  | State/Territory  |
|                             | AUD_PROMO1: Restrict promotion of unhealthy foods in broadcast media         | ST_PROMO1: Restrict exposure of children to promotion of unhealthy food in public settings |
|                             | AUD_PROMO2: Restrict promotion of unhealthy foods online                     | ST_PROMO2: Restrict the promotion of unhealthy foods within elite sport                    |
|                             | AUD_PROMO3: Restrict use of elements appealing to children on food packaging |  |
|                             | AUD_PROMO4: Restrict the promotion of unhealthy foods within elite sport     |  |

**Details on State/Territory-level indicators in this domain:**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>ST_PROMO1</b> Restrict exposure of children to promotion of unhealthy food in public settings</p>  |  |
| <p><i>Good practice statement</i><br/>           Effective policies are implemented by the government to restrict the exposure of children (including adolescents) to the promotion of unhealthy foods and beverages (and related brands) in public settings (e.g. outdoor and public transport advertising, community events)</p> |  |
| <p><b>Definitions and scope</b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This indicator is about <b>promotion</b> (eg. advertising, sponsorship). Product availability (eg in canteens, vending machines) is covered in the FOOD PROVISION domain</li> <li>• Public settings include: public transport (train stations, bus stops etc), outdoor billboards, government buildings, areas in and around schools, preschools/ kindergartens, day-care centres, children’s health services (including primary care, maternal and child health or tertiary settings), community sport, recreation and play areas / venues/ facilities and cultural/community events where children (including adolescents) are commonly present</li> <li>• Includes fundraising and direct marketing in these settings</li> <li>• Includes restrictions on marketing in government-owned or managed facilities/venues (including within the service contracts where management is outsourced)</li> <li>• ‘Effective’ means that the policies are likely to reduce overall exposure of children (including adolescents) to promotion of unhealthy food and beverages and related brands</li> <li>• Excludes alcohol marketing restrictions</li> <li>• Excludes elite sport (covered in ST_PROMO2)</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b></p>   | <p><i>Schools - The Achievement Program</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Healthy Schools, Healthy Early Childhood Services and Healthy Workplaces Achievement Program is a free health and wellbeing program that helps Victorian organisations create healthier environments for working, learning and playing. It provides quality health promotion benchmarks and government recognition for key areas of health - including healthy eating - and is aligned to the World Health Organization's model for Health Promoting Schools and Healthy Workplaces.</li> <li>• Through the Achievement Program, settings (i.e. early years settings, schools and workplaces) that select the healthy eating priority area, must ensure that they do not engage in the sponsorship, marketing or advertising to children and youth any food and drinks that are inconsistent with the Healthy Food Charter (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> </ul> <p><i>Sport and recreation centres</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Healthy Choices: policy guidelines for sport and recreation centres</a> recommends that ‘Organisations do not engage in sponsorship, marketing, branding or advertising to children and youth of foods and drinks inconsistent with Healthy Choices.’</li> </ul> <p><i>Health Services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Healthy Choices: policy guidelines for hospitals and health services</a> recommends that health service retail outlets market and promote the healthiest (green) options to consumers as tasty and appealing choices and to identify products from the green, amber and red food and drink categories, to assist the selection of more nutritious options. This policy extends to health services that children attend.</li> <li>• The Healthy Choices collateral is given to support settings when they have reached the Achievement Program benchmarks.</li> </ul> |

#### National interim guide to reduce children's exposure to unhealthy food and drink promotion

- Victoria has contributed to the development of a national interim guide for reducing children's exposure to unhealthy food and drink marketing. This guide was endorsed by Ministers at the August 2018 COAG Health Council meeting, noting that the guide is for voluntary use by governments ([ref](#)).

#### *Healthy Choices policy directive for Victorian public health services (2021)*

- The new Healthy choices policy directive for Victorian public health services (2021) has a requirement (compared with previous voluntary guidance) that health services cannot provide, sell or promote/advertise RED foods/drinks in their in-house retail food outlets, vending machines or catering.

#### *VicHealth Harmful Industry Relationships Funding and Procurement Policy*

- As of the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2020, community sporting clubs, leagues/associations, participation programs/competitions, sport governing bodies and elite sport teams who apply for VicHealth funding will be required to complete a harmful industry relationship declaration (if the funding amount is \$35,000 or greater) ([ref](#)).
- This step is to *help children and families enjoy sport free from advertising that alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food companies use to promote harmful products.*
- Harmful sponsors include those that pose a greater risk to health and wellbeing and include unhealthy food, sugary drink, alcohol and gambling companies/organisations.

#### *VicHealth - Healthy Sports Rewards*

- VicHealth has partnered with 5 local councils (Frankston, Bendigo, Yarra Ranges, Shepparton and Nilumbik) to replace vouchers for fast food and take away food with healthy activities (e.g. free or discounted access to a local pool or tennis court) ([ref](#)) at some junior clubs in these council areas.

#### *VicHealth – South Metro Junior Football League*

- VicHealth has partnered with South Metro Junior Football League to improve the availability of healthy food and drink options sold in canteens across the league, in addition to the development of a league wide policy on healthy sponsorship to encourage sports environments that promote health and wellbeing.

**ST\_PROMO2** Restrict the promotion of unhealthy foods within elite sport

*Good practice statement*

Effective policies are implemented by the government to ensure that professional/elite sports are not sponsored by brands associated with unhealthy foods and beverages

**Definitions and scope**

- This indicator is focused on promotion related to professional/elite sports only
- Sponsorship includes advertising at sporting grounds/events, naming rights of stadiums, games or series; branded merchandise, product giveaways, logos on uniforms, and exclusive sale rights of unhealthy food at events
- Excludes alcohol marketing restrictions

**Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

*VicHealth – Healthy Sport Sponsorship*

VicHealth Harmful Industry Relationships Funding and Procurement Policy

- As of the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2020, community sporting clubs, leagues/associations, participation programs/competitions, sport governing bodies and elite sport teams who apply for VicHealth funding will be required to complete a harmful industry relationship declaration (if the funding amount is \$35,000 or greater) ([ref](#)).
- This step is to *help children and families enjoy sport free from advertising that alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food companies use to promote harmful products.*
- Harmful sponsors include those that pose a greater risk to health and wellbeing and include unhealthy food, sugary drink, alcohol and gambling companies/organisations.

## Policy area: Food Provision

Good practice statement for this domain: The government ensures that there are healthy food service policies implemented in government-funded settings to ensure that food provision encourages healthy food choices, and the government actively encourages and supports private companies to implement similar policies

### Indicators in this domain by level of government:

| Policy area: Food Provision  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| National   | Federal   | State/Territory   |
| NAT_PROV1: Healthy food policies in early childhood settings                           | AUD_PROV1: Healthy food policies in public sector workplaces  | ST_PROV1: Healthy food policies in schools  |
| NAT_PROV2: Healthy food policies in schools  | AUD_PROV2: Support and training systems for private companies | ST_PROV2: Healthy food policies in health services (visitors and staff)               |
| NAT_PROV3: Healthy food policies in care settings (resident/in-patient food provision) |   | ST_PROV3: Healthy food policies in care settings (resident/in-patient food provision) |
|  |   | ST_PROV4: Healthy food policies in public sector workplaces                           |
|  |   | ST_PROV5: Healthy food policies in community settings                                 |
|  |   | ST_PROV6: Support and training systems for public sector settings                     |

## Details on State/Territory-level indicators in this domain:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| ST_PROV1 Healthy food policies in schools  |   |
| <p><i>Good practice statement</i></p> <p>The government ensures implementation of clear, consistent policies to provide and promote healthy food choices in schools, inclusive of all food service activities (canteens, food at events, fundraising, promotions, vending machines etc.)</p> |   |
| <b>Definitions and scope</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools include government and non-government primary and secondary schools (up to year 12)</li> <li>• Includes policies and nutrition standards to provide and promote healthy food choices or to limit or restrict the provision or promotion of unhealthy food choices</li> <li>• Includes policies that relate to school breakfast programs, where the program is partly or fully funded, managed or overseen by the government</li> <li>• Excludes training, resources and systems that support the implementation of these policies (see ST_PROV6)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Context</b>   | <p><i>Government and non-government schools</i></p> <p>The operation of government schools is the responsibility of the relevant State/Territory Education Minister, while non-government schools (i.e. Catholic and Independent schools) are established and operate under conditions set by State/Territory government registration authorities.</p>  |
| <b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b>  | <p><i>Primary and Secondary Schools</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2006, the Department of Education and Training (formally DEECD) released the <a href="#">Canteens, Healthy Eating and Other Food Services Policy</a> (formally <a href="#">School Canteens and Other School Food Services Policy</a>), which provides guidance to schools to ensure that school food services provide food and drinks which contribute to a supportive, healthy school environment. Victorian government schools including primary, secondary, specialist and language schools, should follow the Canteens, Healthy Eating and Other Food Services policy. The policy is also available for Catholic and independent schools.</li> <li>• The policy applies to all food services within a school setting including the canteen, vending machines, classroom/curriculum activities, school breakfast programs and school celebrations such as sports days. Schools are also encouraged to discuss with licensees (e.g. canteen operators) how a canteen can become compliant with the policy, whilst also considering how the policy can be applied through specific relationships with retail shops (e.g. bakeries and milk bars).</li> <li>• The policy asks schools to ensure ‘everyday’ (green) food and drinks are always available as the main choices, and ‘amber’ food and drinks are selected carefully, with limited availability of ‘occasional’ (red) food and drinks.</li> <li>• The policy stipulates that schools should never supply high sugar content drinks or confectionery.</li> <li>• After the development of Victoria’s <i>Canteen, Healthy Eating and Other Food Services Policy</i>, the Australian Government developed the national Healthy School Canteens Guidelines (NHSCG), which provides consistent guidelines for implementation across all jurisdictions.</li> <li>• There is no publicly available information on the extent of implementation of this policy.</li> </ul> |

#### Out of School Hours Care guidelines

- Guidelines exist to help outside of school hours care (OSHC) settings to provide healthy food and drinks for children, which are in line the Australian Dietary Guidelines and the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating.
- There is no publicly available information on the healthiness of food in OSHC settings.

#### The School Breakfast Clubs Program

- The recently expanded School Breakfast Clubs Program provides healthy nutritious food to help sustain students across the school day who may otherwise arrive at school hungry.
- The Victorian Government, through the Department of Education and Training, has partnered with Foodbank Victoria to deliver free breakfast and lunch supplies to 1000 Victorian government schools.
- Foodbank Victoria deliver the program and work closely with the Healthy Eating Advisory Service to ensure products provided through the program are balanced and healthy. The program also has additional benefits for students through informal learning opportunities, including increased knowledge around healthy eating and nutrition.
- There is no publicly available information on the healthiness of food as part of this program.

## ST\_PROV2 Healthy food policies in health services (visitors and staff)

### *Good practice statement*

The government ensures implementation of clear, consistent policies to provide and promote healthy food choices for visitors and staff in health service settings, inclusive of all food service activities (canteens, food at events, fundraising, promotions, vending machines etc.)

### Definitions and scope

- Includes government-owned, funded health services inclusive of all food service activities (canteens, food at events, fundraising, promotions, vending machines etc.)
- Includes private businesses that are under contract by the government to provide food
- Includes policies and nutrition standards to provide and promote healthy food choices or to limit or restrict the provision or promotion of unhealthy food choices
- Includes the strategic placement of foods and beverages in cabinets, fridges, on shelves or near the cashier
- Includes the use of signage to highlight healthy options or endorsements (such as traffic lights or a recognised healthy symbol)
- Includes modifying ingredients to make foods and drinks healthier, or changing the menu to offer healthier options

### Policy details (to 30 June 2021)

#### *Health services - visitors and staff*

- The *Healthy choices policy guidelines for hospitals and health services* is a voluntary framework for a whole-of-organisation approach to the provision of healthy foods and drinks in Victorian health services.
- The guidelines apply to all foods and drinks available to staff, volunteers, visitors and customers including food and drink retail outlets (e.g. canteens, cafeterias, cafes, coffee shops and kiosks, convenience stores), vending machines, catering, staff rooms and kitchens, fundraising activities, gifts, prizes and give-aways.
- A traffic light system in line with the Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide are recommended for the provision and promotion of foods and drinks. *The Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide* was updated in 2020 ([ref](#)).
- To enable the impact of the guidelines to be monitored, a baseline survey was undertaken in 2015 to gather information; including the current range of food and drink choices available for staff and visitors, the range of food and drink supply outlets and information regarding the management and contractual arrangements.

#### *Healthy choices: policy directive for health services*

- The Victorian Government on 3 August 2021 released the *Healthy choices: policy directive* for Victorian public services. This new policy applies to in-house managed retail food outlets, all vending machines, all catering and items purchased by staff/visitors off patient/resident menus within public health services. Victorian public hospitals and health services are strongly encouraged to apply this policy to all food retail outlets.
- The *Victorian Cancer Plan 2024* has a target of “at least 80 per cent of health services to meet Healthy Choices policy guidelines for all retail food outlets and vending”
- Food will follow the same requirements as provided in the existing Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide. New guidelines are applicable to drinks which include:
  - ‘High sugar (RED category) drinks will be required not to be sold or promoted in all vending and in-house retail outlets. (Previously this was 0% to a maximum of 20%)’

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitoring and reporting requirements - annual reporting against targets (including FoodChecker assessments) will be required to be submitted to the Department of Health (30 September 2022 and 2023).</li></ul> |
|--|---|

## ST\_PROV3 Healthy food policies in care settings (resident/in-patient food provision)

### *Good practice statement*

The government ensures implementation of clear, consistent policies to provide and promote healthy food choices in health services, aged, disability, custodial and community care settings (resident/in-patient food provision)

### **Definitions and scope**

- Include government-funded or managed services where the government is responsible for the provision of food, including public hospitals and other in-patient health services (acute and sub-acute, including mental health services), residential care homes, aged and disability care settings, custodial care facilities, prisons and home/community care services
- Includes private businesses that are under contract by the government to provide food
- Includes policies and nutrition standards to provide and promote healthy food choices or to limit or restrict the provision or promotion of unhealthy food choices
- Includes modifying ingredients to make foods and drinks healthier, or changing the menu to offer healthier options

### **Context**

#### *National Standards – Health services*

- The Australasian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) is responsible for maintaining and implementing the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards ([ref](#)). They outline the broad, minimum standards required for accreditation; the purpose is not to prescribe the specific best practice.
- The Standards provide a nationally consistent and uniform set of measures of safety and quality for application across a wide variety of health care services. They provide a quality assurance mechanism that tests whether relevant systems are in place to ensure minimum standards of safety and quality are met.
- Action 5.27 relates to nutrition and hydration to ensure that health service organisations that admit patients overnight has systems for the preparation and distribution of food and fluids that include nutrition care plans based on current evidence and best practice ([ref](#)).
- Action 5.28 relates to nutrition and hydration to meet patients' nutritional needs and requirements; monitor the nutritional care of patients at risk; identify, and provide access to, nutritional support for patients who cannot meet either nutritional requirements with food alone; and support patients who require assistance with eating and drinking ([ref](#)).

#### *National Standards – Aged, disability and community care services*

- The Department of Health is responsible for the development of quality standards for aged care including home care, home support, flexible care and residential services. The Australian Aged Care Quality Agency is responsible for assessing aged care services against the Accreditation Standards.

#### *National Standards – Prison and custodial facilities*

- Australian prisons, youth detention and custody/remand facilities are operated by the relevant State/Territory departments or bodies. Standard Guidelines for Corrections in Australia were published by the Australian Institute of Criminology (updated in 2012) and endorsed by all States and Territories ([ref](#)).

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators ‘Juvenile Justice Standards 2009’ have been developed to support jurisdictions to deliver services in accordance with the relevant jurisdictional legislation (<a href="#">ref</a>). These standards are broadly used by jurisdictions to monitor service quality and performance.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b></p> | <p><i>Health services - aged, disability and community care (in-patient food provision)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Nutrition Standards for Menu Items</i> are in Victorian Hospitals and Residential Aged Care Facilities, published April 2009.</li> <li>Health services mandated to comply with the policy are not specified in the document, however it appears to apply to acute and sub-acute units, rehabilitation and residential care services (e.g. Home and Community Care, nursing homes, respite care, and aged care services).</li> <li>Central Production Kitchens servicing Victorian public health services must follow the Nutrition Standards (under the Health Purchasing Victoria purchasing policy: Metropolitan Melbourne strategy) (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> <li>The Nutrient Reference Values (2006) were nominated as the reference for assessing the ability of the Standards for specified menu items to provide adequate nutrition for patients/residents. The Standards outline requirements for diets that can be catered for by the ‘main’ menu (i.e. excluding special diets) with respect to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nutritional composition of individual menu items</li> <li>A classification system for menu items reflecting absolute and relative nutritional value</li> <li>Portion sizes</li> <li>Guidelines for developing menus</li> </ul> </li> <li>In 2008 the Standards were incorporated in Health Purchasing Victoria (HPV) tender specifications.</li> <li>The <i>Victorian Department of Health and Human Services Quality indicators in public sector residential aged care services</i> program helps PSRACS collect and report on five quality indicators covering high-risk care areas, including unplanned weight loss (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> </ul> <p><i>Healthy and high-quality food in public hospitals and aged care facilities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A review of food standards in public hospitals and residential aged care services was undertaken in 2019-2020 (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> <li>The review was informed by the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the <i>Nutrition Standards for Hospitals and Residential Care Facilities (2009)</i></li> <li>the Victorian Government <i>Healthy choices: Policy Guidelines for Hospitals and Health Services</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>The review recommended to develop new nutrition and food quality standards for hospital patients and aged care residents, as well as standards for paediatric patients. These new standards should consider: the diverse needs of patients, as well as longer-term aged care residents</li> <li>The development of new nutrition and quality food standards for patients and aged care residents is underway and are anticipated to be complete by the end of 2021. The new standards will have a focus on taste, appearance, and variety of meals.</li> </ul> |

## ST\_PROV4 Healthy food policies in public sector workplaces

### *Good practice statement*

The government ensures implementation of clear, consistent policies to provide and promote healthy food choices in public sector workplaces

### **Definitions and scope**

- The focus of this indicator is public sector workplaces (excluding schools, hospitals, healthcare facilities etc that are covered in other indicators):
- Includes private businesses that are under contract by the government to provide food in public sector workplaces
- Includes policies and nutrition standards to provide and promote healthy food choices or to limit or restrict the provision or promotion of unhealthy food choices
- Includes the strategic placement of foods and beverages in cabinets, fridges, on shelves or near the cashier
- Includes the use of signage to highlight healthy options or endorsements (such as traffic lights or a recognised healthy symbol)
- Includes modifying ingredients to make foods and drinks healthier, or changing the menu to offer healthier options

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

#### *The Healthy choices policy guidelines*

- Can be applied to a range of settings that include food outlets and vending, for example workplaces and universities.
- There is also specific guidance for healthy workplace catering. The Healthy Choices: healthy eating policy and catering guide for workplaces supports organisations wanting to provide healthier food and drinks for employees and visitors- ensuring that foods purchased for meetings and events is healthier (GREEN or AMBER) and the availability of discretionary food and drinks is limited (no RED).

#### *Healthy food procurement*

In early 2020 the Department of Health and Human Services authorised the release of two policies that apply to all departmental offices throughout the state:

1. Healthy Food procurement policy- applies to staff procuring food and drinks with government funds for meetings, functions, and events. To support workplace health and wellbeing, it is a requirement that food and drinks options are GREEN and AMBER. Procurement of RED food and drink options should be avoided wherever possible.
2. Healthy food environments policy- requires that all vending machines located in departmental offices are compliant with Healthy Choices, and that fundraising drives containing RED food and drink items such as chocolate or confectionary cannot be displayed in departmental common areas.

#### *Local Government Authorities*

- As part of the Achievement Program implementation, many local government organisations (all Healthy Together Community sites were required to sign-up to this initiative) have implemented healthy procurement policies to ensure that foods purchased for meetings and events held by LGAs comply with healthy eating principles and to reduce the availability of discretionary foods.
- There is no publicly available information on the healthiness of food in these settings.

## ST\_PROV5 Healthy food policies in community settings

### *Good practice statement*

The government ensures implementation of clear, consistent policies to provide and promote healthy food choices in community settings and events that are government-owned, funded or managed

### Definitions and scope

- Includes food relief programs, sport and recreation facilities, parks, community events (government-owned, funded or managed)
- Excludes 'public settings' that are not funded or managed by the government
- Excludes school and early childhood settings (see ST\_PROV1)
- Excludes health services (visitors and staff) (see ST\_PROV2)
- Excludes in care settings (resident/in-patient food provision) (see St\_PROV3)
- Excludes public sector workplaces (see (ST\_PROV4)
- Includes policies and nutrition standards to provide and promote healthy food choices or to limit or restrict the provision or promotion of unhealthy food choices
- Includes the strategic placement of foods and beverages in cabinets, fridges, on shelves or near the cashier
- Includes the use of signage to highlight healthy options or endorsements (such as traffic lights or a recognised healthy symbol)
- Includes modifying ingredients to make foods and drinks more healthy, or changing the menu to offer more healthy options

### Policy details (to 30 June 2021)

*Sport and recreation facilities, parks, community events (government-owned, funded or managed)*

Healthy Choices Policy Guidelines for Sport and Recreation Centres

- Healthy choices: [policy guidelines for sport and recreation centres](#) is framework for a whole-of-organisation approach to the provision of healthy foods and drinks and reducing discretionary options in recreation centres, swimming pools and aquatic centres, and leisure and multipurpose centres. It is a voluntary guide that is not enforced.
- The guidelines apply to all foods and drinks available to staff, volunteers, visitors and customers including food and drink retail outlets (e.g. canteens, cafeterias, cafes, coffee shops and kiosks, convenience stores), vending machines, catering, staff rooms and kitchens, fundraising activities, gifts, prizes and give-aways.
- The policy is based on the traffic light system in line with the Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide for the provision and promotion of foods and drinks.
- It is recommended that the physical environment support the preparation and provision of healthy food, for example, by providing water fountains
- Healthy Choices was incorporated into the Community grants program for Sport and Recreation infrastructure in 15/16 for the first time.

Healthy choices in sport and recreation facilities-Implementation guidelines and template

- To assist and support councils and facility managers in developing an implementation plan for Healthy Choices the Victorian Government released the Healthy choices in sport and recreation facilities – Implementation guidelines and template in 2019 ([ref](#)).
- In 2020, through a partnership with Sport and Recreation Victoria the adoption of Healthy Choices was incentivised in funding requirements (for aquatic centres and indoor stadium projects) in the \$68M Community Sport Infrastructure Stimulus Program.

#### State Parks

- The Healthy Choices policy guideline for parks (2016) provides a framework for improving the availability and promotion of healthier foods and drinks in retail outlets in parks ([ref](#)).

#### Community events

- A Healthy events toolkit was commissioned by the Department of Health (DH) to be implemented by local governments and state-run community events which is available online to help settings to implement healthier events.
- This led to the development of the Rethink Sugary drink resources, which were implemented by the Rethink Sugary Drink collaborative (a partnership between the 12 health and community organisations such as Cancer Council, Diabetes Australia, Heart Foundation).

#### *DH – Community Food Relief Fund*

- Community Food relief grants and regional food hubs were part of the more than \$25 million in additional funding the Government has provided since February 2020 to expand food relief operations across Victoria- in response to the COVID 19 pandemic.
- The Community Food relief grants supplied one-off grants of up to \$75,000 to community organisations to increase Victoria's capacity to source and distribute food relief ([ref](#)).
- Broad guidance regarding the provision of nutritious food is provided to grant holders however there is no specific nutritional criteria.
- The Ministerial Food Relief Taskforce will provide strategic advice to government on strengthening and enhancing food relief activity in Victoria, and ensuring these activities support the health and wellbeing of Victorians.

#### *VicHealth- Reimagining Health Grants- healthy and affordable food.*

- Grants (of \$3,000, \$10,000 or \$50,000) were provided for community organisations working towards local solutions that address gaps in the food system exposed by coronavirus to build a sustainable food system that ensures all Victorians have access to healthy and affordable food.
- Two Grant rounds occurred- December 2020 & March 2021.

## ST\_PROV6 Support and training systems for public sector settings

### *Good practice statement*

The government ensures that there are good support and training systems to help schools, health services, other public sector organisations and their service providers/vendors to meet healthy food service policies and guidelines

### **Definitions and scope**

- Includes support for schools, early childhood education services, hospitals and health settings, other public sector organisations and their service providers
- Support and training systems include guidelines, toolkits, templates (e.g. policy/guidelines or contracts), recipes and menu planning tools, expert advice, menu and product assessments, online training modules, cook/caterer/other food service staff information and training workshops or courses

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

#### *Healthy Eating Advisory Service*

- The [Healthy Eating Advisory Service](#) (HEAS) is a comprehensive support service funded by the State Government of Victoria and delivered by [Nutrition Australia Victorian Division](#).
- HEAS supports settings such as childcare centres, schools, workplaces, universities, health services, food outlets, parks and sporting centres to provide healthy foods and drinks to the public in line with Victorian Government policies and guidelines. They offer:
  - Free telephone and email advice
  - Healthy food policy support and organisation support
  - Menu and product assessments
  - Recipes and healthy food ideas
  - Training for cooks and food service staff
  - Healthy Choices implementation support to health professionals (for sport and recreation facilities universities and hospital and health services)
  - Free online menu, vending, product and recipe assessments through FoodChecker (details below)
  - Support for food industry supplying to these settings
  - Guidelines for staff catering
  - Information and templates on how to embed Healthy Choices guidelines in tenders, contracts and leases with food service providers.
- HEAS offer organisational support to all primary and secondary schools food services to implement healthy eating plans through policy advice, menu and product assessments, menu planning resources, recipes, and training for staff and health professionals who work with school food services.
- There are a number of other online training resources developed to support public sector settings to adopt healthy food service policies including:
  - [The Healthy Choices Food and Drink Classification Guide](#)
  - [Guidelines on how to develop a ECES healthy eating and food service policy](#)
  - [Healthy Food Charter](#)
- *FoodChecker*, a free online menu, vending, product and recipe assessment tool enables schools to instantly assess their canteen and food service menus and to make suitable changes to meet the Victorian School Canteens and Other School Food Service Policy.

- *FoodChecker* online tool compliments a range of other free strategies provided through HEAS to support a healthier food supply in schools and other settings, including online training and resources as well as support through an Infoline and email.

#### *Health services - aged, disability and community care*

- The Well for Life resource toolkit has been available since 2003, to educate and support management and staff working in such facilities to promote healthy ageing. The toolkit focuses on nutrition, physical activity and emotional wellbeing.
- In 2016, the Department of Health & Human Services launched two resources: a Well for life resource that develops knowledge and skills for staff in the aged care sector (both residential and community facilities) to use a healthy ageing approach in their work; and an information booklet that provides information and advice for older people to follow a healthy ageing approach to life.

#### *Healing Matters*

- The Victorian Government has funded Monash University to deliver HEALing Matters since 2017. HEALing Matters is a novel, evidence-based program to improve the healthy eating and physical activity habits of young people living in out-of-home care (OoHC).
- HEALing Matters includes an online training package and knowledge exchange platform for carers working in OoHC, that strengthens their capacity to positively influence the eating and/or physical activity habits of young people in their care. The program uses a trauma-informed philosophy and is available to carers working in OoHC state-wide. Over 1,300 carers have engaged in the program to date.
- Monash University has undertaken an internal evaluation of HEALing Matters which is informing quality improvement. Carers that completed the HEALing Matters training, report the program has given them the knowledge and skills to introduce health, nutrition and physical activity information into routine care. An impact and outcome evaluation is being conducted.

#### *INFANT*

- Deakin University Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition (IPAN) is funded by the State Government of Victoria to roll out the INFANT (Infant feeding, active play and nutrition) initiative across Victoria.
- INFANT is an evidence-based initiative focusing on establishing healthy eating and active play, offered to parents and caregivers over the first 12-18 months of their baby's life and delivered by Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Nurses, Dietitians, Health Promotion Officers and/or Parent Support Workers. INFANT consists of four 2-hour group sessions when infants are 3, 6, 9 and 12 months of age supported by a complementary website and an evidence-based app (My Baby Now).
- IPAN is funded to deliver training and support to organisations interested in delivering INFANT, including setting up local delivery of INFANT (implementation and evaluation guidance and support regarding how to sustainably embed delivery within local services), INFANT content and group facilitation skills. The training offers 6-hours of continuing professional development (CPD), access to INFANT resources and ongoing support from a Community of Practice.

## Policy area: Food Retail

Good practice statement for this domain: The government implements policies and programs to support the availability of healthy foods and limit the availability of unhealthy foods in communities (e.g food retail outlet density and locations) and in-store (product placement)

### Indicators in this domain by level of government:

| Policy area: Food retail |   |   |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| National                 | Federal   | State/Territory   |
|                          | AUD_RETAIL1: Remote retail store availability of healthy and unhealthy food | ST_RETAIL1: Planning policies: unhealthy food retail outlets                |
|                          | AUD_RETAIL2: Availability of foods in food service outlets                  | ST_RETAIL2: Planning policies: healthy food retail outlets                  |
|                          | AUD_RETAIL3: Restriction of marketing of unhealthy food in retail outlets   | ST_RETAIL3: Remote retail store availability of healthy and unhealthy foods |
|                          |   | ST_RETAIL4: Availability of foods in food service outlets                   |
|                          |   | ST_RETAIL5: Restriction of marketing of unhealthy food in retail outlets    |

**Details on State/Territory-level indicators in this domain:**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>ST_RETAIL1</b> Planning policies: unhealthy food retail outlets</p>   |  |
| <p><i>Good practice statement</i><br/>           Planning frameworks enable the government to place limits on the density or placement of outlets selling mainly unhealthy foods by making community health and wellbeing an enforceable objective of the planning system</p> |  |
| <p><b>Definitions and scope</b></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes the consideration of public health in relevant Planning Acts that guide the policies, priorities and objectives to be implemented at the local government level through their planning schemes</li> <li>• Includes the consideration of public health in State/Territory subordinate planning instruments and policies</li> <li>• Includes a State/Territory guideline that sets the policy objective of considering public health when reviewing and approving food outlet planning applications</li> <li>• Excludes laws, policies or actions of local governments</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Context</b></p>   | <p><a href="#">National context</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Australia, planning is a shared responsibility between state and local governments. Although there is variation in the planning policy approach, in general, state governments set overarching planning legislation and policy frameworks and standards and local governments are responsible for developing and implementing more specific municipal policies and schemes in line with these and considering planning applications.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Victorian context</a></p> <p>The Inquiry into Environmental Design and Public Health in Victoria (2012) recommended amendment of the principal Victorian Act to make health an objective of planning in Victoria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local zoning laws and subsequent retail approvals fall within local government jurisdiction through planning schemes, which operate within overarching State planning legislation. Local planning schemes are developed by the local government authorities, but must adhere to the Victorian Planning Provisions. The VPPS outline the objectives of planning in Victoria as set out in Section 4(1) of the Planning &amp; Environment Act 1987, which do not include an explicit objective of health.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b></p>  | <p><a href="#">Plan Melbourne 2015-2050</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrating long-term land use, infrastructure and transport planning, Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 sets out the strategy for supporting Jobs and growth, while building on Melbourne's legacy of distinctiveness, liveability and sustainability.</li> <li>• The refreshed plan builds on the extensive work and consultation underpinning Plan Melbourne 2014 and previous metropolitan strategies including Melbourne 2030 and Melbourne@5million (<a href="#">Ref</a>).</li> <li>• Principle 7 of the plan 'Strong and healthy communities' describes that strong communities need affordable and accessible healthy food.</li> <li>• The current five-year implementation plan (<a href="#">ref</a>) 2017-2022 contains 113 actions. None of these 113 actions directly relate to the food environment.</li> </ul>   |

### *Implementation of current Victoria Planning Policy Framework*

- To date, attempts to regulate approvals for unhealthy food outlets have not been upheld by the Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal on grounds relating to health given that this is not currently written into the Planning & Environment Act 1987 (for example McDonalds v Yarra Ranges Tecoma case ([ref](#)). However, when councils have successfully argued against fast food permits this has been through aspects contained with the act such as amenity, traffic, noise. For example, in the case of Jasbe Petroleum versus Hobsons Bay City Council the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) refused to issue a permit, citing that Jasbe Petroleum had “not satisfactorily addressed the issue of noise and internal traffic management.” And that there were remaining concerns regarding the length of a 47 metre long wall, without any visual relief” and that these issues had “...the potential to cause conflict between the uses and cause a loss of amenity to adjoining residential properties.”

### Healthy Food Connect

- The Healthy Food Connect resource developed by the DH provides advice regarding local government legislative or regulatory powers, to guide local health promotion workforce strategies. For example, the resource notes local governments have limited powers to:
  - adjust signage regulations to restrict advertising of fast-food outlets (current laws do not distinguish between healthy and unhealthy food and therefore councils cannot place restrictions on the advertising of unhealthy food)
  - improve access to and the affordability of public transport (for example, routes and fares)
  - enable mobile roadside trading where food is to be sold on council-owned land (where local laws do not allow this to happen)
  - influence the placement and density of fast-food outlets within commercial and retail land use zones
  - allow street and open-space-based food production such as planting of fruit trees in parks and other open spaces or the domestic planting of fruit and vegetable growing on nature strips (where open space regulations do not allow this to exist within local planning policies).
- The *Healthy Food Connect* Guide requires an update and is not currently on the DH website.

### Health and wellbeing planning guides

- There are guides to assist councils to plan for a healthy community and to implement, review and evaluate their Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP).
- The Guide to Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Planning builds on the Environments for Health Municipal Public Health Planning Framework, which can be used by councils to consider the impact of the built, social, economic and natural environments on health and wellbeing.
- One of the three supplementary guides that provide specific advice on aspects of legislation and planning is Including Public Health and Wellbeing Matters in the Council Plan or Strategic Plan - advice when considering the legislative and operational implications of including public health and wellbeing matters in their council plan.

## ST\_RETAIL2 Planning policies: healthy food retail outlets

### *Good practice statement*

Zoning laws and related policies are implemented to encourage the availability of health food retail outlets (e.g those selling mainly fresh fruit and vegetables) and/or access to these outlets (e.g. opening hours, frequency)

### **Definitions and scope**

- Healthy food retail outlets include produce markets, farmers' markets, greengrocers, food co-operatives
- Includes fixed or mobile outlets
- Excludes community gardens, edible urban or backyard gardens (usually regulated by local governments)
- Includes State/Territory policies to streamline and standardise planning approval processes or reduce regulatory burdens for these outlets
- Includes policies that support local governments to reduce license or permit requirements or fees to encourage the establishment of such outlets
- Includes the provision of financial grants or subsidies to outlets
- Excludes general guidelines on how to establishment and promote certain outlets
- Excludes laws, policies or actions of local governments

### **Context**

- In Australia, planning is a shared responsibility between state and local governments. Although there is variation in the planning policy approach, in general, state governments set overarching planning legislation and policy frameworks and standards and local governments are responsible for developing and implementing more specific municipal policies and schemes in line with these and considering planning applications.

### *Farmers' markets*

- In general, farmers' markets require approvals and permits from local councils, which will involve an application to assess issues such as use of public land, traffic and parking, amenities. There are ways that local governments could support the establishment and promote farmers' markets such as securing appropriate sites on a regular basis, waiving site fees, supporting the permit application processes, supporting marketing and engaging other community stakeholders.
- A Victorian parliamentary inquiry into farmers' markets in 2010 had a number of recommendations, including:
  - That Victorian local governments seek opportunities to support farmers' market organisers and reduce regulatory barriers for farmers' markets.
  - That the Victorian Government work with the Interface Group of Councils to develop a streamlined and standardised planning approval process for all new farmers' markets.
  - That the Victorian Government, through its Farmers' Markets Program, ensure that a specific number of grants are dedicated to the establishment and operations of farmers' markets in lower income outer suburban areas or areas with limited access to fresh food. Ideally, the Committee believes all Victorian local government areas should have at least one farmers' market.
  - That the Victorian Government include a clause in the State Planning Policy Framework specifically noting the importance of ensuring access to food and encouraging a diversity of local food outlets, such as farmers' markets.

Policy details  
(to 30 June  
2021)

#### [Plan Melbourne 2015-2050](#)

- Integrating long-term land use, infrastructure and transport planning, Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 sets out the strategy for supporting Jobs and growth, while building on Melbourne's legacy of distinctiveness, liveability and sustainability.
- The refreshed plan builds on the extensive work and consultation underpinning Plan Melbourne 2014 and previous metropolitan strategies including Melbourne 2030 and Melbourne@5million ([ref](#)).
- Principle 7 of the plan 'Strong and healthy communities' describes that strong communities need affordable and accessible healthy food.
- The current five-year implementation plan ([ref](#)) 2017-2022 contains 113 actions. None of these 113 actions directly relate to the food environment.

#### [Healthy Food Connect Resource](#)

The Healthy Food Connect resource, developed by the DH, provides advice regarding local government legislative or regulatory powers, to guide local health promotion workforce strategies. This resource notes that local governments have the ability to:

- develop and support policy, programs and services that enhance healthy food access within council plans (including the municipal public health and wellbeing plan or 'MPHWP') which include initiatives that:
  - support residents to shop, store, plan and prepare healthy meals – for example, cooking programs, educational food skill programs or food rescue (and recovery) programs
  - get residents to food and food to residents – for example, providing community transport to get people to and from local shops and markets that sell fresh food or key food retail outlets
  - support residents to adopt healthy eating practices – for example, encouraging local businesses to increase the number of affordable healthy food options on their menu - support alternative distribution models for improving fresh food access.
- ensure that processes to undertake precinct or structure planning identify, zone or designate sites for fresh food
- encourage food retailers to provide transport or delivery services
- ensure that planning processes enable walkability, cyclability and public transportation for residents to reach local fresh food retail outlets or sites of urban production
- develop local planning policies to for example, by incorporating community gardens into council-owned land, and within the planning for new residential developments
- support community initiatives to grow fruit and vegetables (within existing land uses)
- comply with healthy food provision standards and guidelines when considering tendering for the supply of foods to premises owned and operated by councils. For example, leisure centres and home and community care services
- require that council-owned facilities have registered commercial kitchens
- be flexible in applying regulations regarding signage and roadside sales to help facilitate farm trails and roadside sales
- The *Healthy Food Connect* Guide requires an update and is not currently on the DH website.

The Victorian Healthy Eating Enterprise seeks to influence geographical availability of healthy foods across Victoria by engaging businesses and organisations (e.g. Melbourne Market Authority, Foodbank, Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation, Home Economics Victoria) to drive local area changes that improve access and availability to fresh, healthy foods.

## ST\_RETAIL3 Remote retail store availability of healthy and unhealthy foods

### *Good practice statement*

The government ensures support systems are in place to encourage remote food stores to promote the in-store availability of healthy foods and to limit the in-store availability of unhealthy foods

### **Definitions and scope**

- Remote food stores include supermarkets, convenience stores (including 'general stores' or 'milk bars'), greengrocers and other speciality food retail outlets in remote areas
- Support systems include guidelines, resources or expert support
- In-store promotion includes the use of key promotional sites such as end-of-aisle displays, checkouts and island bins as well as the use of shelf signage, floor decals or other promotional methods
- In-store availability includes reducing or increasing supply (volume) of a product such as reducing the amount of shelf-space dedicated to sugar-sweetened drinks and confectionary, or offering fresh produce in a convenience store

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

#### Healthy Food Connect

- As described in ST\_RETAIL1 and ST\_RETAIL2, the DH developed the Healthy Food Connect model to address local food system change. It aims to: create supportive environments to make healthy food choices the easy choices; improve access to a healthy food supply across all community groups and organisations (including vulnerable population groups); and influence policy and develop programs to strengthen community action.
- Using the framework many local governments have worked with retailers to increase healthy food in-store availability and also the needs assessment stage of the framework have led to the collaborative research (RCT) lead by Deakin to assess the effect of increasing healthy food in-store availability in Bendigo ([ref](#)).

## ST\_RETAIL4 Availability of foods in food service outlets

### *Good practice statement*

The government ensures support systems are in place to encourage food service outlets to increase the promotion and availability of healthy foods and to decrease the promotion and availability of unhealthy foods

### **Definitions and scope**

- For this indicator, food service outlets include for-profit quick service restaurants, eat-in or take-away restaurants, pubs, clubs
- Support systems include guidelines, resources or expert support
- Includes settings such as train stations, venues, facilities or events frequented by the public
- **Excludes settings owned or managed by the government** (see ST\_PROV2-ST\_PROV5)
- Includes the strategic placement of foods and beverages in cabinets, fridges, on shelves or near the cashier
- Includes the use of signage to highlight healthy options or endorsements (such as traffic lights or a recognised healthy symbol)
- Includes modifying ingredients to make foods and drinks more healthy, or changing the menu to offer more healthy options

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

#### *Healthy Choices policy guidelines*

- Can be applied to a range of settings that include food outlets and vending, for example workplaces and universities.
- The Healthy Choices policy guidelines and implementation support provided through the Healthy Eating Advisory Service provide consistent and coordinated support to local government to improve the availability and promotion of healthy food and drinks, at the expense of unhealthy options in retail settings.
- The Healthy Choices guidelines set out a range of targets, including the 'advertising, promotion and display of foods and drinks'. As part of this target area, food services are encouraged to label food and drink options as GREEN, AMBER, or RED according to the Traffic Light Classification System. Traffic Light labelling activities are being used by participating retail outlets as a way of influencing consumers to select healthier choices.  
There is Healthy Choices collateral (i.e. posters, stickers) available to participating retail settings which also are a form of menu labelling to assist individuals to select healthier options.
- The Healthy choices guidelines were made a policy directive for health public health services (in in-house managed outlets, all vending and all catering) in April 2021.

#### *Municipal public health and wellbeing plans*

- In 2018, 92% of Victorian local governments have prioritised Healthier eating in their Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plans. Within local government settings, progress in facilitating change through sport and recreation facilities was strengthened by the embedding of Healthy choices guidelines in facility funding grants for indoor stadiums and swimming pools.

## ST\_RETAIL5 Restriction of marketing of unhealthy food in retail outlets

### *Good practice statement*

Effective policies are implemented by the government to restrict the way unhealthy foods are marketed within supermarkets and other retail stores, including through restrictions on product placement in prominent in-store positions (such as checkouts and end-of-aisle displays), price discounts and sales to children

### **Definitions and scope**

- Includes mandatory policy (i.e. legislation or regulations) or voluntary standards, codes, guidelines set by government or by industry where the government plays a role in development, monitoring, enforcement or resolving complaints
- Includes restriction of volume promotional offers such as multi-buys “3 for 2”, “buy-one-get-one-free” offers, extra free promotions e.g. “50% extra free” and fixed price savings on unhealthy foods
- Includes restriction of product placement of unhealthy foods, e.g. at aisle ends, checkouts, store entrances and online equivalents
- Includes the restriction of unhealthy foods promoted through in-store advertisement directed at children

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

There is no state led policy regarding restricting marketing of unhealthy food in supermarkets and other retail outlets.

The new [Healthy choices policy directive for Victorian public health services](#) (2021) has a requirement that health services cannot provide, sell **or promote/advertise** RED foods/drinks in their in-house retail food outlets, vending machines or catering.

# INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

Policy area: Leadership

Good practice statement for this domain: The political leadership ensures that there is strong support for the vision, planning, communication, implementation and evaluation of policies and actions to create healthy food environments, improve population nutrition, and reduce diet-related inequalities

Indicators in this domain by level of government:

| Policy area: Leadership   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| National  | Federal  | State/Territory  |
| NAT_LEAD1: Government strategy for addressing nutrition and obesity           | AUD_LEAD1: Political support for population nutrition    | ST_LEAD1: Political support for population nutrition   |
| NAT_LEAD2: Government taskforce dedicated to addressing nutrition and obesity | AUD_LEAD2: Population intake targets established         | ST_LEAD2: Government strategy and related implementation plan for addressing nutrition and obesity |
| NAT_LEAD3: Comprehensive implementation plan linked to national needs         | AUD_LEAD3: Evidence-based dietary guidelines implemented |  |

**Details on State/Territory-level indicators in this domain:**

| ST_LEAD1 Political support for population nutrition   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><i>Good practice statement</i></p> <p>There is strong, visible, political support (at the Head of State/Cabinet level) for improving food environments, population nutrition, diet-related NCDs and their related inequalities</p> |  |
| <b>Definitions and scope</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visible support includes statements of intent, election commitments, budget commitments, establishing priorities and targets, demonstration of support in the media</li> <li>• Documents that contain evidence of strong political support include media releases, speeches, pre-election policy papers, introduction of a bill, State-level strategic plans with targets or key performance indicators</li> <li>• Head of State is the Premier or the Chief Minister</li> <li>• Excludes health-specific strategic plans (covered in ST_LEAD2 below)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b>   | <p><i>Healthy and high-quality food in public hospital and aged care facilities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In November 2018, the Victorian Labor Government made an election commitment to “ensuring that food available in our public hospitals and public aged care facilities is healthy, of high quality, and where possible, locally sourced, supporting Victorian farmers and producers. In addition, “that all Victorian public hospitals and public residential aged care facilities will be required to follow new health and quality food standards, following a comprehensive review” (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> <li>• In 2019-2020 a comprehensive review assessing the nutritional value, quality and origin of the food served in public hospital and residential aged care services across Victoria was undertaken. Acting Premier, James Merino and the Minister for Health announced the Review report and recommendations at a launch in April 2021. A summary report of Review findings and recommendations is available at this <a href="#">link</a>.</li> <li>• The development of new and revised nutrition and quality food standards for patients and aged care residents is underway. In addition, new standards for paediatric patients are being developed.</li> </ul> |

ST\_LEAD2 Government strategy and related implementation plan for addressing nutrition and obesity

*Good practice statement*

There is a long-term government strategy for addressing diet, nutrition, obesity and related NCDs, including prioritisation for reducing inequalities and protecting vulnerable populations. There is also a corresponding comprehensive, transparent, adequately resourced implementation plan, with annual performance and process targets, linked to state/national needs and priorities.

**Definitions and scope**

- The focus of this indicator is State/Territory specific strategies and plans. Federal and National strategies and plans are covered by other indicators.
- Frameworks strategies or implementation plans specify aims, objectives or targets for addressing diet, nutrition, obesity and NCDs and to reduce inequalities and protecting vulnerable populations including taking a preventive approach that addresses the social and environmental determinants of health
- Includes specific priorities for reducing inequalities for specific population groups
- Excludes priorities to reduce inequalities in secondary or tertiary prevention
- Implementation plans should be current (i.e. maintain endorsement by the current government and/or are being reported against)
- Plans should refer to actions to improve food environments (as defined in the policy domains above) and should include both policy and program strategies

**Context**

*National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions*

The National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions was published in August 2019. The framework is directed at decision and policy makers at national, state and local levels; and provides guidance for those developing and implementing policies, strategies and actions.

The Framework considers shared health determinants, risk factors and multimorbidities across a broad range of chronic conditions and provide national direction for improving chronic disease prevention and care across Australia.

The Framework moves away from a disease specific approach by recognising that there are often similar underlying principles for the prevention and management of many chronic conditions ([ref](#)).

*National preventive health strategy*

In 2019 the Australian Government announced that it would develop a National Preventive Health Strategy. The strategy aims to help Australians improve their health at all stages of life and is a 10-year long-term plan. The consultation for the draft strategy closed 19 April 2021 ([ref](#)).

*National obesity strategy*

The Australian Government is currently working with states and territories to develop a National Obesity Strategy. Results from a national public consultation on a proposed framework and ideas to be included in a national obesity strategy report was released November 2020. A final draft strategy is due to be considered by Health Ministers in early 2021 ([ref](#)).

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <p><i>Aboriginal health: Commonwealth and State Government context</i></p> <p>The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) established the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA) in 2008 and committed to a range of targets to Close The Gap in Indigenous disadvantage, including two targets specifically related to health. Underpinning NIRA are a series of national Health Plans for priority health areas including chronic disease, mental health, and social and emotional wellbeing.</p> <p><i>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework report</i></p> <p>The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework monitors progress in Indigenous Australian health outcomes, health system performance and broader determinants of health (<a href="#">ref</a>).</p> <p><i>The People of Australia – Australia’s Multicultural Policy</i></p> <p>Australia’s multicultural policy acknowledges that government services and programs must be responsive to the needs of our culturally diverse communities. It commits to an access and equity framework to ensure that the onus is on government to provide equitable services to Australians from all backgrounds. The policy aims to strengthen social cohesion through promoting belonging, respecting diversity and fostering engagement with Australian values, identity and citizenship, within the framework of Australian law. (<a href="#">ref</a>)</p>  |
| <p><b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b></p> | <p><i>Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The third Victorian public health and wellbeing plan (2019-2023) was released on 28 August 2019 (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> <li>• The plan sets out to provide a <i>comprehensive approach to deliver improved public health and wellbeing outcomes for all Victorians</i>.</li> <li>• As a part of this document four focus areas designed to drive coordinated action where the greatest gains can be made, were identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tackling climate change and its impact on health</li> <li>- Increasing healthy eating</li> <li>- Increasing active living</li> <li>- Reducing tobacco-related harm</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Targeted achievements described under the <i>Increasing healthy eating</i> focus area include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Increase access to healthier food and drinks, and decrease access to discretionary foods and drinks</i></li> <li>- <i>Increase capacity to breastfeed, and prepare and consume healthier foods and drinks</i></li> <li>- <i>Increase capacity to not consume discretionary food and drinks</i></li> <li>- <i>Increase socio-cultural norms reinforcing healthier eating, drinking and breastfeeding</i></li> <li>- <i>Decrease sodium, saturated fat and added sugar, and increase fruit, vegetables, wholegrains and dairy/alternatives in processed and ready-to-eat foods</i></li> <li>- <i>Increase purchase of healthier food and drinks, and decrease purchase of discretionary food and drinks</i></li> <li>- <i>Decrease the quantity of discretionary food and drinks served eating out and at home</i></li> <li>- <i>Decrease exposure to marketing of discretionary food and drink, and increase exposure to marketing of healthier food and drinks</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Relevant strategic actions listed in the plan include:</li> </ul> |

- *Accelerating the implementation of healthy food (and drink) supply policies in all key public settings (including health services, schools and early childhood services, sport and recreation settings, events and workplaces).*
- *Implementing initiatives and approaches supporting healthier lifestyles and habits.*
- *Investing in collaborative place-based approaches to healthy eating and increasing access to healthy food in communities.*
- New implementation guidance has been prepared to support early childhood settings and schools, local governments, health and humans services and workplaces to take action for each of the focus areas, including 'Increasing healthy eating' and 'Tackling climate change and its impact on Health' ([ref](#)).

*Healthy Kids, healthy futures (in planning before June 2021- released October 2021)*

- The Victorian Government released the *Healthy kids, healthy futures* five-year action plan in October 2021 ([ref](#)).
- The action plan aims to support children and young people to be healthy, active and well.
- Consistent with the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023, *Healthy kids, healthy futures* has a strong focus on creating supportive environments for healthy eating and active living.
- The goals of the plan are to ensure:
  - Child, youth and family focused places provide and promote healthier food and drink,
  - Communities focus on the health and wellbeing of children and young people,
  - Children, young people and families are supported to be healthy and raise health children; and
  - More opportunities to be active throughout the day.

*Victoria's Regional Statement (2015):*

- Set a new approach that changed the way government works with regional Victorians ([ref](#)).
- Its centrepiece was the establishment of nine new Regional Partnerships across the State that will direct regional priorities straight into the heart of government.
- The Government provided an extra \$1.38 billion for health system for new buildings and vital equipment, new health initiatives and increased capacity.

## Policy area: Governance

Good practice statement for this domain: Governments have structures in place to ensure transparency and accountability, and encourage broad community participation and inclusion when formulating and implementing policies and actions to create healthy food environments, improve population nutrition, and reduce diet-related inequalities

### Indicators in this domain by level of government:

| Policy area: Governance |  |   |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| National                | Federal  | State/Territory   |
|                         | AUD_GOVER1: Restricting commercial influence on policy development         | ST_GOVER1: Restricting commercial influence on policy development         |
|                         | AUD_GOVER2: Transparency in the development of food and nutrition policies | ST_GOVER2: Transparency in the development of food and nutrition policies |
|                         | AUD_GOVER3: Assessing the potential health impacts of all policies         | ST_GOVER3: Assessing the potential health impacts of all policies         |
|                         | AUD_GOVER4: Government workforce to support public health nutrition        | ST_GOVER4: Government workforce to support public health nutrition        |
|                         | AUD_GOVER5: Independent health promotion agency                            | ST_GOVER5: Independent health promotion agency                            |

**Details on State/Territory-level indicators in this domain:**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>ST_GOVER1</b> Restricting commercial influence on policy development   |  |
| <i>Good practice statement</i><br>There are robust procedures to restrict commercial influences (where they have conflicts of interest with improving population nutrition) on the development of policies related to food environments |  |
| <b>Definitions and scope</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Includes government policies, guidelines, codes of conduct or other mechanisms to guide actions and decision-making by government employees, for example conflict of interest declaration procedures</li><li>• Includes procedures to manage partnerships with private companies or peak bodies representing industries that are consulted for the purpose of developing policy, for example committee procedural guidelines or terms of reference</li><li>• Includes publicly available, up-to-date lobbyist registers that specify the lobbying activities</li></ul>   |
| <b>Context</b>  | <i>National regulation reform</i><br>In 2012, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to a new regulatory and competition reform agenda: <i>National Compact on Regulatory and Competition Reform: Productivity Enhancing Reforms for a More Competitive Australia</i> (the Compact). The Compact builds on previous COAG agreements such as 1995 National Competition Policy and the 2006 National Reform Agenda. One aspect of this reform agenda was that all governments will establish processes to undertake best-practice regulation impact assessment to demonstrate that the benefits of regulations outweigh the costs, including having regard to the differential impact and experience of regulation on businesses ( <a href="#">ref</a> ). |

**Policy details  
(to 30 June  
2021)**

#### [Victorian Register of lobbyists](#)

- The Register of Lobbyists is a public online platform that contains information about lobbyists who make representation to Government on behalf of their clients. The Victorian Public Sector Commissioner maintains the register.
- Lobbyists are required to comply with the [Victorian Government Professional Lobbyist Code of Conduct](#) and provide the following information:
  - The business registration details and trading names of each lobbyist company, or where the business is not a publicly listed company, the names of owners, partners or major shareholders, as applicable;
  - The names and positions of persons employed, contracted or otherwise engaged by the Lobbyist to carry out lobbying activities;
  - Details of the most senior position(s) held in each category as described in Clause 5.1. (e) of the Code of Conduct;
  - The names of clients on whose behalf the lobbyist conducts lobbying activities.
- It is possible to determine, to some extent, the number of lobbyists registered that represent companies from the commercial food industry, however, there are no details on the nature, frequency or duration of lobbying activities or how accurate and up-to-date the register is ([ref](#)).

#### [Victorian Public Sector Code of Ethics](#)

There is also the Victorian Public sector code of ethics and standards provides clear guidance regarding all government staff not accepting gifts/donations/benefits ([ref](#)). This is constantly re-enforced by the departments.

#### [Overarching guideline](#)

Victorian Public Sector Commission (2014), Managing Conflicts of Interest: A guide to policy development and implementation. This provides a guide to assist organisations to develop and implement a conflict of interest policy. It contains an overview and tools for each stage of the process of developing and implementing a policy, including risk assessment, developing the policy, implementing the policy and evaluating and reviewing the policy.

#### [Electoral Legislation Amendment Act 2018](#)

- The Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Funding and Disclosure Reform) Act 2018 was approved 30 November 2018 ([ref](#)).
- The act overhauls Victoria's political donations regime by eliminating large donations and usher in Australia's most transparent donation disclosure laws.
- Under the new reform donations in Victoria are now restricted and capped including:
  - Foreign donations are no longer allowed
  - Domestic donations are limited to a maximum of \$4,000 every four years
  - Every donation over \$1,000 has to be disclosed to the public
  - All political parties must declare to the electoral commission the amount of donations they have received within a month of receiving it

## ST\_GOVER2 Transparency in the development of food and nutrition policies

### *Good practice statement*

Policies and procedures are implemented for ensuring transparency in the development of food and nutrition policies

#### **Definitions and scope**

- Includes policies or procedures to guide the online publishing of private sector and civil society submissions to government around the development of policy and subsequent government response to these
- Includes policies or procedures that guide the use of consultation in the development of food and nutrition policy
- Includes policies or procedures to guide the online publishing of relevant scoping papers, draft and final policies

#### **Context**

##### *National regulation reform*

In 2012, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to a new regulatory and competition reform agenda: *National Compact on Regulatory and Competition Reform: Productivity Enhancing Reforms for a More Competitive Australia* (the Compact). The Compact builds on previous COAG agreements such as 1995 National Competition Policy and the 2006 National Reform Agenda. One aspect of this reform agenda was that all governments will establish processes to undertake best-practice regulation impact assessment to demonstrate that the benefits of regulations outweigh the costs, including having regard to the differential impact and experience of regulation on businesses ([ref](#)).

##### *Right to Information Act 2009*

The [Right to Information Act 2009](#) (the Act) ensures access to information held by public authorities by:

- authorising and encouraging greater routine disclosure of information held by public authorities without the need for requests or applications
- authorising and encouraging greater active disclosure of information held by public authorities in response to informal requests without the need for applications
- giving members of the public an enforceable right to information held by public authorities, and
- providing that access to information held by public authorities is restricted in only limited circumstances, which are defined in the Act.

The Right to Information Act recognises that some information held by a public authority should not be released. The types of information that may be withheld from release include:

- Executive Council information
- Cabinet information
- internal briefing information of a Minister in connection with the official business of a public authority and in connection with the Minister's Parliamentary duty
- information not relating to official business
- information affecting national or state security, defence or international relations
- information relating to the enforcement of the law \*
- information that is protected by Legal professional privilege \*
- information related to a closed meeting of a Council \*
- information communicated by other government jurisdictions \*
- internal deliberative (working) information \*
- personal information \*

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• information relating to business affairs of third party *</li> <li>• information relating to the business affairs of the a public authority *</li> <li>• information obtained in confidence *</li> <li>• information about procedures and criteria used in financial, commercial and labour negotiations, the execution of contracts, the defence prosecution and settlement of cases and similar activities *</li> <li>• information that is likely to affect the State’s economy *</li> <li>• information that is likely to affect the cultural heritage and natural resources of the State *</li> </ul> <p>*These exemptions are subject to a public interest test. The matters which must be considered in deciding whether disclosure of information is contrary to the public interest are set out in Schedule 1 of the Right to Information Act. The matters that are irrelevant in deciding if the disclosure of the information is contrary to the public interest are specified in Schedule 2 of the Right to Information Act.</p> <p>Section 23 of the Act requires principal officers of public authorities to prepare and promulgate policies and procedures for the release of information under the Act. The usual procedure for release of government information is determined by the type of information and is categorised as required disclosure (ie. by law), routine disclosure, active disclose and assessed disclosure.</p> <p>For example, under the State Service Act (1990) or the Financial Management and Audit Act (1990), certain government documents such as annual reports, budgets or performance audits must be made publicly available.</p> |
| <p><b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b></p> | <p>All food and nutrition policy guidelines have been developed with a round of external consultation, as well as in discussion with other states to ensure consistency as much as possible.</p> <p>Legislated policies such as the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (VHWBP) and the Victorian Planning Framework have requirements within the legislation relating to the transparent consultation processes that are required as part of plan development (<a href="#">ref</a>). As such, all submissions relating to these plans are made publicly available.</p>  |

## ST\_GOVER3 Assessing the potential health impacts of all policies

### *Good practice statement*

There are processes (e.g. health impact assessments) to assess and consider health impacts during the development of policies that affect the healthiness of food environments and/or diet, nutrition, obesity and NCDs

### **Definitions and scope**

- Includes policies, procedures, guidelines, tools and other resources that affect the healthiness of food environments and/or diet, nutrition, obesity and NCDs during and following implementation of all policies
- Includes the establishment of cross-department governance and coordination structures while developing policies with food-related outcomes
- Includes workforce training and other capacity building activities in healthy public policy for non-health departments (e.g. agriculture, education, communications, trade)
- Includes monitoring or reporting requirements related to health impacts for non-health departments

### **Context**

#### *National regulation reform*

In 2012, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to a new regulatory and competition reform agenda: *National Compact on Regulatory and Competition Reform: Productivity Enhancing Reforms for a More Competitive Australia* (the Compact). The Compact builds on previous COAG agreements such as 1995 National Competition Policy and the 2006 National Reform Agenda. One aspect of this reform agenda was that all governments must establish processes to undertake best-practice regulation impact assessment to demonstrate that the benefits of regulations outweigh the costs, including having regard to the differential impact and experience of regulation on businesses ([ref](#)). In other words, the objective of a new or amended policy proposed must not restrict competition unless there are net benefits to the community as a whole.

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and associated outcomes framework and action plan will guide population nutrition activities across government.

## ST\_GOVER4 Government workforce to support public health nutrition

### *Good practice statement*

The capacity (number of staff and their capabilities) of the government's public health nutrition workforce is commensurate with the size of the food and nutrition problems of the population and government resources for health

### **Definitions and scope**

- Estimate of the size (i.e. number of full time equivalent (FTE) persons employed) of the government's population nutrition workforce
- The workforce comprises anyone whose primary role relates to public health nutrition and who is employed full time, part time or casually by the government to perform a public health nutrition-related role. The position may be in the Department of Health, independent statutory authority/agency, other government agency/department.
- 'Public health nutrition' includes promotion of healthy eating, and policies and programs that support healthy food environments for the prevention of obesity and diet-related NCDs. The definition **excludes** all one-on-one and group-based promotion (primary care, antenatal services, maternal and child nursing services etc.), food safety, micronutrient deficiencies (e.g. folic acid fortification) and undernutrition

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

#### *Department of Health*

There are a number of positions with public health nutrition focus in the Department of Health (DoH):

- 2 x State Public Health Nutritionists/Accredited Practicing Dietician (APD) (1.7 EFT total)
- 1 x APD (1 FTE)
- 1 x Senior policy officer position (nutrition qualifications preferred, not required) (1 FTE)
- 1 x Senior Dietitian/Senior Nutritionist (Food Safety and Regulation, APD status preferred, not required) (1 FTE)
- 1 Senior policy officer position (Food Safety and Regulation), currently filled by Registered Nutritionist, nutrition qualification preferred not required) (0.6EFT)
- 1 x Senior policy officer – Indigenous (nutrition quals preferred, not required) (1 FTE)
- Total FTE:

Other staff in the Population Health and Prevention Strategy branch support and deliver on population nutrition work.

#### *VicHealth*

VicHealth has three full time staff dedicated to healthy eating/ food environment work as well as one x 0.8 staff member. This includes a Principal Program Officer, Senior Project Officer, Project Officer and a Policy Officer.

There are other general staff members that work across portfolios that frequently support healthy eating and food environment work.

## ST\_GOVER5 Independent health promotion agency

### *Good practice statement*

There is a statutory health promotion agency in place that includes an objective to improve population nutrition, with a secure funding stream

#### **Definitions and scope**

- The focus of this indicator is on whether there is a health promotion agency established through legislation that includes an objective to improve population nutrition (as specified in relevant legislation, strategic plans or on the agency website)
- Secure funding stream involves the use of a hypothecated tax or other source of funding that can be considered relatively secure

#### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

##### *VicHealth*

- The Victorian Health Promotion Agency (VicHealth) is an independent statutory authority that is funded by the Department of Health and Human Services. VicHealth was the first of its kind in the world and has had bipartisan support since its establishment in 1987.
- VicHealth's [Action Agenda for Health Promotion 2013–2023](#) focuses on five strategic imperatives with associated goals and three-year priorities:
  - Promoting healthy eating
  - Encouraging regular physical activity
  - Preventing tobacco use
  - Preventing harm from alcohol
  - Improving mental wellbeing
- VicHealth Policy Priorities – 2019-2023 Strategic Imperatives:
  - Build an equitable, regenerative, prosperous and resilient food system that delivers (or ensures access to) culturally appropriate and nutritious food for all Victorians. The system should value health, fairness, dignity, and democracy.
  - Ensure all Victorian infants are breastfed where possible and given the best nutritional start to life.
  - Protect Victorians from marketing of unhealthy food and sugary drinks.
  - Create healthy schools to build lifelong healthy food habits.

## Policy area: Monitoring & Intelligence

Good practice statement for this domain: The government's monitoring and intelligence systems (surveillance, evaluation, research and reporting) are comprehensive and regular enough to assess the status of food environments, population nutrition and diet-related NCDs and their inequalities, and to measure progress on achieving the goals of nutrition and health plans

### Indicators in this domain by level of government:

| Policy area: Monitoring and intelligence |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| National                                 | Federal   | State/Territory  |
|  | AUD_MONIT1: Monitoring food environments                                | ST_MONIT1: Monitoring population nutrition intake                      |
|  | AUD_MONIT2: Monitoring population nutrition intake                      | ST_MONIT2: Monitoring population body weight                           |
|  | AUD_MONIT3: Monitoring population body weight                           | ST_MONIT3: Evaluation of major nutrition-related programs and policies |
|  | AUD_MONIT4: Evaluation of major nutrition-related programs and policies | ST_MONIT4: Research funding for obesity and NCD prevention             |
|  | AUD_MONIT5: Research funding for obesity and NCD prevention             |  |

## Details on State/Territory-level indicators in this domain:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| ST_MONIT1 Monitoring population nutrition intake  |  |
| <p><i>Good practice statement</i></p> <p>There is regular monitoring of adult and childhood nutrition status and population intakes against specified intake targets or recommended daily intake levels</p> |  |
| <b>Definitions and scope</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes monitoring of adult and child intake in line with the Australian Dietary Guidelines</li> <li>• Includes monitoring of adult and child intake of nutrients of concern and non-core/discretionary foods including sugar-sweetened beverages (even if there are no clear intake targets for all of these)</li> <li>• 'Regular' is considered to be every five years or more frequently</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Context</b>  | <p><i>National data sources</i></p> <p>With funding from the Federal Government, the Australian Bureau of Statistics conducts nationwide National Health Surveys every 3 years, and data from these surveys is available at the State/Territory level. See the Australian Federal Government summary for more information.</p>   |
| <b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b>   | <p>In Victoria, national data sources are utilised where relevant, and supplemented by the following Victorian evidence and survey data sources related to food, nutrition and health:</p> <p><i>Victorian Population Health Survey</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Victorian Population Health Survey (VPHS) is conducted annually. In 2008 and 2011-12, local government areas were oversampled in order to provide data at an LGA level on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fruit and vegetable consumption (analysed in reference to the dietary guidelines)</li> <li>- Sugar Sweetened beverages (sugar sweetened, and artificially sweetened are categorised separately)</li> <li>- Takeaway consumption (this collection is based on the national nutrition survey question, which is currently not sensitive enough to inform future policy directions)</li> <li>- Food security/access</li> <li>- Snack food consumption question were included in the 2018 State-wide survey</li> </ul> </li> <li>• As of 2014 survey, food security questions were expanded to include not only food security with hunger, but also food security without hunger questions (eg access to healthy foods). A detailed Food Security in Victoria analysis report was published in 2019 (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> <li>• The 2020 Victorian Population Health Survey is currently being conducted. Results are due for release on 30 June 2021 (dashboard) and 31 December 2021 (detailed reports).</li> <li>• The 2020 survey has a focus on collecting information about any changes in lifestyle behaviours related to the COVID-19 pandemic (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> </ul> <p><i>VicHealth Coronavirus Wellbeing Impact Study 2020</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2020, VicHealth conducted the VicHealth Coronavirus Wellbeing Impact Study to explore how Victorians health and wellbeing was affected during lockdowns as a result of the coronavirus pandemic (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> <li>• The survey covered general wellbeing, social connection, healthy eating, physical activity, financial hardship, smoking, alcohol consumption, as well as working and home life.</li> </ul> |

- Food behaviours surveyed included:
  - Vegetable consumption
  - Sugar sweetened beverage consumption
  - Takeaway food consumption
  - Changes in household meals (cooking dinner at home)
  - Food insecurity
  - Alcohol consumption
- There were two waves of data collection, conducted during the first lockdown of 2020 in May/June and September 2020.
- The VCHWS continues to be conducted

#### *The Victorian Student Health and Wellbeing Survey*

- Since 2014, the Department of Education and Training has conducted the Student Health and Wellbeing Survey (SHWS), which includes measures of nutrition. The latest survey was in 2019 ([ref](#)).

#### Victorian Health Monitor

- Conducted in 2009-10, this survey provided an assessment of the prevalence of obesity, hypertension, diabetes, heart disease and the metabolic syndrome in the adult population via a 3-day, 24-hour diet recall and biomedical measures.
- Additional analysis of the VHM focused on healthy eating patterns/nutrition intake and chronic diseases. This data analysis was used to inform a feature chapter in the Chief Health Officers report 2014 on food and nutrition ([ref](#)).

#### The Victorian Child Health and Wellbeing Survey (VCHWS)

- The [Victorian Child Health and Wellbeing Survey](#) replaced the Victorian Child and Adolescent Monitoring System (VCAMS). It is conducted on a semi-regular basis to collect information on children aged 0-13 years and reports on the following relevant indicators:
  - Proportion of infants breastfed
  - Proportion of children who eat the minimum recommended serves of fruit and vegetable every day
  - Proportion of young people who eat the minimum recommended serves of fruit and vegetable every day

#### The Victorian Adolescent Health and Wellbeing Survey (VAHWS)

- The Victorian Adolescent Health and Wellbeing Survey reports on the same indicators as the Child Health and Wellbeing Survey for ages 12 to 17 years. However, the survey has not been conducted since 2009.

#### Department of Education and Training (DET)

- The DET also monitor nutrition outcomes through their Maternal Child Health Nutrition Program monitoring and Breastfeeding rates.

## ST\_MONIT2 Monitoring population body weight

### *Good practice statement*

There is regular monitoring of adult and childhood overweight and obesity prevalence using anthropometric measurements

### **Definitions and scope**

- Anthropometric measurements include height, weight and waist circumference
- 'Regular' is considered to be every five years or more frequently

### **Context**

With funding from the Federal Government, the Australian Bureau of Statistics conducts nationwide National Health Surveys every 3 years, and data from these surveys is available at the State/Territory level. Since 2007-08, the National Health Survey has included measured height and weight data for all ages.

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

In Victoria, national data sources are utilised where relevant, and supplemented by the following Victorian evidence and survey data sources related BMI:

#### *Adult data*

##### *Victorian Population Health Survey (VPHS)*

- VPHS is conducted every year. Height and weight data are self-reported, not measured.
- The VPHS continues to be conducted (adults living in Victoria). The most recent report 2019 is available at ([ref](#)).

#### *Preventive Health Survey*

- The Preventive Health Survey was commissioned as part of the Healthy Together Victoria initiative. The baseline survey was conducted in 2012-13 and a follow-up survey was planned for 2016-17. The survey collected self-reported height and weight data in order to measure changes in obesity over time. It is unclear whether this survey will continue to be supported.

#### *Child/adolescent data*

##### *Victorian Child Health and Wellbeing Survey (VCHWS) and the Victorian Student Health and Wellbeing Survey (VSHWS)*

- The VCHWS (0-13 years) and VSHWS (12-17 years) collect child BMI data, neither has been conducted on a regular basis.
- The VCHWS has been conducted six times in 2006, 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2019 ([ref](#)).
- The VSHWS has been conducted in 2014, 2016, and 2018 ([ref](#)).

#### *Victorian student health and wellbeing survey*

- Information about Victorian students' health and wellbeing, including perceptions on healthy weight, is collected by student self-report in the Victorian Student Health and Wellbeing (About You) Survey, delivered by the Department of Education and Training.
- The survey is conducted every two years with students in Years 5, 8 and 11.
- 2014, 2016 and 2018 survey results are available at ([ref](#)):
- The 2014 survey collected measured BMI in a sample of students.

Reflexive Evidence and Systems interventions to Prevent Obesity and Non-communicable Disease (RESPOND)

- Deakin University has partnered with the Department of Education and Training, the Department of Health and Human Services, VicHealth, primary care partnerships and health services in Northern Victoria, to trial a whole of community approach to childhood obesity prevention – the Reflexive Evidence and Systems interventions to Prevent Obesity and Non-communicable Diseases (RESPOND).
- This project will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of a suite of physical activity and healthy eating interventions and the impact they have on the prevalence of childhood overweight/obesity. As part of this study, school level direct height and weight measurements will be taken.
- The project is being conducted from 2018 -2023 ([ref](#)).
- The 2019 RESPOND Child Health Monitoring report has been published ([ref](#)).
- Key relevant results from this report include:
  - 3,889 grade 2, 4 and 6 students participated in the study from 91 schools across the Ovens Murray and Goulburn region
  - Using the WHO weight classifications, the proportion of participating grade 2, 4 and 6 students (by gender) who were overweight or obese include: grade 2 boys 30.4% (n=619); grade 4 boys 37.5% (n=680); grade 6 boys 36.6% (n=591); grade 2 girls 34.7% (n=623); grade 4 girls 36.8% (n=636) and grade 6 girls 34.1% (n=553)
- Future planned assessments will be conducted in Term 1 and 2 in 2022 and 2024 (COVID-19 dependent).

## ST\_MONIT3 Evaluation of major nutrition-related programmes and policies

### *Good practice statement*

Major nutrition-related programs and policies are regularly evaluated to assess their effectiveness and contributions to achieving the goals of the nutrition and health plans

### **Definitions and scope**

- Includes any policies, guidelines, frameworks or tools that are used to determine the depth and type (method and reporting) of evaluation required
- Includes a comprehensive evaluation framework and plan that aligns with the key preventive health or nutrition implementation plan
- The definition of a major programs and policies is to be defined by the relevant government department
- Evaluation should be in addition to routine monitoring of progress against a project plan or program logic

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

The research team has not identified any publicly available policies or procedures set out by the DH or Department of Treasury and Finance to mandate/guide the evaluation of major policies and plans. There is a brief overview of evaluation listed on the Department of Treasury and Finance website, however this does not provide information regarding when and how evaluations should be conducted. However, DH does regularly undertake evaluation of policies and initiatives.

## ST\_MONIT4 Research funding for obesity & NCD prevention

### *Good practice statement*

Government funded research is targeted for improving food environments, reducing obesity, NCDs and their related inequalities

### Definitions and scope

- Includes the clear identification of research priorities related to improving food environments, reducing obesity, NCDs and their related inequalities in health or medical research strategies or frameworks
- Includes identifying research projects conducted or commissioned by the government specifically targeting food environments, prevention of obesity or NCDs (excluding secondary or tertiary prevention)
- It is limited to research projects committed to or conducted within the last **three years**
- Excludes research grants administered by the government (including statutory agencies) to a research group where the allocation of a pool of funding was determined by an independent review panel
- Excludes routine evaluation of interventions that can be expected to be included as part of an intervention program budget (this is explored in ST\_MONIT3)

### Policy details (to 30 June 2021)

#### Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions-Funds

- There are a number of Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions funding streams that could potentially be used to support and increase healthy food environments. These have a focus on being innovative, scalable approaches, supported by ongoing research and development. These were the:
  - **Future Industries Manufacturing Program**
    - Up to \$500,000 to Victorian-based companies to implement new manufacturing technologies and processes.
  - **Future Industries Sector Growth Program**
    - Up to \$1 million available to undertake Victorian based projects aligned with the Future Industries Sector Strategies.
  - **Food Source Victoria Grant Program**
    - Focused on the agrifood sector in Regional Victoria to increase exports and create new, ongoing jobs (two schemes: applications below \$250000 and those above \$250000).
    - None of these schemes have specific nutrition or public health criteria
- The DH's participation in the Health and Nutrition priority area Expert Advisory Group can help support the investment in innovative projects to contribute to healthy food products.

#### *Investments in research with other key partners*

##### Heart Foundation

- Research from the Heart Foundation (funded by the Victorian Government) found pubs and clubs in Victoria support healthier food initiatives in their venues. The research, including a survey of more than 100 Victorian pubs and clubs, quantitative analysis and focus groups, explored opportunities to improve the nutritional quality of meals in pubs and clubs ([ref](#)).

##### VicHealth's Research Grants and Fellowships

- VicHealth continues to offer annual research grants through Impact Grants and ARC Linkage/NHMRC Partnership grants. In addition, VicHealth has re-introduced Research Fellowships in 2020/21, offering up to four postdoctoral Fellowships each year.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• These grants and Fellowships address barriers to good health and wellbeing for Victorians, including through a focus on food systems/healthy food environments/healthy eating.</li></ul> |
|--|--|

[Funding of the Centre for Behavioural Research at the Cancer Council Victoria](#)

- As part of the implementation of the LiveLighter social marketing campaign, the DH provided funding to the Cancer Council Victoria's, Centre for Behavioural Research to undertake ongoing evaluation of the initiative (including unintended consequences) of the campaign.

## Policy area: Support for Communities

Good practice statement for this domain: The government provides coordinated support mechanisms and resources for community-based interventions to create healthy food environments, improved population nutrition, reductions in obesity, diet-related NCDs and their related inequalities

### Indicators in this domain by level of government:

| Policy area: Support for communities  |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| National  | Federal   | State/Territory   |
| NAT_COMM1:<br>Coordinated support for multi-faceted community-based interventions | AUD_COMM1: Implementation of social marketing campaigns | ST_COMM1: Coordinated support for multi-faceted community-based interventions |
| NAT_COMM2: Food and nutrition in education curricula                              |   | ST_COMM2: Implementation of social marketing campaigns                        |
|   |   | ST_COMM3: Food and nutrition in education curricula                           |

## Details on State/Territory-level indicators in this domain:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>ST_COMM1</b> Coordinated support for multi-faceted community-based interventions</p>  |  |
| <p><i>Good practice statement</i></p> <p>The government has put in place mechanisms to provide broad and coordinated support for creating and maintaining healthy food environments at the community level across multiple settings</p> |  |
| <p><b>Definitions and scope</b></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community settings include workplaces, sporting clubs, recreation centres and groups (e.g. art, music, dance and drama; scouts and guides), youth groups, cultural and religious community groups, community centres and neighbourhood houses, service clubs, men’s sheds, community groups involved in gardens or sustainable living, community markets and events, church and other nongovernment groups who provide support to others</li> <li>Includes comprehensive and flexible resources, guidelines and frameworks, expertise and workforce training to support implementation of community-based interventions</li> <li>Includes the establishment of workforce networks for collaboration, shared learning and support across settings</li> <li>Includes recognition or award-based programs to encourage implementation</li> <li>Excludes specific support for healthy food provision in schools, hospitals and other government settings (this is covered in the Food Provision and Food Retail domains)</li> <li>Excludes the implementation of programs that focus on one-on-one or group-based nutrition education or health promotion</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b></p>  | <p><a href="#">Healthy Choices policy guidelines</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Victorian Government has a suite of Healthy Choices policy guidelines for sport and recreation facilities, hospitals, health services, workplaces and parks, as well as aligned policies for schools and early childhood settings that provide consistent healthy food supply standards across multiple settings.</li> <li>To support implementation across the state, the Victorian Government funds the Healthy Eating Advisory Service (see below) to coordinate support across these settings to improve the supply and promotion of healthy foods and drinks, and to reduce the supply of unhealthy options.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Healthy Eating Advisory Service</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>FoodChecker</i>, the first online menu, vending, product, and recipe assessment tool in Australia enables retail providers to assess for free the healthfulness of the food and drinks they offer and supports them to make healthy changes in order to meet the Healthy Choices guidelines.</li> <li>Support provided by HEAS enables consistent policies to be implemented across the state, maximising scale and reach, while avoiding duplication of resources. As well as free online support tools, HEAS provides free training and coaching for health professionals and food retailers, as well as a series of case studies that showcase lead adopters to inspire and demonstrate the business case for change (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Achievement Program</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Healthy Schools, Healthy Early Childhood Services and Healthy Workplaces Achievement Program is a free health and wellbeing program that helps Victorian organisations create healthier environments for working, learning and playing.</li> </ul> |

- It provides quality health promotion benchmarks and government recognition for key areas of health - including healthy eating - and is aligned to the World Health Organization's model for Health Promoting Schools and Healthy Workplaces.
- The Healthy Eating Advisory Service and the Achievement Program work together to support Victorian public settings to promote and provide healthier food and drink options.

#### *Victorian Healthy Eating Enterprise (VHEE)*

- The Victorian Healthy Eating Enterprise (VHEE) provides a coordinated platform for its partners to collaboratively promote a vibrant healthy eating culture across the state.
- Through the VHEE, the Victorian government works with local governments, community health services, academics, health professionals and peak health bodies to progress action on state government healthy eating priorities.
- The VHEE supports coordinated action in line with increasing healthy eating.
- VHEE priorities include:
  - Increase consumption of fruit and vegetables
  - Decrease consumption of sugar sweetened beverages
  - Improve access to nutritious food

#### *VicHealth Local Government Partnership (in planning before June 2021- for release August 2021)*

- VicHealth is partnering with 16 councils working through the Local Government Partnership. These 16 fast-track council partners are leading the way and committed to including young people in their next Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans 2021-25 and finding ways to embed children and young people's voices in council activity.
- The fast-track councils include 8 Rural Shires, 5 Regional Cities and 3 Outer-Metropolitan localities. Fast track councils will have access to health promotion modules from August 2021 that are toolkits that consolidate best-practice methodology, evidence and case studies to inform the planning and implementation of enhanced, equitable health policy, and practice changes tailored to councils.
- Building better food systems for healthier communities is a core module available to fast track councils, and focuses on creating better food systems through council policy and protecting community from harmful food and drink industries ([ref](#)).

## ST\_COMM2 Implementation of social marketing campaigns

### *Good practice statement*

The government implements evidence-informed public awareness, informational and social marketing campaigns across a range of broadcast and non-broadcast media to promote healthy eating

#### **Definitions and scope**

- Includes television, radio, news media, web-based (including websites and social media), billboards and posters, etc (see examples in the Food promotion domain)
- Evidence-informed includes the use of peer-reviewed literature in the design and implementation of the campaign, the use of an existing successful campaign that has been evaluated, or the co-design and testing of campaign messages with the target audience(s)
- Includes campaigns that focus on promoting the intake of specific foods (e.g. fruit and vegetables, water), reducing intake of nutrients of concern, or supporting the public to make healthy choices (e.g. use of front-of-pack nutrition labels)
- Includes campaigns that are embedded within and complemented by broader policies and programs

#### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

##### [LiveLighter](#)

- LiveLighter social marketing strategy was developed in Western Australia and aims to encourage Australian adults to lead healthier lifestyles - to make changes to what they eat and drink, and to be more active.
- The social marketing campaign seeks to help people understand why they need to take action and what simple changes they can make in order to 'LiveLighter' ([ref](#)).
- The campaign completed June 2016 however the resources and information from the LiveLighter campaign remain available to the public on the LiveLighter website ([ref](#)).
- LiveLighter appears to remain active through its social media platforms.
- The Victorian Government is not engaged in any further plans for LiveLighter

##### [Better Health Channel](#)

- The Victorian Government provides a number of resources to promote healthy eating. These include blogs, interactive videos on healthy living (e.g. support to consumers in the interpretation of food labels, recipes and menu planners, BMI calculators).

##### [Aged Care Web-platform](#)

- To support the implementation of the Healthy Aging Framework and the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, the DH ensures that the Seniors website provides information to support healthy eating behaviours in older population groups (this is primarily through linking to content from the better health channel).
- There have also been resources released a series of information sheets to improve health literacy in older populations ([ref](#)). These are on common resident care issues in an easy-to-understand format for residents, families and careers and are available online as well as through services making them available. There are a number of these that relate to nutrition although have a greater focus on weight loss than obesity issues.

##### [Kilojoule menu labelling](#)

- In May 2018, the Victorian Government launched a small consumer education campaign to support the introduction of kilojoule menu labelling laws in chain food outlets and support Victorians to eat better when eating out.
- The 'Kilojoules on the menu: check before you choose' campaign aims to:

- Raise awareness that the energy (kilojoule) content of food is now displayed on menus and food tags
- Educated consumers about their daily energy (kilojoule) needs, and the kilojoule content of take-away and ready-to-eat foods and drinks
- Encourage consumers to use this information to make healthier choices when selecting takeaway and ready-to-eat food and drinks
- This campaign included paid (radio, social media, shopping centre billboards) and unpaid social media, plus a website with useful tools such as kJ needs calculators, and information on balancing energy intake ([ref](#)).

#### Unpack the Salt

- The Victorian Salt Reduction Partnership (comprising key organisations including: the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, The George Institute for Global Health, The Heart Foundation, Deakin University and the Victorian Department of Health and Human services) ran the consumer awareness campaign 'Unpack the Salt' from 2017-2019 ([ref](#)).
- Over the course of the campaign a number of reports, and media items were released in addition to the formation of a number of collaborations with the food industry.
- As a part of this campaign a range of resources were developed to support the food industry to reformulate foods to reduce their sodium content.

#### *VicHealth- Future Healthy (under development, introduced after June 2021)*

- From September 2021, VicHealth is investing \$45 million over 3 years for *Future Healthy* to work with organisations across Victoria to make a difference in local communities.
- *Future Healthy* will:
  - create neighbourhoods and spaces where people feel safe, welcome and confident to be active;
  - improve access to healthy, delicious, affordable and culturally appropriate food;
  - build meaningful social connections and inclusive environments and engage with young people every step of the way, so they can share their lived experiences, and help to inform and shape solutions ([ref](#)).

## ST\_COMM3 Food and nutrition in education curricula

### *Good practice statement*

The government provides guidance and support to educators for the inclusion of food and nutrition curricula for preschool, primary and secondary school children

### **Definitions and scope**

- Includes food and nutrition as a priority/focus area of the curriculum as a stand-alone component or embedded within other curriculum areas
- Includes the provision of training, resources, guidelines or expert support to educators to support them in educating students
- Includes government-funded education programs on healthy eating or growing and preparing food (e.g. kitchen garden programs)
- Includes government-supported programs that encourage healthy eating in the education setting (e.g. fruit and vegetable snack and water breaks)

### **Context**

#### *National Curriculum*

Australia transitioned to a new national curriculum in 2015. The national curriculum is currently undergoing a review which is due to be completed by the end of 2021 with a revised Australian Curriculum to be released in 2022 ([ref](#)). The national curriculum incorporates food and nutrition as a focus area within the Health and Physical Education Learning Area. The Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority is responsible for the development of the national curriculum and national assessment of student progress.

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

#### *The Achievement Program*

- The DH has funded the Achievement Program, which encourages schools to embed healthy eating policies, programs and education across the whole school environment.
- In addition, there are a number of guidelines and resources for schools to support healthy eating environments. These include:
  - Healthy eating games and activities resource for early childhood services
  - Healthy Eating and Food Literacy in secondary schools (HEFL) training and support service
  - The Healthy Canteen Kit includes a module with Student Learning Activities

#### *Healthy Eating and Advisory Service*

- HEAS supports settings such as childcare centres, schools, workplaces, universities, health services, food outlets, parks and sporting centres to provide healthy foods and drinks to the public in line with Victorian Government policies and guidelines. They offer:
  - Free telephone and email advice
  - Healthy food policy support and organisation support
  - Menu and product assessments
  - Recipes and healthy food ideas
  - Training for cooks and food service staff
  - Healthy Choices implementation support to health professionals (for sport and recreation facilities universities and hospital and health services)
  - Free online menu, vending, product and recipe assessments through FoodChecker (details below)
  - Support for food industry supplying to these settings
  - Guidelines for staff catering

- Information and templates on how to embed Healthy Choices guidelines in tenders, contracts and leases with food service providers.

- HEAS offer organisational support to all primary and secondary schools food services to implement healthy eating plans through policy advice, menu and product assessments, menu planning resources, recipes, and training for staff and health professionals who work with school food services.
- *FoodChecker*, a free online menu, vending, product and recipe assessment tool enables schools to instantly assess their canteen and food service menus and to make suitable changes to meet the Victorian School Canteens and Other School Food Service Policy.
- *FoodChecker* online tool compliments a range of other free strategies provided through HEAS to support a healthier food supply in schools and other settings, including online training and resources as well as support through an Infoline and email.
- The Department of Education also focuses on healthy eating through learning areas in the Health and Physical Education (HPE) Curriculum. An aspect of the Victorian Curriculum Health and Physical Education is the twelve focus areas, one of which focuses on food and nutrition ([ref](#)).

#### [Playground to Plate Grants Scheme](#)

- The Victorian Government (through the then Department of Health and Human Services) funded the 2018 Playground to Plate Grants Scheme with the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation.
- The scheme provided 100 Victorian government primary schools with a one-off \$5,000 infrastructure grant to assist in establishing or enhancing a kitchen garden program, which aims to help children form positive food habits for life.
- This was a one-off funding initiative, which has now ceased.

#### [Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden](#)

- The Department of Education and Training funded the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation to expand its program in Victoria through the Pleasurable Food Education Package. Through this investment, the program has expanded to an additional 250 early childhood services, primary and secondary schools.