



Public Health Association
AUSTRALIA



ABSTRACT BOOK

FOOD FUTURES CONFERENCE 2018

Food - Shaping our future

Tuesday 20 to Wednesday 21 November 2018

Hotel Jen, Brisbane, QLD

#FoodFutures2018

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Tuesday 20 November 2018

1B - Long Orals – Systems & Settings – General

Parkland 2, 11:00am - 12:30pm

Are Big Food's CSR strategies valuable to communities? Qualitative interviews with parents & children

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Affiliations: ¹*School of Health and Society, Faculty of Social Sciences, University Of Wollongong, Wollongong, Australia,*

²*Australian Health Services Research Institute, Faculty of Business, University of Wollongong, Wollongong, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Recent studies have identified parents and children as two target groups whom Big Food hopes to positively influence through their CSR strategies. This preliminary study aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of parents and children's awareness and interpretation of Big Food's CSR strategies to understand how CSR shapes their beliefs about companies.

Methods: Qualitative semi-structured interviews with parents (N=15) and children aged eight-12 years (N=15) from New South Wales, Australia.

Results: Parents and children showed unprompted recognition of CSR activities when showed McDonald's and Coca Cola brand logos, indicating a strong level of association between the brands and activities that target children's settings. When discussing CSR strategies some parents and most children saw value in the activities, viewing them as acts of merit or worth. For some parents and children, the companies CSR activities were seen as a reflection of the company's moral attributes, which resonated with their own values of charity and health. For others, CSR strategies were in conflict with companies' core business. Finally, some also viewed the activities as harmful, representing a deceit of the public and smokescreen for the companies' ultimately unethical behaviour.

Conclusions: A large proportion of participants valued the CSR activities, signalling that denormalising CSR to sever the strong ties between the community and Big Food will be a difficult process for the public health community.

Recommendations: Efforts to gain public acceptance for action on CSR will need to be highly persuasive to garner support of a comprehensive and restrictive approach.

Exploring Indigenous parent feeding practices in the Northern Territory

Authors: Dr Athira Rohit¹, Associate Professor Louise Maple-Brown¹, Dr Renae Kirkham¹, Ms Leisa McCarthy¹, Associate Professor Julie Brimblecombe^{1,2}

Affiliations: ¹*Menzies School of Health Research, Darwin, Australia,* ²*Monash University, Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Melbourne, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Parents play a crucial role in shaping healthy eating patterns in children. A preliminary study on child feeding practices of 30 Aboriginal parents indicated that parents felt disempowered by the wider food environment to guide their child's unhealthy food consumption. To further explore Indigenous parent feeding practices in the Northern Territory, perspectives of community informants and stakeholders involved in the delivery of child health and nutrition programs were explored.

Methods: The results from the preliminary phenomenological study were cross-checked with stakeholders through interviews (n=29). Perspectives on Indigenous parent child feeding practices were collected. Data were thematically analysed using a decolonizing framework.

Results: All stakeholders (Indigenous=13, non-Indigenous=16) reported that families were highly responsive to the needs of their children however, child feeding practices were often challenged by social determinants of health including food insecurity, household overcrowding and the current food environment. A common discourse among non-Indigenous stakeholders was that child autonomy results in 'child-led parenting' and suggested that parents should instead take decisions for the child. Recommendations to strengthen existing child feeding practices included: knowledge transfer from elders, community-level education on cooking healthy meals, healthy food choices at shops and involving children in physical activities.

Conclusion: Improving child nutrition and health is complex and requires the development and delivery of approaches that incorporate the perspectives of parents and address the broader context including the food environment.

Learning Objectives:

- Importance of creating health-enabling food environments in community settings.
- Understanding differences in Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews in interpreting parent behaviours.

All stakeholders provided consent to publicise our research findings.

Inside our food companies: assessment of company policies related to obesity prevention

Authors: Dr Gary Sacks¹, Ms Ella Robinson¹

Affiliations: ¹Deakin University, Burwood, Australia

Abstract:

Background: The food industry has an important role to play in creating healthier food environments and addressing obesity and diet-related diseases. This project assessed Australian food companies on their policies related to obesity prevention and nutrition.

Methods: The largest supermarkets (n=4), food and beverage manufacturers (n=19), and fast food chains (n=11) in Australia were assessed based on their nutrition-related policies and commitments using the BIA-Obesity tool developed by INFORMAS. An evaluation of the short-term project outcomes was conducted through follow up meetings and surveys with participating companies, and an analysis of media coverage.

Results: 16 out of 34 companies (47%) actively engaged in the research process. The average score across all companies was 35 out of 100 (range 3-71). A number of areas of global best practice were identified. The project gained extensive national media coverage. Several companies provided positive feedback on the potential for this work to drive internal change. Some companies that were not engaged reported they would be willing to engage in future assessments, and have since shared relevant policy information in the public domain. A small number of companies heavily criticised the project.

Conclusion and learning objectives: Australian food companies demonstrated some commitment to addressing population nutrition issues, but there is significant room for improvement. The project was seen as a useful tool for increasing accountability and driving change, and garnered significant public attention. Future assessments will also include an assessment of company product portfolios, and investigate the extent to which policies are implemented in practice.

Differential exposure to, and impact of, unhealthy food advertising: A systematic review

Authors: Dr Kathryn Backholer¹, Ms Rebecca Bennett¹, Mr Oliver Huse¹, Ms Christina Zorbas¹, Ms Alex Chung¹, Dr Anna Isaacs², Associate Professor Bridget Kelly³, Ms Gabby Golds¹, Professor Anna Peeters¹

Affiliations: ¹Global Obesity Centre, Deakin University, Geelong, Australia, ²City, University of London, London, United Kingdom, ³University of Wollongong, Wollongong, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Unhealthy food and beverages, which are high in saturated fats, salt, and/or sugar, are extensively marketed to children around the world. This increases preferences for, and intake of, targeted products. There has been no systematic review examining the differential exposure and likely impact of unhealthy food advertising on children according to socioeconomic position (SEP) or race and ethnicity.

Methods: Eight databases (covering health, business and marketing) and grey literature were searched in November 2017 using terms relating to “food or drink”, “advertising or marketing” and “socioeconomic position or race and ethnicity” to identify studies published between 2007 and 2017. Article inclusion and data extraction was conducted by two independent reviewers. Quality of studies were assessed using the Public Health Practice Project’s Quality Assessment Tool for Quantitative Studies.

Results: Of the twenty five included articles, the majority examined differences in exposure of unhealthy food television advertising to children (n=13), followed by outdoor or in-store advertising (n=10), or a mix of mediums (n=2). Most were conducted in the USA (n=20) followed by Australia (n=3) and the UK (n=2). All studies, except one (which reported similar exposure to unhealthy food advertising for Black and White children), revealed a higher exposure or impact of unhealthy food advertising for minority racial groups or among children with a lower SEP.

Conclusions: Minority and socioeconomically disadvantaged children are disproportionately exposed to unhealthy food advertising. Regulations to restrict unhealthy food marketing to children should be implemented to improve children’s diets and reduce inequities in poor dietary intake.

What are Australian local governments doing to create healthy food systems?

Authors: Dr Belinda Reeve¹, Dr Anne Marie Thow², Dr Phil Baker³

Affiliations: ¹The University of Sydney Law School, Camperdown, Australia, ²Menzies Centre for Health Policy, University of Sydney, Camperdown, Australia, ³Faculty of Health, Deakin University, Burwood, Australia

Abstract:

Background: While there is a recognised need for government action on healthy eating, there is very little research on the role of Australian local governments in creating a healthy food system. Using six local governments in the Sydney municipal region as a case study, we aimed to identify policies that are relevant to promoting a healthy food supply and consumer food environment.

Methods: We created a framework for identifying potentially relevant policies by synthesising international policy documents and Australian literature on local governments' role in creating a healthy food system. Policies were identified by searching the six local governments' websites and by contacting council representatives. We undertook a content analysis of the identified policies to examine their objectives, scope, and any mention of food, nutrition, obesity or noncommunicable disease.

Results: Policies often mentioned unhealthy diet as a threat to community health, but there were few identified actions related to creating a healthy food supply or food environment. Most mentions of food or nutrition related to community gardens, food safety, and food security. Our research did not identify any dedicated local government policies on nutrition or diet-related health.

Conclusion: From our case study, there appears to be limited policy development by Australian local governments on the creation of a healthy food supply and consumer food environment.

Learning objectives: More research needs to be done to understand whether local governments could play a more significant role in efforts to promote diet-related health, and the legislative and other barriers to local government action.

Ultra-processed food consumption and chronic non-communicable diseases-related dietary nutrient profile in Australia

Authors: Ms Priscila Machado^{1,2}, Dr Euridice Steele², Dr Gyorgy Scrinis³, Dr Carlos Monteiro^{2,4}

Affiliations: ¹School of Public Health, University of Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo, Brazil, ²Center for Epidemiological Research in Nutrition and Health, University of São Paulo, Sao Paulo, Brazil, ³School of Agriculture and Food, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia, ⁴School of Public Health, Department of Nutrition, University of Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Abstract:

Background: A rapid simultaneous increase in the sales of ultra-processed foods and in obesity and non-communicable diseases (NCDs) prevalence has been observed worldwide. This study aimed to describe the consumption of ultra-processed foods and its association with dietary content of nutrients linked to NCDs in Australia.

Methods: We evaluated dietary intakes of 12,153 participants from the National Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey (2011–12) aged 2+ years. Food items collected through two 24-hour recalls were classified according to NOVA system. Across quintiles of the energy contribution of ultra-processed foods, we examined the average dietary content of all nutrients linked to NCDs, as well as the prevalence of inadequate intake of these nutrients.

Results: Ultra-processed foods contribute to almost half of total daily energy intake (44.9%). A positive and statistically significant linear trend was found between quintiles of the dietary share of ultra-processed foods and the content in free sugars, total, saturated and trans fats, sodium, and diet energy density, while an inverse relationship was observed for fibre and potassium. The prevalence of inadequate intake of all nutrients increased linearly across quintiles of the dietary share of ultra-processed foods. **Conclusion:** Decreasing the dietary share of ultra-processed foods would substantially improve the diet quality in Australia and help the population achieve recommendations on critical nutrients for NCDs development.

Learning objectives: 1. Analyse the impact of ultra-processed food consumption on the nutritional quality of diets in Australia; 2. Discuss the importance of considering the degree of food processing to address the quality of diets.

1C - Long Orals – Science & Sustainability/Sustenance

Jen 1, 11:00am - 12:30pm

Farmers' Markets; Producer and community insights into an alternative food supply model

Authors: Miss Helena Shojaei¹, Dr Natasha Pauli^{1,2}, Professor Fiona Haslam-McKenzie^{1,2}, Ms Jenny Payet³

Affiliations: ¹UWA School of Agriculture and Environment, University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia, ²Centre for Regional Development, University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia, ³Western Australian Farmers Markets Association Inc, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Recent years have seen rapid growth in the number of farmers' markets across Western Australia (WA). This research sought to understand the economic and social drivers of this recent expansion, through a comparative analysis of a regional (Albany) and urban (Manning, Perth) market. It can inform policy on the wellbeing of farmers and the host communities.

Methods: A mixed-methods approach was employed, including 27 semi-structured interviews with participating farmers (representing three-quarters of regular stallholders) and over 200 structured consumer questionnaires.

Results: Motivations for farmers' participation included: to promote healthy eating; education; to earn a higher profit margin by selling direct; and the attraction of working within a community. Most consumers surveyed (94%) were willing to pay a premium for fresh produce, and many (47%) rely on the market for their weekly grocery shopping. Over half believed that farmers' markets promote food security (i.e. providing a regular supply of local produce) and one-third believed the markets foster a sense of community and mental wellbeing.

Conclusion: Farmers' markets serve the public by providing direct access to locally produced food and space for community engagement, and enable farmers to establish and maintain viable businesses. The importance of social connection and purpose espoused by both producers and consumers highlights that farmers' market participation is driven by both community and financial rewards.

Learning Objectives:

- Producers can benefit both financially and socially from participating in farmers' markets.
- Farmers' markets provide an environment that promotes community belonging, individual wellbeing and protects local food security.

The Health Star Rating System and the Promotion of Ultra-processed Foods

Authors: Ms Sarah Dickie¹, Professor Mark Lawrence¹, Dr Julie Woods¹

Affiliations: ¹Deakin University, Burwood, Australia

Abstract:

Background: The consumption of ultra-processed foods is associated with diminished dietary quality and adverse health outcomes. The Australian Health Star Rating (HSR) is a front-of-pack labelling system based on nutrient profiling criteria, implemented to aid the public in selecting healthier packaged foods. This study aimed to analyse the relationship between the HSR system and the promotion of ultra-processed foods entering the Australian marketplace.

Methods: The Mintel Global New Product Database (GNPD) was searched to identify the number of stars displayed on all new packaged food products participating in the HSR system released into the Australian retail food supply between 27 June 2014 and 30 June 2017. Products were categorised by the NOVA food processing categories: unprocessed and minimally processed (MP), processed culinary ingredients (PCI), processed (P), and ultra-processed (UP).

Results: The majority of new food products displaying an HSR were UP (74.4%). The median HSR of MP products (4.5) was significantly higher than the median of P (4) and UP products (3.5) (all $p < 0.05$), although the majority (77%) of UP products displayed an HSR ≥ 2.5 .

Conclusions: Due to technical weaknesses, design flaws, and governance limitations, the HSR is facilitating the promotion of newly released UP foods. These findings add further evidence to concerns that the HSR system, in its current form, is misrepresenting nutrition science and creating a public health risk.

Learning Objectives: Understanding the limitations of nutrient profiling in interpretive front-of-pack labels. The influence of food industry representation in the decision-making processes on the effectiveness of public health nutrition policies.

Access and consumption of regionally-grown fruit and vegetables: a pilot survey

Authors: Dr Katherine Kent¹, Ms Ashley Hoogesteger¹, Ms Sandra Murray², Mr Stuart Auckland¹, Dr Stephanie Godrich³

Affiliations: ¹Centre for Rural Health, University Of Tasmania, Launceston, Australia, ²School of Health Sciences, University Of Tasmania, Launceston, Australia, ³School of Medical and Health Sciences, Edith Cowan University, Bunbury, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Strong regional food systems support the health of individuals, communities and regional economies. This study aimed to measure access to and consumption of regionally-grown fresh fruit and vegetables (FFV) in Tasmania.

Methods: A survey was developed to measure (1) purchasing patterns and enabling factors related to accessing and consuming regionally-grown FFV, and (2) consumption of regionally-grown FFV as a proportion of overall FFV intake using a food frequency questionnaire (FFQ). A cross-sectional pilot study was conducted using a convenience sample of Tasmanian adults.

Results: Respondents ($n=104$, female=68%, tertiary educated=86%) perceived regionally-grown FFV as 'very important' (67%), and identified them using food labels (88%). Respondents accessed regionally-grown FFV at supermarkets (96%), fruit & vegetable shops (74%), farmers markets (65%), and 74% grow their own. Enabling factors included perceived freshness (97%), quality (90%), and to financially support community (91%) and farmers (93%). Of the FFV in the FFQ, 47% of vegetables and 62% of fruit consumed were estimated as regionally-grown. The highest proportion of regionally-grown FFV were potatoes (74%), leafy greens (61%), rhubarb & quince (78%), and apples & pears (72%).

Conclusion: Respondents favoured and frequently accessed regionally-grown FFV, and they contributed a large proportion of overall FFV intake. However, respondents were highly educated limiting the generalisability of these pilot findings. Further research is warranted.

Learning objectives:

1. To determine how survey respondents access regionally-grown FFV
2. To understand the enabling factors of purchasing regionally-grown FFV
3. To ascertain the proportion of FFV purchased and consumed that is regionally-grown

Creating a Food Systems Education Framework for Tasmania – A case study

Authors: Ms Sandra Murray¹, Mr Stuart Auckland¹, Dr Caroline Smith¹

Affiliations: ¹University of Tasmania, Launceston, Australia

Abstract:

Introduction: Tasmania is synonymous with the production of high quality fresh produce, innovative start-up food enterprises and a vibrant food tourism sector, however many Tasmanian's are unable to experience the benefits associated with the thriving local food economy. For them, The impacts of food insecurity, combined with poor educational outcomes contribute to Tasmania having some of the worst health outcomes in Australia. Recent research has identified a growing interest in food systems education (FSE) across Tasmania. The aim of this research was to scope the potential demand for FSE, in Tasmania, leading to the development of an educational framework at the short course and associate degree level.

Methods: A three-phase approach included (1) a scoping review of FSE programs globally; (2) a series of seven focus groups with food system stakeholders, across three regions of Tasmania to determine attitude, need and interpretation of FSE; and (3), development of an education framework through thematic analysis and interpretation of outcomes from phases one and two.

Results: Findings indicate that FSE should be driven by community-values in preference to the perceived needs of the existing food supply chain, and that transformative, learner-centred education is needed to create sustainable food systems and improve health outcomes.

Conclusion: Combined with the establishment of a state-wide food council, transformational leadership is needed to drive change and coordinate future FSE activities from grassroots to government to improve public health outcomes.

Learning Objectives:

- To determine community demand for FSE in Tasmania.
- To develop a FSE framework that reflect community-values.

Enabling reformulation readiness in food manufacturers: Victorian Salt Reduction Initiative

Authors: Ms Jen Reimers¹, Ms Elizabeth Joldeski², Ms Sian Armstrong (APD)², Dr Jacqui Webster PhD, RPHNutri³, Ms Clare Farrand⁴

Affiliations: ¹VicHealth, Carlton, Australia, ²Heart Foundation, Docklands, Australia, ³University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, ⁴The George Institute, Newtown, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Salt reduction strategies are proven worldwide to improve population health. The key element of success for countries who report an impact on population salt intakes is effective engagement with food manufacturers and the setting of salt targets. The Australian Healthy Food Partnership is currently consulting on voluntary reformulation targets for Australian food manufacturers.

Method: The Victorian Salt Reduction Partnership has actively engaged food manufacturers to reformulate as part of an integrated strategy including consumer awareness campaigning and advocacy to government for policy reform. Diverse engagement approaches have been used with the cornerstone being comparing the salt content in all products within specific food categories and the dissemination of results through the media.

Results: The initiative has targeted Australian food manufacturers who have commenced reformulating and those who have not, identifying a total of 25 food manufacturers, covering specific food categories for direct engagement. A total of 12 food manufacturers have been met, for a total of 23 direct engagement meetings, and another 13 food manufacturers are being targeted for engagement during 2018/19. Meaningful relationship development has resulted in the development of one case study, one reformulation commitment statement, and four case studies in development, demonstrating a positive response rate of 50% of companies engaged.

Conclusion: Food manufacturers need to be reformulation ready if the Australian government set voluntary targets. Public health initiatives, which implement pro-active and targeted industry engagement can drive food manufacturers to take action early, particularly when benchmarking is publicly used to inform consumers about salt content.

Building international consensus on guidelines for researchers engaging with the food industry

Authors: Dr Katherine Cullerton¹, Dr Jean Adams¹, Prof Nita Forouhi¹, Mr Oliver Francis¹, Prof Martin White¹

Affiliations: ¹University of Cambridge, Cambridge, United Kingdom

Abstract:

Background: Most food in Australia comes from commercial food systems, which create food environments that drive what we eat. Researchers studying food behaviours and diet need to understand how the food industry shapes food choices and identify levers for change. This may require that researchers engage with industry. However, there is no explicit consensus among researchers regarding what constitutes acceptable or effective engagement. This has led to confusion over real and perceived conflicts of interest, which can undermine scientific integrity.

Methods: We undertook a systematic scoping review of published and grey literature and a two-stage Delphi study of public health researchers during 2017. We thematically analysed included documents to derive principles until saturation was achieved. A two-round, online Delphi survey was undertaken to clarify and build consensus on these principles.

Results: Our review identified 56 unique principles within five key areas: funding, risk assessment, research governance, transparency and publication standards. 100 dietary public health researchers completed the first round of the Delphi survey and 92 completed the second. Overall, 39 statements (68%) reached consensus. Detailed comments were provided by participants in relation to the principles.

Conclusion: For both the scoping review and the Delphi survey there was modest agreement on the identified principles, but limited guidance on how they should be applied in practice. It was identified that there are other areas, particularly around assessing the appropriateness of an industry partner and the type of engagement, where more clarity and consensus is required.

1D - Long Orals – Social Inclusion

Jen 2, 11:00am - 12:30pm

Perth food charity recipients perspectives and recommendations for system improvement

Authors: Dr. Sue Booth¹, Dr. Andrea Begley², Professor Bruce Mackintosh³, Professor Martin Caraher⁴, Ms Jill Whelan⁵, Ms Jill Porter⁶, Dr. Christina Pollard^{7,2}

Affiliations: ¹Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia, ²Curtin University, Perth, Australia, ³The University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia, ⁴City University, London, UK, ⁵Deakin University, Geelong, Australia, ⁶Frog Design, Perth, Australia, ⁷Department of Health, Perth, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Notably absent from the current discourse on charitable food systems are the voices of recipients. Including the voices of disempowered people in decision making provides an understanding of their experience essential for co-designing effective interventions and policy. This paper presents recipients' perspectives on charitable food services in inner city Perth and their recommendations for improvement.

Method: Face-to-face in-depth semi-structured interviews (n=14) were conducted with charitable food service recipients recruited from inner city Perth. Transcripts were thematically analysed using a phenomenological approach.

Results: Most reported obtaining sufficient food, but the quality and type of food did not meet their expectations or needs. Three main themes were identified: (i) Issues with the charitable food system (unreliable information and access, services under pressure, transport difficulties, problems with food queues); (ii) Specific issues with the food per se (gratitude and resignation, currently quantity more than quality, monotonous and not catering for individual preferences, food memories and meaning); and (iii) Recipient suggestions for service improvement (choice and independence, better coordination and information, recipient-centered approach to food-healthier, more variety and better quality).

Conclusion: A recipient-centered charitable food system should provide a dignified food service that prioritises nutritious food and individual choice.

Learning objectives:

- (1) Understand the lived experience of charitable food system recipients
- (2) Gain insight into the challenges facing service providers and what a recipient-centred approach might look like

Nutrition advocacy lessons from a case study of Aboriginal health policy

Authors: Dr Jennifer Browne¹, Dr Deborah Gleeson¹, Professor Karen Adams², Associate Professor Rick Hayes¹

Affiliations: ¹*La Trobe University, Bundoora, Australia*, ²*Gukwonderuk Unit, Monash University, Clayton, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Food and nutrition have significant roles to play in the physical, social, emotional and cultural aspects of health and wellbeing. However, little is known about the process by which nutrition issues become priorities for Government. The aim of this research was to investigate the process through which policy decisions are made regarding food and nutrition, using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health policy as a case study.

Methods: A policy analysis was undertaken to examine the prioritisation of food and nutrition in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health policy during 1996-2015. Data collection analysis of key documents and interviews with 38 policy actors.

Results: The findings demonstrated that, despite persistently high levels of illness related to food and nutrition among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, prioritisation of nutrition in policy reduced over time. The research found that the nutrition policy community has lacked unity, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and self-determination, a compelling policy narrative and an institutional home. Additionally, the complexity of nutrition as a policy problem and perceived lack of evidence-based solutions have constrained policy change.

Conclusion: Future advocacy should focus on embedding nutrition within holistic approaches to health and building a collective voice through advocacy coalitions. Strategic communication and political opportunism may be as important as “evidence” for raising the priority of food and nutrition on the policy agenda.

Learning Objective:

- To provide lessons for stronger food and nutrition advocacy
- To propose a framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health policy advocacy

Improving and maintaining social connection and cooking confidence through community cooking classes

Authors: Dr Joanna Russell¹, Ms Sophie Wright-Pedersen², Ms Berbel Franse², Ms Kelly Hayes³, Dr Deanne Condon-Paoloni¹

Affiliations: ¹*University Of Wollongong, Wollongong, Australia*, ²*Healthy Cities Illawarra, Fairy Meadow, Australia*, ³*Cancer Council NSW, Wollongong, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Evidence suggests that community cooking programs can improve social connectedness resulting in increased cooking enjoyment, and access to community services. Cook Chill Chat (CCC) partnered with community services to facilitate a six-week cooking program followed by ongoing informal cooking groups. The aim of this study was to assess the effectiveness of CCC on improving social connectedness and cooking confidence six months after completing the 6-week cooking program.

Methods: All CCC participants who completed the cooking program were invited to participate in the study. Data were collected at three separate time points: before starting the 6-week program (T1); following completion of the 6-week program (T2); and 6 months into the informal program (T3). Questions about social connectedness and cooking confidence were included in surveys. Comparisons between T1, T2 and T3 variables were analysed using either ANOVA or Friedman and Cochran Q tests.

Results: Overall 109 participants in 12 groups completed 6-week cooking programs with ongoing programs established for all groups. Fifty participants with data available at all three time points were included in the analysis.

Significant increases were found between T1 and T3 in the proportion of participants who accessed local services ($p=0.04$) and attended local events ($p=0.02$). Similarly increases in self-reported confidence in a range of cooking skills were significant including cooking from basic ingredients (mean difference 0.58, SE 0.15 $p<0.0005$); planning meals (mean difference 0.82, SE 0.15, $p<0.0005$).

Conclusion: Cooking programs have the potential to build social connectedness in communities in addition to education around healthy eating and cooking skills.

Determining nutrition strategies for refugee communities using an equity and access framework

Authors: Associate Professor Barbara Radcliffe¹, Kym Perkins

Affiliations: ¹*Access & Capacity-building Team, Metro South Health, Eight Mile Plains, Australia*

Abstract:

Introduction: Many people arriving to Australia on humanitarian visas have low levels of food literacy in relation to the Australian food supply and difficulties in accessing affordable and healthy traditional food items. The Healthy Refugee Communities Project aims to improve food literacy, create supportive communities and to increase access to traditional fruits and vegetables.

Methods: The Metro South Health's Equity and Access Framework was used to guide the selection of nutrition interventions. It consists of five key domains; inclusive systems and environments, capable and informed staff, effective communication, consumer engagement and partnerships, and healthy communities.

Results: The framework ensured nutrition strategies addressed all the key health equity and access domains. Examples include:

- the incorporation of food and nutrition content into settlement processes and the English tuition curriculum (inclusive systems and environments)
- strategies to increase the capacity of settlement staff and TAFE teachers to support healthy eating (capable and informed staff)
- use of interpreters and development of simple English and visual nutrition resources (effective communication)
- the recruitment of project partners involved in key settlement processes, and customised methods of engaging consumers (consumer engagement and partnerships)
- the establishment of community gardens to grow traditional foods (healthy communities)

Conclusions: The Equity and access framework is a useful and practical tool in developing community nutrition interventions targeting refugee communities. Its major strengths are its focus on customised communication with the target group, consumer engagement, and the development of sustainable strategies based on partnerships with key service providers.

Reflections from the field: A collaborative mixed-methods food security evaluation

Authors: Ms Julia McCartan¹, Mr Davey Wilson², Dr Suzanne Kleve¹

Affiliations: ¹Monash University, Notting Hill, Australia, ²City of Whittlesea, South Morang, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Food insecurity is a complex phenomenon with multiple determinants. Innovative methodologies that consider the needs of priority population groups and local service providers are required to evaluate the impact of place-based food insecurity initiatives. This research is situated in the City of Whittlesea, a municipality 20km north of Melbourne where 12% of residents experience food insecurity. Monash University was contracted by the City of Whittlesea to evaluate a place-based food security project. This presentation describes the collaborative evaluation approach undertaken to balance the needs of all project partners.

Body: The evaluation was grounded in case study research, consisting of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods. Local emergency relief service providers requested unobtrusive and sensitive evaluation methods to understand the stories of residents experiencing food insecurity. The evaluators collaborated with project volunteers to co-design and implement a Photovoice process, whereby residents used photos to describe their experiences accessing and utilising food. The opinions of project stakeholders and partners were sought through in-depth interviews. Document evaluation provided objective data to support these findings. Lastly, an economic evaluation was performed to provide a cost benefit analysis of the program. This was required to justify project spending and provide alternative scenarios whereby the program could become more cost efficient.

Summary: To generate meaningful evaluation findings for food security initiatives, academia should collaborate with local service providers and residents to co-design innovative evaluation methodologies.

Learning Objective: To describe the value of utilising community informed methods to robustly evaluate local responses to food insecurity.

Good Tucker, Good Advice: Implementation of National Feeding Guidelines in central Australia.

Authors: Ms Walbira Murray¹, Ms Jenna Pauli, Doctor Bronwyn Silver

Affiliations: ¹Central Australia Aboriginal Congress, Alice Springs, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (Congress) provides comprehensive primary health care to Aboriginal families in central Australia. High rates of failure to thrive and anaemia are common. The growth of most Aboriginal infants is satisfactory until breast milk becomes insufficient. The incidence of malnutrition rises sharply from 6 to 18 months of age when complementary food is advised. Simultaneously, infants are vulnerable to a wide range of infections, entering the cycle of infection-malnutrition. Deficits acquired at this age are difficult to compensate for later in childhood. This study investigated the implementation of National Infant Feeding Guidelines in a remote Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation.

Methods: Using an Integrated Quality Improvement framework, a baseline audit of interventions was undertaken. Surveys of primary health care providers were completed to ascertain current practice and knowledge; this was followed by training. A 'food basket' survey was also conducted in remote stores to determine availability and prices.

Results: Across Congress program areas, inconsistent infant feeding advice was given. Of the 40 surveys completed, 93% were not aware of or used the guidelines. At eight weeks post training (n=35): 76% of participants reported using the information

provided and 80% had specifically advised caregivers on iron rich foods. Confidence increased in providing advice. Limited access to recommended foods and increased pricing was found in remote stores.

Conclusion: Current National Infant Feeding Guidelines are challenging to implement in remote Aboriginal Australia. Consideration of the cultural, social and geographical context needs further investigation for implementation to be successful.

2B - Workshop

Parkland 2, 1:15pm – 2:45pm

The impact of supermarkets on public health: goals for improvement in Australia

Authors: Mrs Claire Pulker¹, Dr Christina Pollard^{1,2}, Dr Sue Booth³, Professor John Coveney³, Ms Sarah Pennell⁴, Dr Jane Dixon⁵

Affiliations: ¹Curtin University, Bentley, Australia, ²East Metropolitan Health Service, East Perth, Australia, ³Flinders University, Bedford Park, Australia, ⁴Foodbank Australia, North Ryde, Australia, ⁵ANU, Canberra, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Supermarkets hold a powerful position in the Australian food system, acting as the primary gatekeepers – making decisions about the products available, price, promotional activity, aisle and shelf location, and point-of-sale merchandising, all of which influence food choice. Most Australians make food purchases in supermarkets; therefore there is great potential to influence population purchasing habits and dietary intake. Supermarkets may also impact food insecurity, making significant donations to charities of food that would otherwise be wasted. Supermarkets argue they respond to consumer demand and need to deliver shareholder value, yet there is a lack of transparency and understanding around many of their practices. In the current regulatory environment, supermarkets privately govern the food system which impacts suppliers. Supermarkets pose multiple complex challenges and we depend on them to support a healthy and sustainable food system.

Workshop format: The core themes of supermarket power, impact on food choice, and commitment to corporate social responsibility will be workshopped. Participants from a range of food-related disciplines will explore ways to hold supermarkets to account in achieving better outcomes for the community through shareholder action and food democracy.

Learning objectives:

1. Examine the power of supermarkets within the Australian food system;
2. Describe the impact of supermarket power on public health;
3. Understand the potential for healthy supermarket environments to reduce diet-related non-communicable diseases; and
4. Understand the challenges of minimising food waste, and the implications of supermarket food donations on the charitable sector and its' recipients.

2C - Workshop

Jen 1, 1:15pm – 2:45pm

Understanding dietary patterns approaches and their application to dietary guidelines

Authors: Professor Sarah McNaughton¹, Ms Kate Wingrove¹, Professor Mark Lawrence¹

Affiliations: ¹Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Dietary patterns have increasingly become a focus of research in the field of nutritional epidemiology. Conceptually, dietary patterns are defined as the quantities, proportions, variety or combinations of different foods and beverages in diets, and the frequency with which they are habitually consumed. However there are a number of different methodological approaches that have been used and each approach has strengths and weaknesses. There is now significant recognition among national and international researchers, policy-makers and practitioners that food and nutrition guidelines, policies and interventions should be informed by evidence obtained from dietary patterns research. There are significant gaps in our knowledge on the use and application of dietary patterns approaches.

Summary: This workshop will feature three presentations outlining the complexity and diversity of dietary patterns methodology, issues to consider in the use of dietary patterns approaches in dietary guidelines and an overview of the current state of science and literature relating to dietary patterns. The workshop will conclude with a panel discussion on the translation of dietary pattern methods to the formulation of dietary guidelines.

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand the methodological challenges of dietary patterns research and recent developments in the field of assessing dietary patterns and total diet.
2. To summarise the state of science and existing literature in dietary patterns and identify research gaps
3. Understand the application of dietary pattern approaches to dietary guidelines

2D - Workshop

Jen 2, 1:15pm – 2:45pm

Community and Public Health Nutrition Workforce Futures

Authors: Dr Helen Vidgen¹, Dr Andrea Begley², Prof Danielle Gallegos¹, Prof Mark Lawrence³, Dr Penelope Love³, Ms Barbara Radcliffe⁴, Ms Christine Innes-Hughes⁵

Affiliations: ¹Queensland University Of Technology, Kelvin Grove, Australia, ²Curtin University, Perth, Australia, ³Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia, ⁴Metro South Health and Hospital Service, Brisbane, Australia, ⁵NSW Health, Sydney, Australia

Abstract:

The training of a specialised community and public health nutrition (CPHN) workforce assumes they are optimally placed to address food and nutrition issues at a population and community level. However, concomitant with the rise of diet as the leading risk factor contributing to the burden of disease in Australia, has been a dramatic disinvestment in this workforce. Permanent, full time nutritionist positions embedded in communities or population settings are few. If an organisation invests in a nutrition intervention it is increasingly implemented by generalist staff often on temporary appointments. This approach limits the extent to which nutrition issues can be effectively addressed. In addition, a professionally connected workforce has a greater capacity to collaborate and strategically act in a complementary way.

Objectives:

1. Identify the current workforce and mandates for action
2. Analyse global, national and state trends in CPHN to support workforce development
3. Develop a business case for a work setting for a CPHN position

Workshop agenda:

Part A: short presentations which will:

- Examine national and global developments which highlight the importance of the case for investing in community and PHN in workforce future (ML)
- Present available data on the Australian Community and Public Health Nutrition workforce by jurisdiction and sector and mandates for workforce (AB, CIH, PL, BR)
- Explore global workforce trends (DG)
- Consider how these trends apply to community and public health nutrition work

Part B: facilitated activity to:

- Draft a business case
- Explore broader opportunities for workforce futures

Wednesday 21 November 2018

3A – Table Top Presentations

Jen 1 & 2, 11:00am - 12:30pm

Who cares and why it matters: Non health collaborations leading healthy change

Authors: Ms Veronica Graham¹, Mr Will Dalton², Ms Jessica Eccles¹, Mr Malcolm Brown²

Affiliations: ¹Department of Health and Human Services, Melbourne, Australia, ²Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, Melbourne, Australia

Abstract:

Context: Food systems play a critical role in supporting population health. A healthier food system requires collaborations and action between multiple sectors outside of health to lead healthy change. Economic impacts, viable markets as well as links to policy and practical support all build the case for long term transformation creating a healthier food supply as the norm.

Outcomes and Analysis: The session will focus on multiple successful collaborations that have emerged from the Victorian Healthy Eating Enterprise (VHEE), using a collective impact approach to support healthier eating and improve access and supply of nutritious food at a state level. The VHEE is a partnership of up to 300 stakeholders including government, industry, health professionals and communities. There will be opportunity for an in-depth discussion into factors that forged the successful collaboration between agriculture, industry and health to support healthy food innovation to meet government healthy food policies in key state settings.

Learning Objectives: Understand the critical factors of success in establishing and maintaining a state multi-sector platform for collaboration to improve population nutrition.

Analysis of collective impact actions at state level led by non-health sectors and why it matters in the long term to improve population health

South West Food Community: Connecting stakeholders and government to improve food security.

Authors: Dr Stephanie Godrich¹, Dr Sharon Zivkovic², Ms Emily Humphreys², Dr Melissa Stoneham³, Ms Melinda Edmunds³, Professor Amanda Devine¹

Affiliations: ¹School of Medical and Health Sciences, Edith Cowan University, Joondalup, Australia, ²Wicked Lab, Victoria Square Tarntanyangga, Australia, ³Public Health Advocacy Institute of Western Australia, Bentley, Australia

Abstract:

Context: Food security is a complex topic relating to sufficient physical, economic and social access to nutritious food. A comprehensive approach is required to understand food security system actors in rural Western Australia (WA). This presentation will prompt discussion regarding how an Australian-first pilot project in South West WA will build communities' adaptive capacity to improve food security.

Process: Complex adaptive systems and systemic innovation theory informed this project's methodology. A survey/interview tool was developed to understand the characteristics of food security-focused initiatives and their contribution to the food security system. A region-based 'solution ecosystem' (map) will be generated. A multi-sector group workshop will bring together government and community stakeholders to review results highlighting strengths and gaps in opportunity that could be harnessed. Workshop participants will co-design strategies to address gaps in opportunity, by amending current initiatives or developing new initiatives. A purpose-built online platform will house the map, evidence, professional development and advocacy strategies.

Analysis: Survey/interview data will be analysed using an online tool. Workshop data will be analysed thematically to understand key themes, with the solution ecosystem updated with additional co-designed initiatives.

Outcomes: This project will increase the adaptive capacity of government and community stakeholders to improve food security, through an online mapping process, stakeholder workshop and purpose-built web platform.

1. To increase understanding of current initiatives being implemented to support food security, among South West WA government/community stakeholders.
2. To increase identification and adoption of more effective food security initiatives among South West WA government/community stakeholders.

A Food Stress Index to identify families at risk of food stress.

Authors: Mr Tim Landrigan¹, Dr Christina Pollard¹

Affiliations: ¹*Curtin University, Belmont, Australia*

Abstract:

Introduction: Food stress is a similar concept to housing stress and occurs when a household needs to spend more than 25% of their disposable income on food. Households at risk of food stress are vulnerable to food insecurity as a result of inadequate income. A Food Stress Index aims to identify these at-risk households using a range of variables to create an index.

Methods: Candidate variables were identified in a multi-dimensional framework consisting of: household demographics, household income, household expenses, financial stress indicators, food security and food availability. The candidate variables were expressed as proportions, of either persons or households, in a geographic area. The candidate variables were taken from Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census data, ABS Household Expenditure Survey and the Food Access and Cost Survey. Principal Component Analysis was used to determine the final variables which resulted in a final set of weighted raw scores. These scores were then scaled to produce the index scores for the Food Stress Index.

Results: The Food Stress Index was developed for Western Australian postal areas. The results were also compared with the ABS Socio-Economic Indexes For Areas (SEIFA) to determine suitability.

Conclusion and Recommendations: The Food Stress Index was found to be a suitable indicator of risk of food stress in Western Australian households. Further research needs to be done to extend the index methodology to all Australian households.

A planetary health approach to reducing pre-consumer losses in sheep value chains

Authors: Ms Kate Wingett¹, Professor Robyn Alders¹, Professor Margaret Allman-Farinelli¹

Affiliations: ¹*School of Life and Environmental Sciences and Charles Perkins Centre, University Of Sydney, Sydney, Australia*

Abstract:

Study rationale: Sustainably producing sufficient volumes of safe, nutritious food to achieve global food and nutrition security is a major challenge facing humanity (sustainable development goal (SDG) 2). Reducing food loss and waste is a crucial component of meeting this challenge (SDG 12). The Australian sheep industry produces significant volumes of energy-dense, nutrient-dense animal-sourced food annually, as well as being a world leader in wool production. Realising a sustainable sheep industry that positively contributes to public health is vital for both rural and urban Australia.

Method: a desktop review of pre-consumer losses from the Australian sheep meat value chain and the nutrient content of Australian meat and offal was performed. This included searching scientific databases as well as publicly available databases.

Results: Australia is the second largest sheep producer in the world. Mutton and offal are the most nutrient-dense products of all terrestrially-farmed animals in Australia. Yet Australians eat very small amounts of mutton and offal. Concurrently, micronutrient deficiencies are impacting communities domestically and globally. The Food and Agricultural Organization reports in 2013, more than 17 million kilograms of Australian sheep and goat meat products were put to uses other than direct human consumption. This would provide more than one million people with a year-supply of red meat.

Conclusion: Promoting consumption of mutton and offal locally may lead to improved nutritional outcomes for Australians, while simultaneously maintaining profitability of sheep farming and reducing the number of animals that need to be farmed to sustainably meet our food and nutrition requirements.

Food system actors demonstrating willingness to change towards a sustainable food system.

Authors: Ms Ros Sambell¹, Professor Amanda Devine¹, Dr Steph Godrich¹, Ms Lesley Andrew¹, Mr Justin Wolfgang², Mr Dieter Van den Broeck³, Ms Katie Stubley⁴, Dr Nick Rose^{5,6}, Mr Trevor Shilton⁷, Professor Lenore Newman⁹, Ms Robina Crook⁹, Professor Pierre Horwitz¹

Affiliations: ¹*Edith Cowan University, Joondalup, Australia*, ²*Natural Resource Management, Perth, Australia*, ³*Commonland Foundation, Amsterdam, The Netherlands*, ⁴*University of Western Australia - Centre for Social Impact, Crawley, Australia*, ⁵*Sustain, Melbourne, Australia*, ⁶*William Anglis Institute, Melbourne, Australia*, ⁷*National Heart Foundation, Perth, Australia*, ⁸*University of the Fraser Valley, Abbotsford, Canada*, ⁹*Hassell, Perth, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Food systems are under increasing pressure from land uses that degrade and diminish soil and water. A step toward whole-of-system change for Western Australia's food system is to engage cross-sector stakeholders, to raise awareness about regenerative farming.

Methods: An intersectoral workshop engaged 120 participants including regenerative farmers, ecologists, health practitioners, educators, government, town planners and academics. Theory U, was utilised to form a common intent to create deeper understanding of the role various sectors were willing to play in a sustainable food system. Challenges of the current food system for Access, Production, Processing, Consumption were workshopped to elucidate pathways for transformational change; action statements of intention were shared. Findings were analysed thematically.

Results: Challenges across four domains included: Access: lack of knowledge about regenerative farming techniques; capital; land; local markets; government support; pressure to produce at low prices. Production: loss of land; drought; climate change; lack of ecological literacy; high costs as a driver of traditional farming practices. Processing: limited local innovation and scalable solutions for a point of difference; cost of processing systems; complex regulation. Consumption: lack of knowledge about healthy eating, food production, provenance, seasonality; low cost food vs. environmental value. Participants shared future action statements at an organisational and individual level, thus demonstrating a willingness for change.

Conclusion: Attendees demonstrated a support ethos of stewardship of the food system, formed strategies to add value to agricultural enterprises, build collaboration to protect the environment, and engage community to achieve a sense of purpose for future generations.

Household food security experiences among Indigenous Australians in a Northern Australian setting

Authors: Dr Leisa McCarthy¹, Professor Anne B Chang^{1,2}, A/ Professor Julie Brimblecombe¹

Affiliations: ¹Menzies School of Health Research, Alice Springs, Australia, ²Children's Health Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Food security (FS) is socially acceptable access at all times to ready availability of sufficient, nutritious and safe food for an active and healthy life. Relevant data to Indigenous Australians is limited, including the experience of FS.

Objective: Describe an urban Indigenous Australian community's experience of FS, influencing factors and coping strategies employed.

Methods: A qualitative research inductive process was used. Data were collected through an iterative process of inquiry involving initial interviews with 30 primary care-givers of children (aged 6 to 48 months) and subsequent in-depth interviews with 6 participants to further explore emerging themes. The first author audio-recorded and transcribed in-depth interviews and coded full transcripts after verification of coding by the senior author. Data were organised by major topic areas: Influencing Factors, Food Insecurity (FI) experiences, Impact on food selection, and Coping strategies.

Results: Different levels of household FI were experienced by most participants. Food affordability relating to income and living expenses was considered a major barrier to accessing a healthy diet. Large household bills impacted food choice and quality of meals. Coping strategies commonly reported were living with extended family and accessing family support.

Conclusion: FI is experienced by Indigenous Australian families, especially at times when large household bills are due for payment. For most, food insecurity is intermittent but mostly present. Family support is providing an essential social security safety net for many individuals and their families. The implications of this are important to consider in public policy to address food insecurity.

3B – Rapid Fire Presentations

Jen 3, 11:00am - 12:30pm

The political construction of obesity: an analysis of Australian parliamentary discourse

Authors: Mrs Cherie Russell¹, Dr Phillip Baker^{1,2}, Prof. Mark Lawrence^{1,2}, Dr Katherine Cullerton³

Affiliations: ¹Deakin University, Preston, Australia, ²Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition (IPAN), Burwood, Australia, ³The University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK

Abstract:

Background: Despite the significant health and economic burden of obesity in Australia, political priority for policy intervention has been weak. This has been attributed to the 'wickedness' of the problem, in particular the many stakeholders with competing interests and beliefs about what or who is causing the problem, and what should be done to resolve it. However, despite their central role in shaping policy responses, how political leaders interpret and portray (i.e. frame) obesity in political discourse is poorly understood.

Body: The aim of this project was to test and refine a framework that demonstrates how Australian parliamentarians 'construct' obesity through framing. A framework synthesis approach and framing analysis method was adopted. An initial theoretical framework was derived from relevant theory, then tested and modified through an analysis of transcripts of Australian Parliamentary debates. Four steps were undertaken: initial theoretical framework development; search for relevant debate transcripts; analysis of transcripts; synthesis and framework modification.

Summary: Preliminary results show that parliamentarians frame the causes, harms, risks, responsibilities and solutions to obesity in ways that reflect their political party ideology whilst drawing upon frames that resonate across ideologies. Neoliberal discourse was prominent, emphasising minimum government intervention and personal responsibility, contrasting with discourse emphasising systemic drivers of obesity, industry culpability, and a strong role for government. Further analysis of this data is currently underway to refine the framework and results. The framework helps to elucidate how parliamentarians 'construct' obesity as a political problem, thereby generating new insights to inform strategic communication by advocates.

Risks, benefits and efficacy of food reformulation within the Healthy Food Partnership

Authors: Mr Brandon I¹, Professor Mark Lawrence¹, Dr Phillip Baker¹

Affiliations: ¹Deakin University, Burwood, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Dietary risk-factors along with obesity are the leading contributors to the global burden of disease. The Australian government's Healthy Food Partnership (HFP) promotes voluntary reformulation, supported by the HSR system, as its flagship policy intervention in an effort to improve the nutritional quality of the food supply, within the public-private partnership (PPP) model. Whilst the HFPs goals are laudable, it is unclear as to whether the HFP can balance the numerous commercial interests of key stakeholder members, whilst at the same time deliver favourable public health outcomes.

Body: In this case-study, policy documents from Rudd to Turnbull governments (2007-2018) were systematically searched and evaluated for comprehensiveness against the NOURISHING framework, to understand the narrowing of Australia's nutrition policy agenda. In-depth, semi-structured interviews of key-informants were conducted to elucidate the various risks and benefits of the HFPs reformulation intervention, as well as the influence of key stakeholder members in directing Australia's nutrition policy towards a PPP-centred agenda.

Summary: Executive committee stakeholder membership and PPP governance structure appear to favour food industry commercial interests, which presents a significant risk to the efficacy of the HFP. Furthermore, voluntary reformulation may serve as a barrier against effective policy interventions and the development of a comprehensive national nutrition policy.

Learning Objectives:

- (1) Describe how the nutrition policy agenda in Australia has narrowed over time;
- (2) Describe the risks and benefits of the HFPs food reformulation intervention; and
- (3) Assess the efficacy of the HFP in balancing stakeholder interests within the PPP model.

The science and politics of Australia's health star rating system

Authors: Professor Mark Lawrence¹

Affiliations: ¹Deakin University, Geelong, Australia, Geelong, Australia

Abstract:

Background: The Health Star Rating (HSR) system and the Dietary Guidelines (DGs) represent contrasting approaches to tackling dietary risk factors. Nutrient profiling informs HSRs and dietary pattern systematic reviews inform DGs. The HSRs nutrient-orientation and the DGs food/diet-orientation reflect competing worldviews of causes of and solutions to dietary problems. This study's aims were, to: i) assess alignment of the HSR and DGs; and ii) analyse the HSR's development, implementation and evaluation processes.

Method: Mintel Global New Products Database was searched for every new food product displaying a HSR from 27/6/14 until 30/6/17. Foods were categorised as five food group or 'discretionary'.

The advocacy coalition framework was applied to critically analyse data collected on policy actors, their worldviews and HSR advocacy activities.

Results: 56.7% of discretionary foods displayed ≥ 2.5 'health' stars. Actors supporting the HSR are characterised by a nutrient-oriented worldview towards policy activities. A coalition of pro-HSR actors have pursued advocacy activities especially media use and framing the causes of dietary risks and how HSR flaws are rationalised.

Conclusion: The current HSR system is undermining DGs by facilitating discretionary food marketing. Actors sharing a nutrient-centric worldview have coalesced for HSR advocacy. Future food will be shaped by HSR and DGs alignment. Reforms of the HSR's design so discretionary foods display warning symbols or are capped at 1 – 2 health stars is a priority.

Learning objectives

- Current HSR and DGs conflict but principles can support their alignment
- Understanding science and politics interplay is critical for future food regulation

Support for food policy initiatives to address obesity-related lifestyle factors

Authors: Ms Wendy Watson¹, Ms Lyndal Wellard-Cole¹, Ms Clare Hughes¹

Affiliations: ¹*Cancer Council NSW, Woolloomooloo, Australia*

Abstract:

Context: Over 30% of all cancers are preventable. Obesity, poor diet and lack of physical activity are among the preventable risk factors for cancer. Policy measures to address overweight and obesity can help reduce prevalence of obesity-related cancers, however community support is vital for policy change.

Process: The study investigated awareness of the link between cancer and obesity-related lifestyle factors in the NSW community, and assessed community support for food policy initiatives, including food labelling, food marketing regulation and food taxes.

Analysis: Online surveys of 2,474 and 3,188 NSW adults were conducted in 2013 and 2016 respectively. Questions assessed awareness of lifestyle behaviours and cancer risk and gauged support for related policy measures. Associations between demographic factors, awareness of obesity-related risk factors for cancer and support for food policy initiatives were analysed.

Outcomes: 2013 results showed only 17.5% of participants were aware that obesity, poor diet, insufficient fruit and vegetable consumption, and physical inactivity are linked to cancer. Participants who were aware of the link between obesity-related lifestyle factors and cancer were more likely to support food policy initiatives than those who were unaware. The presentation will compare 2013 and 2016 results. Improving awareness of links between diet, physical activity and cancer risk may achieve higher levels of community support for food policy interventions.

Learning objectives

1. Learn about community support for food policy initiatives.
2. Gain an understanding of how raising awareness of diet- and physical activity-related risk factors can help refine communication strategies and advocacy for policy change.

Lessons for Public Health Nutrition Involvement in Food Regulation Policy

Authors: Ms Bronwyn Ashton¹, Associate Professor Cassandra Star¹, Professor Mark Lawrence², Professor John Coveney¹

Affiliations: ¹*Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia*, ²*Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: This research aimed to understand how the policy ‘problem’ was represented in food regulatory decision-making, and the implications for public health nutrition participation in future policy development.

Methods: Bacchi’s (2009) “what’s the problem represented to be?” discourse analysis method was applied to a case study of voluntary fortification (VF) policy, developed by the Australia and New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council between 2002 and 2012. Key documents used in the development of the policy were collected, and a series of in-depth, semi-structured, telephone interviews were conducted with key informants involved in the policy process.

Results: In the 57 key documents, citizen, public health and government stakeholders represented VF as a problem of public health. Industry represented it as a problem of commercial benefit. The problem was also represented as one of commercial benefit in both the initial consultation paper and the final policy, indicating stakeholder debate did not alter the outcome.

The 13 key informants represented VF as a problem of commercial benefit, indicating citizen, government and public health stakeholders viewed the final policy as unsupportive of public health. Further, a struggle for supremacy between industry and public health stakeholders was evident in the data, with VF also represented as a problem of power.

Conclusion: This research indicates that in food regulation, the battle is often fought and won at the initial framing of the problem in the earliest policy process stages. If public health nutritionists leave their participation until formal consultation stages, the battle may already be lost.

The self-regulatory scheme for alcohol warning labels is failing consumers

Authors: Ms Meredythe Crane¹, Ms Madeleine Day¹

Affiliations: ¹*Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE), Canberra, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: In Australia, there is no requirement for alcohol products to display health warning labels, nutrition information and ingredient lists, despite Government reviews recommending this.

Warnings labels are an important public health strategy as they promote health messages at point of sale and point of consumption. They are particularly important in informing pregnant women about the risks of alcohol consumption during pregnancy and preventing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) which are caused by maternal alcohol consumption during pregnancy.

Methods: In the lead up to Ministerial decisions on alcohol warning labels, FARE commissioned independent research on consumer understanding of the current health warning labels being used by the alcohol industry. FARE also examined examples of pregnancy warning labels that are currently being placed on alcohol products in Australia under the voluntary industry scheme.

Results: Many alcohol producers in Australia appear to be deliberately abusing the voluntary system by manipulating the meaning, size and legibility of the pregnancy 'warning' label in order to reduce its impact on consumer behaviour.

Research on consumer understanding of the current labels confirms that they are not noticeable or clear enough to have an impact on consumer behaviour.

Conclusion: Ultimately, industry conduct calls into question the efficacy of a self-regulatory or voluntary scheme as a mechanism to provide consumer information.

Learning objectives: Delegates will be able to:

- Understand how alcohol product labelling contributes to disease prevention efforts
- Learn about how consumers interpret and act upon label information
- Critically reflect upon the strengths and weaknesses of regulatory approaches

Price promotions and household food purchases: evidence from New Zealand.

Authors: Ms Christina Zorbas¹, Dr Helen Eyles², Associate Professor Liliana Orellana¹, Dr Cahit Guven¹, Professor Anna Peeters¹, Professor Cliona Ni Mhurchu², Dr Kathryn Backholer¹

Affiliations: ¹Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia, ²The University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand

Abstract:

Background: The ubiquitous promotion of unhealthy, ultra-processed foods and beverages has led to recent policy recommendations to restrict price promotions on these products. Evidence is yet to conclusively determine the extent to which price promotions are purchased across different food categories, and whether this differs by income level.

Methods: Food and beverage purchase data for 2016-2017 were obtained from a nationally representative panel of 1,778 New Zealand households. Over 1.9 million purchases were categorised by level of processing (using the NOVA classification). Linear mixed models accounting for sampling weights were used to estimate (i) the proportion of purchases with a price promotion (overall and across NOVA categories) and (ii) the mean difference in the quantity of items purchased on promotion compared to off promotion. Analyses were stratified by equivalised household income.

Results: In total, 49% of foods and beverages were purchased on price promotion. This was highest for processed (59%) and ultra-processed foods (55%) compared to unprocessed foods (45%). Low-income households purchased a higher proportion of their foods and beverages when price promoted (51% overall compared with 45% for high-income households). The largest increase in the quantity of items purchased on promotion compared to off promotion, was for ultra-processed foods.

Conclusions: Price promotions are highly prevalent among unhealthy food and beverage purchases in New Zealand. Restricting price promotions on unhealthy products may effectively and equitably improve household purchases.

Learning objectives:

1. To understand how foods are purchased when price promoted.
2. To understand the implications of price promotions for policy.

Implementation lessons for school food policy-making in Samoa and the Philippines

Authors: Ms Erica Reeve¹, Ms Anne-Marie Thow², Mr Gary Sacks¹

Affiliations: ¹Global Obesity Centre, Centre for Population Health Research, Deakin University, Burwood, Australia, ²Menzies Centre for Health Policy, Sydney, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Regulating the school food environment is an important way of promoting the adoption of healthy dietary behaviours by children, particularly in low-resource settings, where food insecurity and poor nutrition literacy contributes to the development of diet-related NCDs. Sustained implementation of food policies in education setting is however a challenge for many countries.

Methods: We applied policy theory to qualitative case-studies conducted in Samoa and the Philippines to identify issues affecting policy implementation.

Results: We identified a large gap between the foods being provided in schools and those recommended in the relevant policy frameworks. Despite substantial efforts by policymakers in both countries, policy compliance had not improved significantly over time.

Food affordability represented a major barrier to policy implementation, as did the availability and promotion of cheap, processed foods in the school vicinity. Existing policies were found to be unclear to implementers, and were not supported by effective monitoring and strong enforcement processes. Despite a committed group of policy leaders, policymakers found it difficult to delegate responsibility for implementation to 'agents' they had little control over, nor enforce their actions. The degree in which actors exercised 'agency' was influenced by their capacity to act, their motivation, and their food literacy.

Conclusions/Learning objectives: Efforts to implement nutrition policies in education settings in these countries is likely to need increased resourcing, clearer technical guidance, and the political will to adopt strategies to improve the broader food environment. Stronger implications for non-compliance would likely enhance policy outcomes where actor 'agency' negatively affects implementation.

Corporate Political Activity: how self-regulation strategically pre-empts nutrition policy

Authors: Ms Jennifer Lacy-nichols¹, Dr Gyorgy Scrinis¹, Dr Rachel Carey¹

Affiliations: ¹University of Melbourne

Abstract:

Background: Public health researchers argue that self-regulation is a Corporate Political Activity (CPA) that seeks to pre-empt government regulations that could threaten corporate profits. Existing research on food industry CPA has primarily focused on documenting the existence of self-regulation. This paper will examine the motivations driving its development and the strategies used to promote self-regulation to policy makers.

Methods: We used a dataset of industry documents published by the Australian Beverages Council (ABC) between 1998 and 2016. We analysed how the ABC voiced its political motivations about self-regulation and what internal nutrition policies it developed prior to its public launch of self-regulation. We analysed two promotional strategies: funding research and writing policy submissions.

Results: Between 1998 and 2006, the ABC shifted from a defensive strategy that denied the role of its products in obesity to a more conciliatory strategy that emphasised the role of its industry in solutions to obesity. The ABC deliberately timed the launch of its self-regulation to coincide with an international public health congress. Following its launch, the ABC funded research demonstrating the efficacy of self-regulation and wrote submissions to government nutrition policies arguing that further regulation was unnecessary.

Conclusions: The soft drink industry uses self-regulation to bolster its reputation and influence nutrition policy. Strategic timing plays a key role in the political influence of self-regulation.

Learning outcomes:

- Self-regulation amplifies other CPA strategies.
- The food industry learned from the experience of the tobacco industry.
- Web archive analysis can augment existing methods for researching CPA.

Australian Food Environments: a systematic review to support evidence-based policy

Authors: Ms Cindy Needham¹, Associate Professor Gary Sacks¹, Professor Steven Allender¹, Associate Professor Liliana Orellana², Doctor Claudia Strugnell¹

Affiliations: ¹Global Obesity Centre (GLOBE), World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention, Faculty of Health, Deakin University., Geelong, Australia, ²Biostatistics Unit, Faculty of Health, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Unhealthy food environments, caused by changes in the global food system, are the primary drivers of obesity. Policy led interventions aimed at reversing obesogenic environments will be key to success. Considerable political difficulties are faced by policy makers when considering regulatory interventions for the food environment in the absence of a strong evidence-base. Recent systematic reviews of food environment literature in Canada and USA highlight that findings are not generalizable across countries. In Australia, it is unclear how the food environment has changed overtime, its healthiness, or associations with diet and obesity.

Aim: To systematically review the literature in Australia examining the food environment; and associations between the food environment, diet and obesity.

Objectives: To describe the current literature on the composition of Australian Food Environment (AFE), and reported changes overtime. To examine variation(s) in healthfulness by geographical position and area level socio-economic position. Finally, to examine reported association(s) between the AFE, diet and/or obesity and provide recommendations for future studies.

Search Strategy: The search strategy was undertaken in March 2018 using relevant search terms to identify studies reporting on Australian community (e.g. food retail density & proximity), consumer (e.g. price, availability) and information (e.g. marketing, advertising) food environments. Duplicates removed, 3,429 papers were identified.

Data Sources: Ebsco (CINHAL, Global Health and urban Studies); Embase; Web of Science. (MEDLINE).

Results: Full text review of 424 papers is currently underway, results will be finalized prior to presentation. Preliminary findings indicate the presence of ‘food swamps’ in the AFE.

Effective advocacy strategies for influencing government nutrition policy: a conceptual model

Authors: Dr Katherine Cullerton¹, Dr Timothy Donnet², Prof Amanda Lee³, Prof Danielle Gallegos²

Affiliations: ¹University Of Cambridge, Cambridge, United Kingdom, ²Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia, ³Sax Institute, Sydney, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Influencing public policy change can be difficult and complex, particularly for those with limited power and resources. For any one issue there may be several groups, including the commercial sector, advocating from different policy perspectives. However, much of the public health advocacy literature and tools available are based on research from only one side of an issue. This limited perspective deprives advocates of potential insight into the most effective levers for this complex and difficult process.

Methods: The results from three previous studies by the authors: a systematic literature review, a social network analysis of key actors in Australian nutrition policy plus in-depth interviews with key actors were compared, contrasted, prioritised and mapped to answer the question “how can resource poor organisations increase their influence in the nutrition policymaking process?” Policy process theories and network theories were also used to compare, contrast and prioritise the results and to aid synthesis.

Results: By integrating significant policy process theories and network theory with three previous studies exploring power and influence in nutrition policy in Australia, a conceptual model was developed. The model incorporates contextual factors as well as practical strategies that can be undertaken by all potential nutrition advocates.

Conclusion: This conceptual model is intended to inform and guide the way nutrition advocates understand nutrition policymaking in order to increase their influence over it. Through understanding the key steps outlined in the model advocates will be better equipped to increase political and public will, and affect positive policy change.

Sugar content for packaged yoghurts and milk in Australia and United Kingdom

Authors: Dr Sarinda Singh¹, MS Daisy Coyle¹, Dr Rhoda Ndanuko¹, Ms Liping Huang¹, Assoc Prof Jason Wu^{1,2}

Affiliations: ¹Food Policy Division, The George Institute For Global Health, Sydney, Australia, ²University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Dietary guidelines recommend reduced fat dairy, leading to the increased development of reduced or fat-free dairy products with added sugar. With concerns over the adverse effect of excess intake of sugar, the aim of this study is to examine the sugar content of packaged yoghurts and milks in Australia (AU) and the United Kingdom (UK).

Methods: Nutrient values for packaged yoghurts and milks were collected from nutrient information panels, extracted in March 2018 from the George Institute FoodSwitch databases, and products were classified as ‘plain’ or ‘flavoured’. Added sugar was estimated by subtracting average values of intrinsic sugar (estimated from the Australian Food Composition Database) from the total sugar content. Differences in mean total sugar content between types of products and countries were assessed by unpaired t-tests.

Results: 2545 yoghurt products were analysed (AU, n=1145; UK, n=1399). Overall, plain yoghurts had a mean total sugar content of 6.3g/100g that were similar between countries (AU 6.5g/100g; UK 6.0g/100g). Overall, flavoured yoghurts had about double the mean total sugar content compared to plain yoghurt (12.7g/100g; Pt-test<0.0001). Imputed mean added sugar level was 6.1g/100g for flavoured yoghurts, i.e. on average, three daily serves of flavoured yoghurts would contribute ~74% of daily sugar intake advised by the World Health Organization (~25g). Analyses are ongoing for milks and will be completed by July, 2018.

Conclusion: Findings from this study suggest flavoured dairy yoghurts contain significant levels of added sugars, and policies that promote reformulation to reduce sugars from such products may be needed.

3C – Rapid Fire Presentations

Jen 4, 11:00am - 12:30pm

Responding to Big Food's CSR strategies: expert recommendations for public health action

Authors: Miss Zoe Richards¹, Dr Lyn Phillipson^{1,2}, Professor Heather Yeatman¹

Affiliations: ¹*School of Health and Society, Faculty of Social Sciences, University Of Wollongong, Wollongong, Australia,*

²*Australian Health Services Research Institute, Faculty of Business, University of Wollongong, Wollongong, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Big Food companies assert that corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies are a way for corporations to give back to the community and contribute to social good. However, public health experts question the motives of Big Food companies and fear CSR could be creating positive associations with unhealthy products and brands. This research systematically explored when, what and how experts perceived actions should be taken in response to Big Food's CSR activities.

Methods: One to one qualitative, semi-structured interviews with international public health experts (N=30), from academic positions at universities and civil society positions, from eight countries.

Results: A small group of experts expressed that action on CSR should be taken, but it was not the most pressing priority. However most experts suggested that action should be taken now, and within the context of a broader public health framework. Their recommended actions included: counter-marketing campaigns targeted at parents and community organisations to denormalise CSR in the community; and direct lobbying of government, aimed at public policy makers.

Conclusions: Additional and consistent actions to respond to Big Food's CSR activities need to be embedded within existing public health frameworks that promote healthy food environments.

Recommendations: Further debate is required within the academic community regarding the consequences of not calling CSR out as marketing, and what is required to shift community perceptions towards viewing CSR as strategic marketing that needs to be restricted.

Recipient perspectives on current and potential models of food relief in SA

Authors: Dr. Sue Booth¹, Dr. Christina Pollard², Professor John Coveney¹, Associate Professor Ian Goodwin-Smith¹

Affiliations: ¹*Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia,* ²*Curtin University, Perth, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Two models of food relief exist in response to food insecurity; charitable and social enterprise models. Charitable services are struggling to meet increased need and social enterprise initiatives in the Australian emergency food relief sector are under developed. This study sought to investigate recipient perspectives on current charitable and potential social enterprise models of food relief in South Australia. Recipients' views were also sought on how charitable food models might be improved and aspects of social enterprise food models that might be desirable to better meet the needs of people who are food insecure.

Method: Seven focus groups with food relief recipients were conducted across metropolitan, regional and rural South Australia. A semi-structured interview with visual stimuli were used and the data thematically analysed.

Results: Qualitative focus group data indicate that recipients want food relief that is a blend of social enterprise and charitable models. They want solidarity not charity, respect not stigma, co-operation and choice.

Conclusion: Based on participants views regarding food relief in South Australia, recipient-oriented services that encourage independence and autonomy as a pathway out of food insecurity are needed. Alternative models of food charity such as social enterprise models offer promise.

Learning objectives:

- (1) Understand the lived experience of food insecurity amongst South Australian recipients
- (2) Understand the two types of food relief models and aspects for recipient identified improvements.

Understanding contemporary food environments in the Pacific: a case study in Niue

Authors: Dr Anne-Therese McMahon¹, Dr Joanna Russell¹

Affiliations: ¹University of Wollongong, Wollongong, Australia

Abstract:

Many of the countries and territories within the Pacific Islands are currently going through nutrition transition with changing dietary patterns inclusive of western style foods. The emerging dietary patterns are associated with increased non-communicable disease prevalence linked to lifestyle changes such as increased consumption of processed foods high in fat, sugar and salt. Currently proxy measures of food security and dietary diversity are calculated based on household food acquisition data collected as part of the Household Income & Expenditure Surveys (HIES). Evidence from the Federated States of Micronesia HIES found that households reporting acquisition of discretionary foods had higher dietary diversity scores. Hence relying on high scores to evaluate dietary diversity and quality can be problematic and what is needed is more in-depth understanding about the local food environments and impact on household food procurement. A case study piloting mapping and observation methodology to examine the food environment and food choices/ behaviours will be conducted on the island of Niue. It is anticipated this study will identify key features and factors of a Pacific Island food environment that are critical to household food procurement. The methodological framework identified from this case study will be used to co-design an approach to examine other Pacific Islands' food environments and provide depth of knowledge for interpretation of findings from HIES data.

Evaluating policies for infant feeding protection, promotion and support.

Authors: Mrs Naomi Hull^{1,2}, Assoc Professor Julie Smith^{1,2}

Affiliations: ¹World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative, Ashgrove, Australia, ²Australian National University, Canberra, Australia

Abstract:

Background: In 2003, the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN) developed an easy to use assessment tool, The World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi). This was a pioneer initiative seeking to develop indicators for helping inform policy makers to scale-up countries breastfeeding programmes. It was designed to enable the systematic analysis of a nation's progress in relation to the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding. The assessment has been used by 94 countries around the world, to benchmark their current infant feeding policies and programs.

Objective: This study benchmarks the current policy environment in Australia.

Methods: We describe the background of the WBTi, how the WBTi Australia assessment was conducted, and the current results for Australia. The presentation will include how assessment results have been used, including in engaging with policymakers.

Results: In September 2017, academics, health professionals and breastfeeding and public health advocates attended a training workshop at the ANU on conducting a WBTi assessment for Australia. A core group was formed, data was collected and scoring completed from October 2017 to April 2018. The report was finalised in May 2018. Australia scored poorly. Plans for future advocacy and reassessment are being developed.

Conclusions: The WBTi Australia is an important community initiative which will inform public policy formulation on the forthcoming Australian National Breastfeeding Strategy.

Funding source: Funding and other support for the initial event was provided by the Australian National University (ANU) College of Asia and the Pacific and the ANU Gender Institute.

Influencing major stadia in Victoria to create health promoting sporting environments

Authors: Ms Tara Heneghan¹, Ms Jenny Reimers¹

Affiliations: ¹VicHealth, Carlton, Australia

Abstract:

Sporting stadia are in an ideal position to promote healthier choices by supporting the connection between physical activity and healthy eating to their spectators, players and staff. However, junk food and sugary drink marketing is prolific in stadia through sport sponsorship, signage and retail environments. In addition, accessibility to free drinking water in public spaces should be considered a civic right. Sports stadia need to be targeted as a priority setting to provide free drinking water, to nudge individuals to choose water over less healthy sugary drinks.

VicHealth's Water Initiative is an integrated program with the goal of more Victorians choosing water instead of sugary drinks. Part of the program supports installation of water fountains within major sporting stadia. In 2015, VicHealth established a partnership with Etihad Stadium and Yarra Valley Water to install and promote water fountains within this high profile Victorian sporting venue. VicHealth promoted the fountains with four AFL club partnerships who encouraged fans to refill water during their games at Etihad Stadium. Evaluation shows fountain use is strong. Key success factors included forming collaborative partnerships and using behavioural insights to inform placement and promotion of fountains – which can inform others who want to progress similar work.

The Etihad Stadium partnership represents the first major stadium to install and promote free drinking water in Victoria. VicHealth's vision is for all sporting venues in Victoria to provide drinking water fountains and we are utilising the leadership and learnings to influence other major stadia over the coming years.

Sugar Reduction in Remote Indigenous Communities

Authors: Miss Brianna Sanderson¹, Miss Jen Savenake, Mr Braedon Mclean

Affiliations: ¹*Outback Stores, Darwin, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Excessive sugary drink intake can contribute to health problems such as tooth decay, obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and chronic kidney disease. Outback Stores (OBS) is a Commonwealth owned retail management company which manages 37 remote Indigenous community stores in the NT, SA and WA.

Methods: OBS nutrition policy includes marketing strategies addressing price, promotion, product and placement designed to reduce the sales of sugary drinks. Volume of drinks derived from sales data across 37 stores was analysed using Microsoft Power BI.

Results: In 2017, the amount of sugar from sugary drinks sold in communities was 11.5 tonnes less than 2016. So far this year there has been a 6.5% reduction in the proportion of sugary drinks sold compared to the same period last year. Communities with higher engagement had larger reductions in sugary drinks

Conclusion: Further engagement with OBS store managers, Indigenous store owners and communities is vital for successful implementation of policies and to maintain reductions in sugary drink consumption. Education to support these strategies is a critical component of achieving positive outcomes. Additional funding has allowed further support in 10 communities. We are training store staff and local community members to become peer-educators or 'Good Food Champions' to run health promotional activities in their store with community members. Through sharing knowledge of healthy eating these 'Good Food Champions' are helping the community make better choices.

Learning objectives:

1. Sugar is a big issue in remote Indigenous communities.
2. Communities are taking the initiative to reduce sugar consumption

Transforming food environments in sport and recreation facilities

Authors: Ms Sharon Laurence¹, Ms Jessica Kempler¹, Ms Veronica Graham¹

Affiliations: ¹*Department of Health and Human Services, Melbourne, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Stepping out of the health system, governments can reduce the impact of obesogenic environments by leveraging opportunities to improve supply and promotion of healthier food and drinks in public settings.

Body: Healthy eating and physical activity work together to promote healthy lifestyles. Historically, increasing sports participation is a key driver across the sport and recreation (S&R) sector, with little focus on the significance of healthy eating. Public facilities largely supply and promote unhealthy foods and drinks, undermining messages about the importance of healthy eating in supporting healthy, active lifestyles.

The Victorian government's Healthy Choices: policy guidelines for sport and recreation centres aims to improve food and drink supply in these settings. Using a systems approach with multiple partners, multiple strategies have been delivered at the state and local level to drive uptake and support for this policy, and broader food and drink supply change.

This presentation outlines key policy drivers, lead adopters, implementation support structures and the business case for change within this sector.

Summary: It is estimated that across Victoria upwards of 120 S&R facilities are taking steps to reduce the dominance of unhealthy food and sugary drinks in preference for healthier options.

Learning objectives: Delegates understand:

1. Opportunities for governments and others to drive healthy changes to the food supply in public settings and communities.
2. Community outcomes of healthy changes to the food supply with respect to health as well as social and economic considerations.

Factors for success: how to change a school's food and drink culture

Authors: Ms Nicole Coyles¹, **Ms Michelle Fisher¹**

Affiliations: ¹Health Improvement Branch, ACT Health, ACT Government, Canberra, Australia

Abstract:

Background: The 2016 ACT Chief Health Officer's Report states approximately 25% of children in the

ACT are overweight or obese. Fresh Tastes is a free ACT Government service for Canberra primary schools to make healthy food and drinks a bigger part of everyday life for students. As of May 2019, 86% (n=93) of primary schools are involved, reaching 38,000 students.

Body: Schools committed to Fresh Tastes take a strengths-based, whole school approach over three years to improve children's knowledge, access to and consumption of healthy food and drinks. Fresh Tastes is an evidence-based initiative that uses models of best-practice for health behaviour change through the following action areas: classroom learning; food for sale; growing food; cooking food; food from home; and healthy food and drink guidelines.

Summary: As of May 2018, 26 ACT primary schools have completed three years of participation with all schools reporting a positive shift in their food and drink culture and environment. These schools have also identified the key factors that contributed to their success. Another 67 schools are expected to finish three years of involvement by 2021. The challenge moving forward is to ensure all schools are supported to sustain their positive changes.

Learning objectives:

- What is the Fresh Tastes model?
- What are the key factors for success to change a school's food and drink culture?

A unique opportunity to harness a multi-sectoral vision for sustainable food systems

Authors: Dr A Devine¹, Mrs Ros Sambell¹, Dr S Godrich¹, Mrs L Andrew¹, Mr J Wolfgang², Mr D Vandenbroeck³, Mrs K Stuble⁴, Dr N Rose⁵, Mr T Shilton⁶, Dr L Newman⁷, Mrs R Crook⁸, Dr P Horwitz¹, **M Miller**

Affiliations: ¹Edith Cowan University, Joondalup, Australia, ²Perth NRM, Belmont, Australia, ³Commonland, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, ⁴University of Western Australia, Nedlands, Australia, ⁵Sustain & William Angliss, Melbourne, Australia, ⁶Heart Foundation, Subiaco, Australia, ⁷University of the Fraser Valley, Abbotsford, Canada, ⁸HASSELL, Perth, Australia

Abstract:

Background: A whole-of-system change for Western Australia's food system requires multi-sector stakeholder dialogue. We explored the participant's perceived initiatives from a personal and organisational perspective that would facilitate momentum of food-system change.

Methods: Survey evaluation of a multi-sectoral workshop of 117 stakeholders including regenerative farmers, ecologists, health practitioners, educators, government, town planners and academics, driven by Theory U, captured perceptions of actions required to impact individual and organisational change for the food-system. Qualitative responses from 47 surveys (40.1% response rate) were analysed thematically using NVivo version 11.

Results: Education and communication about regenerative farming was deemed a priority, to raise awareness among school children, consumers and government and improve farmer transition to regenerative farming. Strategies included research translation, web-based presence and food labelling that differentiated conventional from regeneratively farmed products. Government funding was needed to support urgent research regarding benefits of foods grown regeneratively and support transition towards sustainable farming practices. Advocacy was needed to build momentum, as was re-inclusion of a carbon tax to incentivise local food security and reduce food miles. Stakeholders supported: peak industry bodies to champion principles; showcase early adopters of regenerative practices; the establishment of a government group to regulate land use, halt artificial fertiliser use and legislate for change. Stakeholders suggested generation of position statements, marketing of transparent practices and connecting food growers with consumers to shift behaviours.

Conclusions: Education, funding, research translation, government leadership and an overwhelming sense of stakeholder collaboration and partnership building were seen as fundamental to transform the food-system.

2018 Queensland Tuckshop Survey; creating profit from healthy food and drinks

Authors: Mrs Christine Stewart¹, Ms Aimee Johnston

Affiliations: ¹Queensland Association of School Tuckshops, Coorparoo, Australia

Abstract:

Background: School tuckshops are the ideal setting to encourage and inspire healthy eating amongst students and staff. Tuckshops can role model this by demonstrating and educating students that healthy menu items are also tasty. This supports nutrition messages taught in class and promotes the adoption of healthy, life long habits. Tuckshops also have the ability to generate profit and contribute funds for school resources. This study aims to challenge common assumptions that healthy school tuckshop menus are not profitable.

Objectives:

1. To investigate if a correlation exists between school tuckshop menus and profit.
2. To determine the factors that impact on the successful promotion of healthy foods and drinks to students at school while remaining financially viable.

Methods: Through funding received from the Queensland Government, QAST will administer a 15-minute computer assisted telephone interview (CATI) with approx. 500 Queensland tuckshop convenors during Term 2, 2018. The survey will collect qualitative and quantitative data on various aspects of running a tuckshop. Participating schools are also invited to submit tuckshop menus and financial information for analysis, which will be matched to CATI interview data prior to de-identification. Statistical analysis will be performed using IBM SPSS Statistical software.

Results: Survey findings will be available by the end of August 2018.

Conclusion: This research considers the correlation between profitability and the provision of healthy menu items within school tuckshops

Learning Objectives:

- Cooking onsite with fresh ingredients can improve profit margins in school tuckshops
- Understand the enablers and barriers to providing healthy tuckshop menus

Australian fast food environments: what have we learnt over the past decade?

Authors: Ms Lyndal Wellard-Cole¹, Mrs Wendy L Watson¹, Ms Clare Hughes¹

Affiliations: ¹Cancer Council NSW, Woolloomooloo, Australia

Abstract:

Context: Frequent fast food consumption can lead to weight gain. Australians are increasingly consuming fast foods. After scrutiny from public health and governments, industry united under the Quick Service Restaurant Forum, 'a platform for coordinated action on issues' in 2009. The Forum developed a marketing code and made changes to menus. Since then mandatory kilojoule labelling was introduced in five states and territories.

Process: An analysis of changes in fast food environments in the last decade was conducted, including QSR Forum activities on marketing to children, availability/accessibility of nutrition information, use of nutrition content and health claims and menu item nutrition composition.

Analysis: Introduction of the marketing code has not reduced advertising to children on television and other marketing forms are emerging. Despite mandatory menu labelling, the availability of comprehensive nutrition information in-store has reduced. Some chains used nutrition content and health claims on their websites, often on unhealthy foods. Despite this, there has been little change in nutrition composition of most menu offerings, meaning many remain unhealthy.

Outcomes: The Australian fast food environment is obesogenic. Chains could become more health-promoting by systematically reformulating menus, removing claims from unhealthy foods and providing full nutrition information in-store. Regulations on advertising to children are also required.

Learning objectives

1. Understand developments in fast food environments in response to scrutiny from public health, the government and the public, and whether this created healthier environments.
2. Recognise recommendations to make fast food environments less obesogenic.

Dining at altitude - the cooking and eating experiences of apartment-dwelling families.

Authors: Mrs Kate Dunn¹, Dr Fiona Andrews¹, Dr Elyse Warner¹

Affiliations: ¹Deakin University, Coorparoo, Australia

Abstract:

Background: The positive health effects of home cooking and eating for children are well documented, with the literature generally assuming that the home setting contains sufficiently well-designed space and adequate facilities to enable cooking and eating to occur effectively. However, for an increasing number of Australian families choosing to live in inner-city, high-rise apartments (designed predominantly for those without children), what constitutes a family home is changing significantly. To date, no research has been carried out to capture their cooking and eating experiences and how their practices are shaped by the apartment designs.

Methods: The current study sought to address this gap by qualitatively exploring parents' experiences of cooking and eating in high-density dwellings in inner Brisbane and Melbourne. Photo-elicitation interviewing was used to collect two sources of data appropriate to a phenomenological approach, namely photographs and one-to-one interviews, thereby accessing the life-worlds of seven mothers with young children.

Results: Two themes emerged. First, the family practices of home cooking and eating reflected deeply-held values the mothers were not prepared to compromise, despite the significant spatial and design constraints of their apartments. The second demonstrated how the mothers had to adapt to their apartments' compromised spaces and designs, albeit assisted by proximity to supermarkets and fresh food markets.

Conclusion and learning objectives: The findings point to further research opportunities and support the need for developing family-friendly apartment guidelines in Australia. These should include design guidelines for kitchen and dining spaces to enable families to promote healthy cooking and eating practices.

3D – Rapid Fire Presentations

Parkland 2, 11:00am - 12:30pm

Growing for the long haul: learnings on supporting young leaders

Authors: Ms Thea Soutar¹

Affiliations: ¹Youth Food Movement, Glebe, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Australia is home to a growing disparate community of young adults who are ambitious drivers of change in our food system. For 7 years, Youth Food Movement has provided a home for this group of educated, self-starting young people, providing a platform for this community to create events and digital campaigns to educate millennials about the Australian food system.

Body: YFM has consciously experimented with a variety of methods and approaches in how best to mobilise this community, with a vision to having both an immediate positive impact on our food system, and to support the growth of our future food leaders.

Our findings: Our greatest successes in mobilising this community have been those where we proactively fostered environments where young people could share their personal experiences and learnings with their peers in an open, non-judgemental environment. This experience was transformational for many members of the community.

Summary: Challenging the established systems power in food system is deeply challenging work. If we are to support and empower young people with the necessary skills they need to tackle these systems in the long term, we need to invest in creating safe spaces for them to share their unique experience of the world and develop a long-lasting capacity to listen both to their own inner compass, and to those around them.

Learning objectives:

- Understand useful methods for supporting young people create meaningful change in our food system

You can't promote healthy food choices when there is no choice

Authors: Ms Jillian Whelan^{1,4}, Dr Penelope Love², Dr Lynne Millar^{3,6}, Mrs Cherie Russell⁵, Ms Felicity Grainger⁵, Professor Steven Allender⁴, Professor Colin Bell^{1,4}

Affiliations: ¹School of Medicine, Deakin University, Geelong, Australia, ²Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition (IPAN), Early Prevention of Obesity in Childhood Centre of Research Excellence (EPOCH), School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences, Deakin University, Waurn Ponds, Australia, ³Australian Health Policy Collaboration, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia, ⁴School of Health and Social Development, Global Obesity Centre, Deakin University, Geelong, Australia, ⁵School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia, ⁶Australian Institute for Musculoskeletal Science, University of Melbourne, Sunshine, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Rurality is linked with higher rates of obesity and premature death from related chronic diseases. Poor diet is a leading modifiable risk factor and food environments a primary driver of unhealthy weight. Rural communities traditionally have fewer supermarkets and more general stores than urban centres, associated with less variety, poorer quality, higher prices, and unreliable access to an affordable, nutritious food supply. This study assessed the healthiness of the food environment in a rural Victorian Shire (pop ~ 7000)

Methods: As part of a broader obesity prevention intervention, we conducted a census audit of the food supply using an adapted Nutrition Environment Measurement Score for restaurants and food stores (NEMS-R and NEMS-S).

Results: Ground truthing identified 38 outlets, all were included in the data analysis. These were 11 food stores (5 supermarkets, 6 general stores) and 27 food service outlets (1 sit-down restaurant, 12 hotels/pubs, 7 cafes, 5 fast food, 2 bakeries). The average restaurant NEMS-R score was 3.0 (SD 4.0); total possible 21 (excluding children's menu). Food stores (NEMS-S) mean score of 16.60 (SD 8.67), total possible 54 points. Scores were higher in supermarkets compared to general stores.

Conclusions: Low scores indicate that availability and promotion of healthier food options is limited in food stores and restaurants across the shire. Out-shopping may result, lowering demand and reinforcing poor food supply. Urgent food supply interventions are required.

Learning objectives: To identify:

1. the extent of food supply challenges faced by rural communities,
2. up-stream food supply determinants for intervention.

Farmers' markets food price research project

Authors: Ms Jasmin Moore², Ms Sarah Why², Mr Adam Guise¹, Ms Kerry Gibson³, Dr Avigdor Zask¹

Affiliations: ¹Northern Nsw Local Health District, Lismore, Australia, ²Griffith University Dietetics & Nutrition student, ³Red Cross Food Security officer

Abstract:

Background: Nutrition and dietetics students from Griffith university conducted research comparing farmers' markets (FM) food prices and provenance with that of supermarkets (SM) and greengrocers (GG) in the Lismore local government area (LGA). This project was undertaken in partnership with the Northern NSW Local Health District and Red Cross.

Methods: Students gathered food price and provenance data from 6 FMs, 5 SMs and 3 GGs in the Lismore LGA over a 6 week period. Data collation and attributes were informed by similar previous studies using the Victorian food basket model. An additional criterion of provenance was included. Data was collated in spreadsheets and analysed. A report and infographics with key findings and messages was produced.

Results: A representative seasonal basket was \$187, \$213 and \$252 at SMs, FMs and GGs respectively. A basket of organic products was cheaper in FMs than SMs (\$50 and \$58 respectively).

Compared to SMs, nuts and vegetables were significantly cheaper, meat alternatives and dairy were more expensive and fruit were similarly priced.

Nearly 70% of FMs' produce was sourced within 50 km of Lismore, and nearly 97% within 150 km.

Conclusion: Results demonstrated that FMs were price competitive for fruit, vegetables and nuts, but more expensive for meat and dairy. FMs had a significantly higher proportion of locally produced food.

Learning objectives:

- Increase participants' knowledge of: 1. price comparison methodology, and 2. farmers' markets pricing and provenance.

Evaluating the Food Environment of an Australian University with Campuses Nationwide

Authors: Dr Carrie Tsai¹, Mr Scott Slater², Dr Rimante Ronto², Dr Klaus Gebel^{1,2,3}, Dr Jason Hao Yu Wu^{4,5}

Affiliations: ¹University Of Sydney, Sydney, Australia, ²Australian Catholic University, North Sydney, Australia, ³James Cook University, Cairns, Australia, ⁴The George Institute of Global Health, Newtown, Australia, ⁵University of New South Wales, Kensington, Australia

Abstract:

Background: In Australia, young adults have the highest proportion of energy from discretionary foods (41%). Universities are important settings to enhance food environments as large proportions of young adults spend substantial amounts of time at these locations. Yet, few studies have assessed the food environment of Universities in Australia. The current study aims to evaluate the healthiness of the food environment of food outlets at one large Australian University, which has campuses nationwide.

Methods: Cross-sectional assessments will be conducted across six campuses of the Australian Catholic University (ACU) (N=10 food outlets) using an audit tool designed to assess compliance with current NSW nutritional guidelines in parameters of availability, placement, and promotion of 'Everyday' or 'Occasional' products ('core' or 'discretionary,' according to the Australian Dietary Guidelines).

Results: Availability: Preliminary results based on four food outlets found that Everyday products made up 46% of products, with sugar-sweetened beverages making up 36% total beverages. None of the four fixed outlets met the guideline's availability benchmarks of ≥75% Everyday food and beverages. Placement: On average, food outlets did not meet recommendations of limiting 'Occasional' products in prominent positions, with checkout areas and countertops displaying 75% 'Occasional' items. Promotion: Half of meal deals included 'Occasional' products.

Conclusion: Preliminary baseline audit results show that substantial improvements in availability, placement, and promotion can be made on these University campuses to meet current nutrition guidelines. Future research is needed to assess if such findings are generalizable to other Universities, and if University management can improve the food environment based on this data.

Implementing targeted cross-curricular approaches to strengthen nutrition education in schools

Authors: Miss Katherine Cacavas¹

Affiliations: ¹James Cook University, Cairns/Townsville, Australia, ²Mossman State School, Mossman, Australia, ³Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)

Abstract:

Background: A 4-week Service Learning placement, undertaken during a Masters of Teaching course, built on previously implemented nutrition education models in rural/remote school communities through a targeted research project. At Mossman State School (MSS) in Far North Queensland (population ~55% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students), a contextually-relevant approach to curriculum delivery was trialled, embedding nutrition education across the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education learning area and the Australian Curriculum subjects: Digital Technologies and Media Arts.

Methods: An Action Research (AR) reference group was formed to develop, implement and reflect on curriculum delivery, with the purposeful intention of finding sustainable solutions. The group included representatives from James Cook University (JCU), MSS and the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). A mixed methodological approach captured information including quantitative (interactive surveys for students [n = 70] and staff [n = 5]) and qualitative (resource design, staff/student interviews and observations) data.

Results: Each class in the school (10 classes; Prep – Year 6) engaged in at least four targeted nutrition lessons. Students demonstrated increased nutrition knowledge (70% - 87%) following implementation of the curriculum. Students produced unique and creative resources using both digital technologies and visual arts media to effectively communicate health information to their wider community. Common interview themes emerged including barriers to developing and implementing effective curriculum connections given competing priorities in schools and the time needed to plan.

Conclusion: This project demonstrated that taking a cross-curricular approach to delivering nutrition education in schools can consolidate student learning experiences and reduce teacher workload, however it remains reliant on staff availability to sustain relevant planning, delivery and outcomes analysis.

Learning Objectives:

1. Link opportunities for embedding nutrition education across the Australian Curriculum.
2. Empower students to lead health behaviour change in their own communities through targeted and relevant approaches.

The school and wider community of Mossman, Far North Queensland, with acknowledgement to the traditional owners, the Eastern Kuku Yalanji peoples, have supported the implementation, analysis and dissemination of this Master's research project that took place with all students and staff of Mossman State School, Mossman in May 2018.

Climate change impacts of the infant nutrition transition: estimating greenhouse gas emissions

Authors: Dr JP Dadhich², Associate Professor Julie Smith¹, Mr Alessandro Iellamo, Dr Adlina Suleiman³

Affiliations: ¹Australian National University, ACTON, Australia, ²International Baby Food Action Network South Asia, New Delhi, India, ³National Defence University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Abstract:

Background: Global markets in milk formula are booming, with unrecognised environmental costs. This study evaluated greenhouse gas (GHG) emission impacts of milk formula production for selected Asian Pacific countries.

Method: A life cycle assessment approach was used to estimate kg CO₂ eq. emissions per kg of milk formula, using GHG emission factors for milk powder, vegetable oils and sugars identified from a literature review. Proportions of ingredients were calculated using FAO Codex Alimentarius guidance on macronutrient composition and ingredients for milk formula products. Estimates were for production and processing of individual ingredients from cradle to factory gate. Annual sales data sourced from Euromonitor International provided descriptive analyses of emissions for six countries from 2012 to 2017. Six lower-middle, upper-middle and high-income countries (Australia, South Korea, China, Malaysia, India, Philippines) were considered. Milk formula is for Infants and young children (0-less than 36 months).

Results: Annual emissions per kg for production of milk formula ranged from 3.95 to 4.04 kg CO₂ eq. Projected emissions for China for 2017 were 4,219,052 Tonnes CO₂ eq. Milk formula use in the six

Countries contributed 2,893,030 Tonnes CO₂ eq. to global GHG emissions in 2012 (including food waste, excluding emissions associated with blending, and with distribution and consumer use phases). Aggregate emissions were highest for follow-up milk formula products.

Conclusion: Shifting children's diets to optimal breastfeeding improves diet and health and contributes significantly to improved sustainability of the food system and to the environment.

Learning objectives: recognise milk formula environmental impacts; understand its GHG implications

Can environmental sustainability be incorporated into the Australian Dietary Guidelines?

Authors: Miss Kathy Faulkner¹

Affiliations: ¹Deakin University, Ascot Vale, Australia

Abstract:

Background: While climate change threatens world food supply, modern food production systems contribute to climate change.

During the review of the Australian Dietary Guidelines (2008-2013) the relationship amongst environment, food and health was extensively debated.

Aim: To investigate how the issue of environmental sustainability was considered during the 2008-13 review of the ADG.

Methods: An analysis of all documents developed to inform the revision of the ADG was conducted to identify key events impacting on the integration of environmental sustainability.

A text data analysis was conducted of all public submissions to the NHMRC, which considered environmental sustainability issues within the ADG.

Results: The process analysis identified:

1. Requirements for low energy, but otherwise nutrient dense diets inhibit promotion of environmentally sustainable diets.
2. Revision of the Core Food Groups before the Evidence Report, allowed criticism of proposed dietary restrictions with respect to environmental sustainability.
3. Inappropriate use of NHMRC evaluation frameworks in the context of environmental sustainability.

Of the 152 publically available submissions to the NHMRC, 54 (36%) recommended environmental sustainability be integrated into the ADG. Only 3 were against its inclusion.

Conclusion: Despite considerable public support for its inclusion, the sequence of events, incommensurate goals and inappropriate evaluation frameworks, allowed opposing vested interests to demand removal of the environmental sustainability factor from the ADG.

Learning Outcomes:

1. There is demand for integration of environmental sustainability into the ADG.
2. Appropriate evaluation frameworks, logical sequencing of events and compatible goals are crucial to establishing a solid argument for its inclusion.

HealthLit4Kids: Is this school-wide programme capable of addressing Food Literacy in Children?

Authors: Dr Rebecca Kelly¹, Dr Rosie Nash¹, Dr Shandell Elmer¹, Prof Joan Abbott-Chapman¹, Dr Casey Mainsbridge¹

Affiliations: ¹*University of Tasmania, Hobart, Australia*

Abstract:

Learning objectives:

1. Examine the HealthLit4Kids programme application in relation to food literacy.
2. Recognise the potential strengths and limitations of using artefacts to measure food literacy in children.

Background: Schools are a key setting in which to target the early development of food literacy. The importance is reinforced by the inclusion of health literacy in the Australian Curriculum's Health and Physical Education (ACHPE). There are currently few available resources and no validated childhood food literacy measurement tools to support teachers to develop and assess these competencies.

Methods: HealthLit4Kids is a program designed to improve health literacy responsiveness in primary schools. Students' health literacy was assessed using "artefacts" which they had created. Artefacts were catalogued against ACHPE areas and analysed according to three functional, interactive and critical components of health literacy. Post-intervention teacher and parent focus group data were analysed to assess the perceived change in student food literacy and the usefulness of children's artefacts.

Results: Early evaluation of the HealthLit4Kids artefacts from one school revealed that half of the artefacts (n=6/12) addressed food and nutrition. All 6 addressed the three critical components of food literacy. Following artefact development, the teachers and parents identified positive changes in the children's knowledge and behaviours relating to food.

Conclusions: The HealthLit4kids program fostered skills to maintain a healthy diet in primary school children. Each activity and associated artefact addressed all three critical aspects of food literacy. Artefacts were identified as potentially useful tools for the assessment of food literacy, this requires further research.

Food literacy: an international update of its conceptualisation, measurement and application

Authors: Dr Helen Vidgen¹

Affiliations: ¹*Queensland University Of Technology, Kelvin Grove, Australia*

Abstract:

Since 2010, the term food literacy has increasingly become part of the community and public health nutrition vocabulary of practitioners, policy makers and researchers. The only empirically derived definition of the term was developed in Australia through a study of Australian food experts, review of Australian interventions and a study of young people in Brisbane across a spectrum of disadvantage (Vidgen 2014). This work included the identification of eleven components organised into four domains of planning and management, selection, preparation and eating, a conceptualisation of how food literacy related to nutrition and more broadly where it may fit within broader public health programs. Since this time, this work has been widely cited in the international literature as various countries progress their conceptualisations of food literacy and what it means for their policy and practice.

This presentation will:

- provide an overview of recent systematic reviews of definitions and conceptualisations of food literacy from different countries
- provide a summary of current efforts to develop measures of food literacy, with a particular focus on Italian, Dutch and Canadian tools
- present brief case studies of food literacy work including the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation's Scaling Up Food and Nutrition Education in Schools as part of the Decade of Action on Nutrition and Canadian and Italian work to train a nutritionists to develop food literacy among their citizens.

This presentation aims to contribute to nutritionists' understanding of the field of food literacy to support them in evidence based practice.

Building understanding of food insecurity for community action in Ballarat

Authors: Dr Deborah Greenslade¹, Ms Melissa Farrington¹

Affiliations: ¹*Ballarat Community Health, Lucas, Australia*

Abstract:

Introduction: Food insecurity is the uncertain or limited physical, economic or social access to food. Over 12% of Ballarat's 100,000 residents are estimated to be food insecure. Research was undertaken to identify key determinants of and investigate the impacts and experiences of food insecurity amongst residents accessing Emergency Food Relief (EFR) programmes. This presentation will report the research findings and its translation in mobilising action in this regional Victorian city.

Methods: Four Monash University Masters of Dietetics students conducted the research in partnership with Ballarat Community Health and the Ballarat Food Access Network. A convenience sampling strategy was used, with clients sampled from three EFR organisations during February/March 2018. Data collection included a 24 hour food recall, height/weight measurements and a 41 question survey comprising financial, housing, family and health status questions, and an adaptation of the United States Household Food Security Survey Module to determine food security status.

Results: Of the 100 respondents, 78% were experiencing moderate or severe food insecurity with hunger. Despite accessing EFR, 39% had gone without food for one day or more in the previous week. The 24 hour food recall indicated respondents were at risk of malnourishment. Income, education and physical environment factors were key determinants. Mental and physical health repercussions were identified by 61% of respondents.

Conclusion: Research findings have assisted to raise community awareness of the extent and impacts of food insecurity and inform current and future initiatives to both prevent and address this complex issue.

Exposing food insecurity in low-to-middle income Melbourne households: Now what?

Authors: Dr Sue Kleve¹, Assoc Prof Claire Palermo¹, Dr Zoe Davidson¹, Dr Sue Booth²

Affiliations: ¹Monash University, Notting Hill, Australia, ²Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Food insecurity, the limited/uncertain individuals' and households' physical, social and economic access to sufficient and nutritious food is an underreported, yet salient issue in Australia. Typically associated with those on very-low income, there is limited understanding of food insecurity amongst higher income groups. Using a mixed methods approach, the lived experiences of food insecurity in low-to-middle income Melbourne households are reported. Regardless of income the findings suggest more finessed responses to food insecurity are required.

Body: A dark 'underbelly' of food insecurity exists in low to middle income households, hidden but varying in severity and temporality. Food insecurity triggers related to income constraints, including events that impacted on household income and increasing costs-of-living expenses. Additional factors included local food supply, and time available to procure and prepare food.

The lived experience of food insecurity was broad in nature and encompassed behaviours of guilt and worry to compromises in food quality, quantity and nutrition. Resilience and resourcefulness manifested in an established array of protective strategies.

Summary: These findings are new and extend existing understanding of food insecurity beyond very-low income households. Responses to food insecurity need to shift beyond food based responses and individual responsibility; towards shared action and leadership by key actors that places people's lived experiences at the centre of decision making.

Learning Objectives:

- Provide evidence for the existence and experience of food insecurity in low-to-middle income households
- Reinforce the need for action beyond food based responses.

Overcoming dietary data collection challenges by involving community researchers

Authors: Mrs Dani Kennedy¹, Mrs Emma Tonkin¹, Roslyn Dhurrkay¹, Yalurr Dhanarrandji¹, Veronica Gondarra¹, Ms Julie Brimblecombe^{2,1}

Affiliations: ¹Menzies School of Health Research, Darwin, Australia, ²Monash University, Melbourne, Australia

Abstract:

Background: The main challenges reported by previous studies for collecting dietary information for infants and in Aboriginal populations have included difficulty collecting data reflective of consumed quantities and traditional foods; high levels of socially desirable reporting; difficulty obtaining full data due to multiple caregivers; and time constraints in nutrition research. Our research aimed to harness the experience of local Aboriginal researchers to improve dietary assessment outcomes.

Methods: Families with children participating in a child growth study in one remote community were visited four times by at least two members of the research team that comprised three local Aboriginal researchers and two non-Aboriginal researchers.

Results: Thirty-three (83%) of the 40 participants recruited completed all (three) dietary assessments, resulting in a validated dietary assessment tool for infants that was previously not available for this population group.

Conclusion: By involving the community and particularly the dedicated community researchers we were able to minimise challenges that have previously been reported in past studies.

Learning objectives:

- Research challenges can often be overcome by involving the community and harnessing local expertise.
- Research invested in drawing on the capacity of community researchers, benefits the community and quality research outcomes.

- Feedback of study findings to families serves as a form of health promotion and can help initiate behavioural change.

Permission was granted from study participants and the community Local Authority Board to use the study data in publications and conference. During a recent feedback visit, data findings were disseminated and approved by the Local Authority Board.

4A - Long Orals – Success in Practice

Jen 1, 1:15pm - 2:45pm

Electronic Tools to Support and Audit Healthy Food Environments

Authors: Ms Elizabeth Munn¹, Ms Megan Cobcroft¹, Dr Helen Trevena², Ms Beatrice Tang¹, Dr Michelle Crino¹, Mr Shane Landon¹, Ms Tarli O'Connell¹, Ms Anne-Marie Mackintosh¹, Mr Wayne Croning¹, Ms Anne-Marie Healey¹, Mr Simon Chang¹

Affiliations: ¹Centre For Population Health, NSW Ministry Of Health, North Sydney, Australia, ²University of Sydney, Faculty of Medicine and Health, School of Public Health, Menzies Centre for Health Policy, Camperdown, Australia

Abstract:

Introduction: An unhealthy eating pattern is a leading preventable risk factor for chronic disease. Australian adults obtain over one third of their total daily energy intake from an abundant choice of unhealthy foods. In 2017, NSW Health re-launched a healthy food and drink policy that applies to food outlets operating in health facilities. Key limitations to implementation of the previous policy include a lack of systematic monitoring and reporting, and inadequate support for implementation on the ground.

Methods: To monitor and report on the achievement of a healthy food and drink offering, NSW Health has developed a mobile application-tool to collect data which is linked to a food and drink database and reporting system. The tool has been designed for users with limited nutrition knowledge who can complete the audit in less than 30 minutes. Implementation is additionally supported by an online food and drink look-up tool, the Healthy Food Finder.

Results: The tools enable implementation and auditing of the food offering in NSW Health food outlets, including cafés, and vending machines against a set of 12 food and drink practices, one of which is the removal of sugar-sweetened beverages. Adoption of the tools provides a standardised approach to annual state-wide auditing, strengthens accountability and implementation of the Framework.

Learning objectives: This paper reflects on the opportunities for other settings to adopt this innovative approach.

Creation and implementation of a healthy food policy at Deakin University

Authors: Miss Emily Massey¹, Professor Anna Peeters¹, Professor Sarah McNaughton¹

Affiliations: ¹Deakin University, Surrey Hills, Australia

Abstract:

Background: The Deakin Food Charter, launched in 2017, has the potential to grow national and international momentum for institutional food policies. It demonstrates the need for a collaborative approach for success in the creation and implementation of food policy in complex environments.

Body: Multi-faceted actions to catalyse change in Deakin's food system in a way that values health, equity and environments, have included:

Governance - creation of a steering committee and cross-faculty engagement (with health, hospitality, communications etc.) and adherence to Victorian Healthy Choices Guidelines criteria.

Demonstration – a pilot store opened on campus to showcase the Charter.

Resourcing - investing in a dietitian to work collaboratively with the hospitality team; educating and negotiating with retail operators.

Monitoring - the hospitality team worked closely with University solicitors to define key performance actions aligned with the Food Charter to be incorporated to Hospitality Management Agreements so as to support ongoing implementation, monitoring and review.

The lack of healthy products available from food manufacturers is a barrier to further success. Without commercially viable food solutions, it will be challenging to make effective change with retail operators.

Learning objectives:

1. Participants will understand the tools Deakin used to collaborate with key stakeholders to create and implement healthy food policy.
2. Participants will be able to describe the benefits and challenges associated with interventions in complex food environments.

3. Participants will be able to identify existing gaps between food retailers and manufacturers that limit healthy change to menus.

Breaking Barriers, Breaking Bread: Evaluating a school breakfast program using recovered food

Authors: Associate Professor Karen Charlton¹, Ms Natika Deavin¹, Dr Anne McMahon¹, Associate Professor Karen Walton¹

Affiliations: ¹*School of Medicine, University Of Wollongong, Northfields Avenue, Australia*

Abstract:

Aim: One in seven Australian school children do not consume breakfast. Breakfast assists children meet their nutritional requirements and provides cognitive and behavioural benefits. Although school-based breakfast programs are reportedly largely beneficial they may result in significant food costs and waste. This study aimed to explore acceptability and perceived benefits of a novel free primary school-based breakfast program utilising donated food.

Methods: Process evaluation incorporated the breakfast program volunteers' perspectives, program delivery observation collection and breakfast food nutritional analysis. Impact evaluation assessment drew upon qualitative approaches using focus groups with students, parents and teachers to explore their perspectives about the program. Breakfast diaries and hunger rating scales incorporating a visual analogue scale were also used to evaluate the students' breakfast habits at home.

Results: The program saved 14.4 tonnes of food from landfill though conversion into 44000 meals. In terms of breakfast consumption, 20% of children interviewed arrived at school without having breakfast at least once/week. A third of students reported being hungry on arrival at school, which included 42% who had consumed a highly refined breakfast cereal. Qualitative analysis identified breakfast program participation influenced willingness to attend school, alertness and behaviour as well as created an equal supportive environment beneficial for low income or food insecure families.

Conclusions: This novel breakfast program based on recovered food was widely accepted by students, teachers and parents and provided benefits beyond the mere provision of food. It provides a model for school-based interventions to be combined with sustainable food approaches.

Increasing reach and service delivery through digital transformation

Authors: Ms Margaret Rozman¹, Ms Veronica Graham², Ms Amy Wakem¹

Affiliations: ¹*Nutrition Australia, Carlton, Australia*, ²*Department of Health and Human Services, Melbourne, Australia*

Abstract:

Context: In the rapidly growing digital age, health promotion interventions face the reality of needing to join the digital world or get left behind.

The Healthy Eating Advisory Service (HEAS) supports organisations in Victoria to provide and promote healthier foods and drinks in community settings such as child care, schools, hospitals, and sport and recreation centres. HEAS has adapted the way it delivers its services taking on a digital transformation, and has seen great success!

HEAS is delivered by Nutrition Australia Vic Division, funded by the Victorian Government.

Process: HEAS' digital transformation involved turning face to face training workshops into free online modules and creating an Australian-first online assessment tool to review food and drink according to Victorian policies and guidelines for relevant settings. Prior, all assessments and training were performed manually.

The transformation has increased access to HEAS' core services in Victoria, especially in areas that are more difficult to reach.

Outcomes: Previously, HEAS completed 197 assessments in 12 months, 39 of which were for organisations in disadvantaged areas of Victoria. In 10 months, the online menu assessment tool facilitated over 4000 menu, product and recipe assessments, including 358 for organisations in disadvantages areas. HEAS's reach is now 12 times greater, with eLearning alone increasing training delivery by 57%.

By going digital, while there have been some challenges, the opportunities for growth and the future of the online menu assessment tool are endless.

Learning objectives:

- HEAS's success with digital transformation
- Overcoming challenges with going digital

A Cape York sugary drinks initiative: community-led action for supportive environments

Authors: Miss Tiffany Williams¹, **Ms Melinda Hammond¹**, Miss Kiarah Cuthbert¹, Ms Emma Fehring¹, Ms Kani Thompson¹

Affiliations: ¹*Apunipima Cape York Health Council, Bungalow, Australia*

Abstract:

Introduction: Sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) are consumed at a higher rate by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people than other Australians. Regular consumption of SSBs is a key dietary contributor to overweight and obesity, and associated with conditions including dental decay and type 2 diabetes. Evidence for supportive environments as an upstream health promotion approach is well-documented. However, literature about creating environments which support healthy drink choices in the remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander context is limited.

Methods: The Healthy Communities Project was a partnership project with Aboriginal Shire Councils and community leaders, led by Apunipima Cape York Health Council. The project aimed to increase availability of water and decrease availability of SSBs through community-led action. Social marketing was used as a strategy to raise awareness of health issues associated with high SSB consumption and increase community readiness for action.

Results: Community engagement and readiness increased over the project. Changes to the drink environment were monitored using a store audit tool and geographical information systems (GIS) community mapping. A number of community-led changes to the environment were implemented in pilot communities, such as installation of water bubblers and modifications to drink placement at the local community store.

Conclusion & Recommendations: Social marketing is a useful strategy to increase community readiness for community-led action. Partnering with Councils and community leaders can be effective in influencing the sugary drink environment.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand how social marketing may increase community readiness
- Consider the process of community-led action to improve the sugary drink environment

Removing soft drinks from YMCA aquatic and recreation centres: results and reflections

Authors: **Monash University Tara Boelsen-Robinson^{1,2}**, **Ms Alethea Jerebine³**, Ms Ariana Kurzeme³, Associate Professor Liliana Orellana², Dr Kathryn Backholer², Ms Beth Gilham², Ms Stella Cifone³, Mrs Alexandra Chung^{1,2}, Professor Anna Peeters²

Affiliations: ¹*Monash University, Melbourne, Australia*, ²*Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia*, ³*YMCA Victoria, Melbourne, Australia*

Abstract:

Context: In 2014 YMCA Victoria introduced a Healthy Food and Beverage Policy, aiming to create a healthy eating environment. A key element of the policy was the removal of non-diet soft-drinks from recreation centre cafes (other high sugar drinks were not targeted).

Analysis: Monthly cold drink sales data was collected from 18 centres, for three periods: pre-implementation (January 2013–November 2014); implementation (December 2014–November 2015) and post-implementation (December 2015–December 2016). Drinks were categorised using state guidelines into 'green' (best choice), 'amber' (choose carefully) or 'red' (limit intake). The impact on volume sales of 'red' drinks, 'green' drinks, and overall sales value was conducted using an interrupted time series analysis. Individual centres results were combined using a meta-analysis approach.

Outcomes: At December 2015, 'red' drink volume sales reduced by 41.3% across centres (95%CI -57.6%;-25.0%) compared to if the policy had not been implemented. Volume of 'green' drinks did not change (3.1% CI -9.7%;+15.9%). Sales value of all drinks decreased by 24.7% (95%CI -31.6%;-17.9%). All results were maintained at December 2016.

Learning Objectives: The policy had its desired effect of reducing soft-drink sales, showing that reducing soft drink availability within recreation centres is an effective and feasible public health policy. Complementary strategies that encourage greater shifts to healthier alternatives should be considered, particular when considering the implementation of similar policies in organisations who rely more heavily on income from their drink sales. Despite a decrease in total drink sales, support internally for the policy has grown, highlighting the importance of leadership and persistence.

4B – Societies' Voices

Jen 2, 1:15pm - 2:45pm

Consumer concerns relating to food labelling – Australian governance actors respond

Authors: Dr Emma Tonkin¹, Professor John Coveney¹, Dr Trevor Webb², Dr Annabelle Wilson¹, Dr Samantha Meyer³

Affiliations: ¹*Flinders University, Bedford Park, Australia*, ²*Behavioural and Regulatory Analysis Section, Food Standards Australia New Zealand, Canberra, Australia*, ³*School of Public Health and Health Systems, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Canada*

Abstract:

Background: A goal of public policy is to mitigate consumer concerns from undermining trust in the food supply. The aim of this study was to report and critically analyse the responses of Australian and New Zealand food governance actors to a set of consumers' concerns and issues relating to food labelling. We describe how these actors construct both consumer perspectives and the food policy environment in which they work to address consumers' food concerns.

Methods: Fifteen food labelling governance actors were asked to view an online presentation of the findings from a previous study exploring consumer perspectives on food labelling and trust, before completing a one hour in-depth, semi-structured interview. Colebatch's social constructionist perspective on policy was adopted in the analysis.

Results: Participants reconstructed the consumers' perspectives of Australian food policy, the role of labelling and consumer trust as a means to minimise the consumer concerns. There appeared to be a tension between agency (of governance actors) and structure (existing policy agendas) in their work which inhibited their engagement with the consumer perspectives presented. Actors were not aware they contributed to perpetuating this tension.

Conclusion: Agentic and structural factors made it possible for actors to sideline both consumer perspectives on food labelling, and the importance of the divergent and contradictory values held by consumers, governance actors and industry. Inadequate critical engagement with the moral dimension of consumer concerns is a potential driver of the inertia demonstrated in the Australian government's approach to addressing consumer concerns about food.

The morality of sugar consumption: Australian adult's perspectives about sugar in diet?

Authors: Dr. Adyva Gupta¹, A/Prof. Lisa Smithers², Dr. Jane Harford², Prof. Annette Brauanck-Mayer^{1,2}

Affiliations: ¹*University of Wollongong, Wollongong, Australia*, ²*University of Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: This study draws on the relationship between food choices and morality to explore how Australian adults conceptualize and negotiate their sugar intake.

Design: 15 in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted among English speaking adults residing in South Australia. The participants were purposively sampled from Australia's National Dental Telephone Interview Survey 2016-2018 based on their sugar consumption levels (high or low), age and gender. The data was coded and analysed using thematic analysis.

Results: Participant's initially defined sugars as either good or bad based on based on the source, colour, texture and taste of sugar and its impact on health. However, when confronted with the amounts of sugars present in commonly consumed foods and drinks, participants redefined all sugars as bad sugars. This created moral challenges leading to two types of justifications for sugar consumption. One group of justifications included socially evaluative statements to appear as morally virtuous: participants explained that sugar is an essential source of energy and part of a balanced diet; that sugar consumption is limited to infrequent occasions such as celebrations, social gatherings and cultural practices; and that sugar consumption is sometimes a cultural obligation. Second group of justifications located the source of morality within the individual: consuming sugar was necessary for emotional and psychological well being, and that it could be controlled by being disciplined and vigilant.

Conclusions: This study provides news insights on how Australians conceptualise and make decisions about sugar consumption.

Learning objectives: Moral or value negotiations are crucial elements influencing sugar consumption.

Adolescents' views on high school food environments

Authors: Dr Rimante Ronto¹, Dr Lauren Ball², Prof Donna Pendergast², A/Prof Neil Harris²

Affiliations: ¹Macquarie University, Belfield, Australia, ²Griffith University, Gold Coast, Australia

Abstract:

Adolescents' dietary behaviours have been described as poor posing risk to the development of diet related health issues later in life. On a daily basis adolescents navigate complex food environments and as a result are subjected to many influences. This study explored adolescents' perspectives on high school food environments and how these factors may impact their dietary behaviours.

Fifteen focus groups were conducted with adolescents aged 12-17 years. Adolescents were asked four major questions: 1) what does your school do that encourages you to eat healthy? 2) what makes it hard for you to eat healthy?; 3) How could the school change to make it easier for you to eat healthy? 4) What is stopping that change? A content and thematic data analysis were used.

Positive role modeling, healthy food options in school canteen and nutrition education were identified as factors impacting healthy dietary behaviours. In contrast, unhealthy food availability and affordability, positive attitudes towards unhealthy foods and no regulations impacted unhealthy dietary behaviours.

The high school setting provide ideal opportunity to encourage healthy food choices for adolescents. Research, policy makers and public health practitioners should develop strategies that address the issues identified by adolescents in order to help them to make informed food choices.

Learning objectives:

- Adolescents want to make informed food choices and school food environments should support this;
- Adolescents identified numerous environmental factors that had an impact on their dietary behaviors and provided some recommendations on how to minimise unhealthy food environments.

Public support for policies to promote healthy diets: a multi-country survey

Authors: Ms Janelle Kwon¹, Dr Adrian Cameron^{1,2}, Prof. David Hammond³, A/Prof. Gary Sacks^{1,2}

Affiliations: ¹School of Health & Social Development, Deakin University, Burwood, Australia, ²Global Obesity Centre, Deakin University, Burwood, Australia, ³School of Public Health & Health Systems, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Canada

Abstract:

Background: Public support is an important factor in encouraging government adoption of policies that promotes healthy diets. This study measured the level of public support for various food policies across five countries.

Methods: An online survey measuring policy support was completed by 18,878 adults in Australia (n=3,767), Canada (n=2,139), Mexico (n=4,057), United Kingdom (n=4,047) and United States (US) (n=4,868). Support, opposition or neutrality was measured for 22 commonly recommended policies targeting the food environment. Differences by country, demographic groups within countries, and by key dietary behaviours were examined.

Preliminary Results: Preliminary results indicate that, across all countries, the policies that received the most support were nutrition standards for school canteens (67.9%) and kilojoule labelling in chain restaurants (62.4%). Overall, policies based on financial disincentives or restricting availability were the least supported, although support varied significantly between countries. Only one third of US respondents supported a sugar-sweetened beverage (SSB) tax, compared with half for Mexican respondents. In Australia, 40.5% of respondents supported a SSB tax, 55.9% supported restrictions on unhealthy food promotion, and 42.6% supported zoning restrictions on fast food restaurants.

Conclusion and learning objectives: Public support for globally recommended food policies varies within and between countries. Repeated cross-country comparisons can be useful in tracking how public support changes over time, particularly in response to changes in policy implementation. Further investigation is required to understand the factors that influence public support, and strategies to increase it.

What and how Australian adolescents would like to learn about food systems

Authors: Ms Margaret Miller¹, Mr Michael Furfaro¹, Ms Julie Boston², Dr Martin Masek³, Ms Sandy Smith², Dr Donna Barwood², Professor Amanda Devine¹

Affiliations: ¹*School of Medicine & Health Sciences, Edith Cowan University, Joondalup, Australia*, ²*School of Education, Edith Cowan University, Joondalup, Australia*, ³*School of Science, Edith Cowan University, Joondalup, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Educating adolescents about food systems is critical for food futures. This research engaged students in a computer game design project to identify their gaps in knowledge, interests and ideas for learning activities related to food production, processing, distribution and consumption.

Methods: 17 classes of Years 7-9 students (95 boys, 155 girls) were recruited from six Perth metropolitan schools with high, medium and low Index of Community Social and Educational Advantage (ICSEA). Students played a prototype computer game developed based on formative research with other students. The aim of the game was to grow, process, and market potatoes to maximise health and commercial returns but minimise food and resource wastage. In groups, students discussed, documented and reported what they learned, what else they would like to learn, and how. Written responses were analysed for themes.

Results: Students reported learning most about themes related to growing time, waste, making healthy choices and the complexity of the food system. They wanted to learn more about diverse topics but especially themes on inputs and costs, handling and processing, benefits of buying local, and production systems for other foods. Creative, experiential and research based learning activities were favoured. Specific examples within themes and activities will be provided.

Conclusions: Computer games can both educate and stimulate inquiry. Adolescents have gaps in their knowledge about food systems but are interested in learning more through research, creative and experiential activities.

Learning objectives: Identify topics and learning activities most likely to engage adolescents in education about food systems

4C – Systems & Settings – Food Retail

Jen 3, 1:15pm - 2:45pm

Outcomes of a 12-month supermarket randomised controlled trial to promote healthy eating.

Authors: Mr Adrian Cameron¹, Ms Amy Brown², Mr Graham Gamble³, Ms Jenny Reimers⁵, Ms Josephine Marshall¹, Mr Tom Steele¹, Prof Liliana Orellana¹, Prof Cliona ni Mhurchu⁶, Prof Marj Moodie¹, Prof Fabrice Etile⁴, Prof Boyd Swinburn⁶, Ms Jaithri Ananthapavan¹, Ms Winsfred Ngan¹, Associate Professor Gary Sacks¹

Affiliations: ¹*Deakin University, Burwood, Australia*, ²*City of Greater Bendigo, Bendigo, Australia*, ³*Champions IGA, Bendigo, Australia*, ⁴*Paris School of Economics, Paris, France*, ⁵*VicHealth, Melbourne, Australia*, ⁶*University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand*

Abstract:

Background: Supermarkets are the setting for the majority of food purchases. Marketing approaches that modify the choice architecture in supermarkets can be important for promoting healthy eating at a population level.

Methods: Eat Well @IGA was a 12-month, NHMRC-funded randomized controlled trial conducted between May 2017 and May 2018 (with 12-month baseline data collection) in 5 intervention and 6 control supermarkets in regional Victoria. Intervention components included shelf tags (highlighting all products with 4.5 and 5 health star rating), trolley/basket and floor signs, shelf wobblers, local area promotion (flyers), social media, in-store banners and posters and a public launch. Primary outcome: sales of core and discretionary food from store sales data, was analysed using a segmented regression approach. Customer intercept surveys were conducted mid-intervention (n=682).

Results: The impact on sales of core and discretionary food, key nutrients and total store profit will be presented. Customers overwhelmingly supported the intervention with 57% more likely to shop at IGA and 7% saying they shop there more often because of it. Customers felt shelf tags and wobblers were the biggest influences on purchasing (53% reporting change in purchases because of shelf tags, 40% because of wobblers). Most customers (96%) believed IGA should continue its efforts to encourage healthy eating.

Conclusions: Eat Well @IGA represents a unique partnership between industry, academia, local government and NGO partners. Customers were extremely positive about the intervention. Given the exceptional reach of supermarkets, such interventions are a particularly promising approach to encourage healthy eating at a population level.

Potential cost-effectiveness of supermarket shelf tags promoting healthier products

Authors: Ms Jaithri Ananthapavan^{1,2}, Dr Adrian Cameron², Ms Josephine Marshall², Mr Tom Steele², Ms Ella Robinson², Dr Gary Sacks², Dr Marj Moodie^{1,2}

Affiliations: ¹*Deakin Health Economics, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia*, ²*Global Obesity Centre, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: The supermarket environment has a major impact on the healthiness of Australians' diet, with over 60% of food purchased in supermarkets. Evidence suggests that shelf tags that alert customers to healthier products could improve the healthiness of overall purchases.

Methods: We estimated the cost-effectiveness of a 2-year intervention in which shelf tags were prominently displayed on all products eligible for a 4.5 or 5 Health Star Rating, implemented across the top four supermarket chains in Australia. Effect size was based on evidence from a 12-week trial undertaken in seven supermarkets in regional Victoria. The percentage change in energy density of all packaged foods purchased in intervention versus control stores was used to estimate changes in energy intake at a population level. A multi-state, multiple-cohort Markov model was used to estimate the resulting obesity-related health (health adjusted life years, HALYs) and cost outcomes over the lifetime of the 2010 Australian population.

Preliminary results: The intervention resulted in a 9% reduction in the energy density of packaged foods purchased, translating into an average change in population body weight of -0.66kg. The intervention was dominant (both cost-saving and health improving), resulting in over 10,000 HALYs saved and cost-savings of over AUD100 million. Costs accrued by the participating supermarkets were estimated to be approximately AUD1.5 million.

Learning objectives:

- The evidence of effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of supermarket-based obesity prevention interventions is growing.
- Considering both the costs and benefits is important when assessing the credentials of interventions designed to improve the food environment.

Nutrition content and health claims on labels in Australia pre- and post-regulation

Authors: Ms Lyndal Wellard-Cole¹, Mrs Wendy L Watson¹, Ms Clare Hughes¹

Affiliations: ¹*Cancer Council NSW, Woolloomooloo, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Food Standard 1.2.7 requires products carrying health claims to meet the Nutrient Profiling Scoring Criteria (NPSC). We assessed the prevalence of products in three food categories carrying claims pre- and post-regulation, and whether they met the NPSC.

Methods: All claims on beverages, breakfast cereals and cereal bars were collected in 2011 (pre-regulation) and 2016 (post-regulation). The NPSC was applied to determine eligibility to carry health claims. Changes in proportions of products meeting the NPSC and carrying claims were calculated.

Results: In 2011, 1,028 products carried claims, increasing 61% (n=1,653) in 2016. Nutrition content and health claims increased by 71% and 142% respectively, contributing to an 81% overall increase in claims from 2011-2016. The proportion of products carrying at least one claim increased significantly. Between 2011 and 2016, significantly less breakfast cereals not meeting the NPSC carried health claims, but a greater proportion of cereal bars not meeting NPSC carried health claims.

Conclusions: Significantly more products were available in 2016, carrying more claims. Standard 1.2.7 has not led to reductions in the prevalence of health claims on cereal bars or beverages not meeting the NPSC. Nutrition content claims on unhealthy products potentially misleads consumers. The NPSC should be introduced for all claims. Stricter monitoring and enforcement is needed.

Learning objectives

1. Understand regulation of Australian nutrition content and health claims, and associated issues.
2. Understand changes in the amount and types of claims on labels pre- and post-implementation of Standard 1.2.7.
3. Recognise options for improving regulation of claims.

Reporting on key dietary indicators to improve nutrition in remote Indigenous communities

Authors: Dr Emma McMahon¹, Dr Megan Ferguson¹, Mr Anthony Gunther¹, Dr Tom Wycherley^{1,2}, Assoc Prof Julie Brimblecombe^{1,3}

Affiliations: ¹*Menzies School of Health Research, Darwin, Australia*, ²*University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia*, ³*Monash University, Melbourne, Australia*

Abstract:

Context: Indigenous store-owners and store managers are key decision-makers to action change to create health-enabling stores. Reports tracking diet quality indicators from sales data can be a powerful decision-support tool for remote retailers.

Process: We aimed to develop timely, accessible, easy to interpret and evidence-informed reports (FoodFox reports) on indicators of community diet quality in remote Indigenous communities. To inform report development we examined best-evidence, consulted with store owners in 3 communities and collected 18 months of sales data from 31 stores in the Northern Territory and Queensland. Reports were made available to participants. Follow-up interviews occurred with store managers to inform future implementation.

Outcomes: The FoodFox web-tool provides online and downloadable customisable reports showing key food indicators tracked longitudinally and benchmarked against dietary guideline targets, store goals and the average of participating stores. The indicators (6 food groups and 40 subgroups) and categorisation (Best Choices, Less Healthy Choices and Unhealthy Choices) align with Australian Dietary Guidelines. Community consultation indicated remote retailers were eager to receive reports to inform their decision-making and that reports had potential value in shaping a health-enabling store that supported healthier food and drink choices. Store manager interviews identified several potential barriers and enablers to consistent and effective report implementation.

Conclusion: This decision support tool has the potential to support community food sovereignty and help build resilience in a dynamic food environment.

Learning objectives:

1. Explain how tracking indicators of diet quality can improve nutrition in remote Indigenous communities.
2. Describe barriers and enablers for implementation.

Food price and affordability in rural Victoria: Are healthy diets more expensive?

Authors: Dr Penelope Love¹, Ms Jillian Whelan², Ms Meron Lewis³, Professor Amanda Lee³

Affiliations: ¹*Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition, School of Nutrition and Exercise Sciences, Deakin University, Geelong, Australia*, ²*Global Obesity Centre, School of Health and Social Development, Deakin University, Geelong, Australia*, ³*The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre, The Sax Institute, Sydney, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Rural communities experience higher rates of obesity, chronic disease burden and reduced food security compared with urban communities. Public perception that healthy foods are expensive also contributes to poor dietary choices and diet-related health inequities. Providing an accessible, available, affordable healthy food supply is an equitable way to improve the nutritional quality of the diet for a community. These local food supply data are rarely available for country towns.

Methods: This study assessed the price, price differential and affordability of the current/unhealthy diet compared with the recommended/healthy diet in a rural Shire comprising 10 towns (popln≈7000) in Victoria, Australia, using the Diets ASAP (Australian Standardised Affordability and Pricing) tool and protocols.

Results: All retail food outlets were audited (n=40). Three towns had supermarkets and remaining towns had general stores. Seven towns had café/take-away outlets. For all towns, the current, unhealthy diet was more expensive than the recommended, healthy diet, with the majority of the current food budget (59.5%) being spent on discretionary foods. The recommended, healthy diet cost 30-32% of disposable income compared with 37-40% for the current, unhealthy diet.

Conclusion: Findings confirm that a recommended, healthy diet can be more affordable than current, unhealthy dietary patterns in Australia. This is challenging for rural communities facing inequities with higher food costs, limited variety and poorer quality. This study also provide insights into the use of the Diets ASAP methods for rural Australian communities.

Learning objectives:

1. To examine the affordability of healthy diets in Australian country towns.

A global comparison of Australian supermarkets' corporate social responsibility commitments to health

Authors: Mrs Claire Pulker¹, Dr Christina Pollard^{1,2}, Dr Georgina Trapp^{3,4}, Professor Jane Scott¹

Affiliations: ¹Curtin University, Bentley, Australia, ²East Metropolitan Health Service, East Perth, Australia, ³Telethon Kids Institute, The University of Western Australia, West Perth, Australia, ⁴School of Population and Global Health, The University of Western Australia, Crawley, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Globally, supermarkets have been described as having unprecedented power in the food system. US-based global supermarket chain Walmart is ranked two places above Australia for annual revenue. Therefore, society depends on supermarkets to manage their impact on people and the world's resources via corporate social responsibility (CSR). CSR is implemented to demonstrate good corporate citizenship, whereby supermarkets commit to act responsibly towards local communities and address global challenges. This study examines publically available CSR commitments to public health by the world's largest supermarkets to identify how Australian supermarkets compare.

Methods: The world's largest one hundred retailers were identified using the Global Powers of Retailing report. Thirty-one supermarkets that published corporate reports referring to CSR or sustainability, in English, in the last five years were included, and thematically analysed.

Results: Supermarket CSR commitments affecting public health were evident in the following areas: general governance, influencing policy, setting rules for suppliers, influencing livelihoods, influencing communities, accessibility, availability, affordability, food preferences, food safety, nutritional quality, animal welfare, food and packaging waste, and sustainable sourcing. Australian supermarkets made few commitments to accessibility, availability, affordability, food preferences, or nutritional quality.

Conclusion: Australian supermarkets could do more to manage their impact on public health via CSR. Examples of CSR from global supermarkets will be used to demonstrate opportunities for improvement.

Learning objectives:

- (1) Examine the impact of powerful global supermarkets on public health.
- (2) Understand the key concepts of CSR.
- (3) Understand how Australian supermarkets' CSR commitments compare with those from other countries.

4D – Systems & Settings – Schools

Jen 4, 1:15pm - 2:45pm

Policymakers' perspectives on designing secondary school-based health and wellbeing and nutrition initiatives

Authors: Ms Sarah Meiklejohn¹, Professor Anna Peeters², Dr Lisa Ryan³, Associate Professor Claire Palermo¹

Affiliations: ¹Monash University, Notting Hill, Australia, ²Deakin University, Burwood, Australia, ³Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, Galway, Ireland

Abstract:

Background: Initiatives based upon the Health Promoting Schools Framework have previously been successful in improving nutrition education and food policies in early childhood settings and primary schools. The 'Achievement Program' launched by the Victorian government in 2013, was arguably the biggest investment in promoting health, wellbeing and nutrition in secondary school settings. This study aimed to explore the political considerations informing the design of the Achievement Program for secondary schools.

Methods: Interpretive policy analysis was undertaken using interviews with a purposive sample of government and non-government policy actors. Interviews explored factors influencing program design and were analysed using thematic analysis examining the representation of problems and how policies reflect the social construction of "problems".

Results: Ten in-depth interviews including 11 participants were conducted. The analysis revealed four themes. The Achievement Program was designed through (i) the establishment of strategic collaborations and good governance, involving people that made valuable and diverse contributions to addressing the problem while acknowledging their (ii) positions of power, (iii) ensuring careful attention was paid to an evidence informed program design, and (iv) incorporation of real-time feedback from other settings.

Conclusion: Policymakers appear to engage and respond to feedback from stakeholders in the policy making process and use the evidence to inform policy. There is a need to determine how effectively the Achievement Program has been adopted by schools.

Learning Objectives:

1. Discuss the policy making process of the Victorian government's Achievement Program.
2. Explore findings of policy analysis interviews related to the Achievement Program design.

Improving healthy food purchases from online canteens: A cluster RCT

Authors: Ms Tessa Delaney^{1,2,3}, A.Prof Luke Wolfenden^{1,2,3}, Dr Sze Lin Yoong^{1,2,3}, Dr Rachel Sutherland^{1,2,3}, Prof. John Wiggers^{1,2,3}, Prof. Kylie Ball⁴, Prof. Karen Campbell⁴, Prof. Chris Rissel^{5,6}, Dr Rebecca Wyse^{1,2,3}

Affiliations: ¹University Of Newcastle, Callaghan, Australia, ²Hunter New England Population Health, Wallsend, Australia, ³Hunter Medical Research Institute, New Lambton, Australia, ⁴Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition, School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences, Deakin University, Geelong, Australia, ⁵University of Sydney, Camperdown, Australia, ⁶NSW Office of Preventive Health, Liverpool, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Online canteens, where students order and pay for their lunch online, are increasingly common and provide an attractive opportunity to deliver interventions to encourage healthy purchasing. This study aimed to assess the efficacy of a consumer behaviour intervention implemented in an online canteen in reducing the average kilojoule, saturated fat, sugar and sodium content of primary students' lunch orders.

Methods: Ten NSW primary schools (2,714 students) currently using an online canteen were recruited to a cluster RCT conducted over a 2-month period. Intervention schools received a consumer behaviour intervention integrated into their online menu (targeting menu labelling, healthy food availability, item placement and prompting). Control schools received no change to their online menu. Data were assessed using separate linear mixed models under an ITT framework with multiple imputation.

Results: Analysis of all available data (n=2,714 students) showed significant reductions in the average energy (-572kJ; p<0.001), saturated fat (-2.38g; p<0.001) and sodium (-231mg; p=0.005) content of intervention students' lunch orders. No significant differences were observed for sugar (p=0.17).

Conclusions: The study provides strong evidence supporting the efficacy of a consumer behaviour intervention utilising online canteen infrastructure to encourage healthier purchasing from primary school canteens and may represent an appealing policy option as part of a broader government strategy to improve child public health nutrition.

Learning objectives:

1. Identify effective consumer behaviour strategies appropriate for dissemination at scale.
2. Describe the potential of online canteens ordering systems to disseminate effective interventions for population health benefit.

Changing the culture of school canteens

Authors: Ms Kasey Bateup¹

Affiliations: ¹Nutrition Australia ACT, Chifley, Australia

Abstract:

Introduction: The introduction of the ACT Public School Food and Drink Policy in 2015 and supporting initiatives has been pivotal in improving the food environment in school canteens. The Policy is underpinned by the traffic light system from the National Healthy School Canteen Guidelines which states the majority of items for sale must be Green and no Red items should be available.

Methods: Nutrition Australia ACT is contracted by the ACT Government to support school canteens transition to meet policy requirements. Progress is monitored annually via canteen menu assessments. Since September 2015, all public schools with canteen food services have received menu assessments.

Results: Of the 72 public school canteens assessed in 2017, 56% met the criteria for a majority of Green items (up from 10% pre-policy), 57% met the criteria for no Red items (up from 16%) and 42% of canteens were compliant with the policy (up from 8%).

Improvements made to canteen menus has been accompanied by significant attitudinal and cultural shifts among canteen managers and the school community. It is now widely accepted that canteens play an important role in supporting healthy food choices for students, as part of an integrated whole of school approach to improving student health.

Conclusion/Recommendations: Achieving cultural change, alongside the implementation and monitoring of healthy food and drink policies in schools can influence the food environment.

School canteens require ongoing support from the school community including parents, teachers and executive, as well as government and key community partners to achieve sustainable outcomes.

Participatory Research in a primary school setting; making healthy food desirable

Authors: Dr Suzie Waddingham¹, Dr Pieter Van Dam¹, Dr Linda Murray¹, Dr Kelly Shaw², Dr Silvana Bettiol¹

Affiliations: ¹University of Tasmania, Margate, Australia, ²KP Health, Hobart, Australia

Abstract:

Introduction: Healthy eating habits are a protective against chronic disease in the future, when formed early in life they persist into adulthood. In Australia, children are not eating according to the Australian Dietary Guidelines. There is a gap in knowledge about children's potential role in improving healthy eating. The study aim was to investigate factors that influence food choices in a primary school setting, described by children.

Methods: Participatory Action Research was used, completing five action cycles with a convenience sample of children in a non-government school in Tasmania (grade two - six). Data was collected through observation, filming and documentation by researchers using; an open class discussion, a day in the canteen, a specified meal for the day and two Discovery Days (children worked in groups to design a menu). Qualitative data were analysed using a conventional content analysis to establish common concepts that represented factors that influence children's food choice.

Results: While knowledge did not influence their food decisions, children used a range of concepts (pleasure, texture, social acceptability, versatility and eating context) collectively to make food choices. The concepts were used to develop an innovative model that could guide canteen menus to improve the desirability of healthier foods.

Conclusion: Children are key informants about concepts influencing their food choices which were used to develop a model that can support the promotion of healthy food in schools. Designing programs which consider children's perceptions could shape what and how food is presented to children during school in the future.

A review of the international literature: food literacy interventions in school settings.

Authors: Dr Rebecca Kelly¹, Dr Rosie Nash¹, Dr Shandell Elmer¹, Prof Joan Abbott-Chapman¹, Dr Casey Mainsbridge¹

Affiliations: ¹University of Tasmania, Hobart, Australia

Abstract:

Learning objectives:

- Describe key components of existing school-based food literacy interventions.
- Recognise potential barriers and enablers to school-based food literacy interventions.

Background: Childhood is a crucial period for establishing healthy behaviours and attitudes towards food. These skills are collectively known as food literacy, one component of health literacy. Schools are an important setting for improving food literacy in children, however there is little consensus regarding the most effective strategies. This systematised review evaluates school-based food literacy interventions.

Methods: A systematised search of major databases (Pubmed, Science Direct, Web of Science, CINAHL, ERIC) was performed for publications of school-based food literacy interventions. A second in-depth search strategy using Pubmed only was also performed. Nutbeam's (2000) tripartite health literacy framework was used to critically analyse each study.

Results: From 992 sourced, following exclusion of duplicates, 29 original publications were located that fulfilled our inclusion criteria. All studies included functional aspects of critical food literacy, whereas fewer considered critical (n=20, 71.4%) or interactive (n=14, 50.0%) components of food literacy. Common themes were identified in the interventions, including; understanding food advertising, reading food labels, eating disorder awareness, cooking classes and gardening skills. Qualitative analyses revealed several barriers and enablers to program implementation and effectiveness.

Conclusion: This review addressed a critical gap in health promotion literature and provides a useful summary of school-based food literacy interventions. Focusing on critical and interactive food literacy, a participatory approach and multi-level design are key recommendations for future food literacy programs in schools.

¹Nutbeam D. Health literacy as a public health goal: a challenge for contemporary health education and communication strategies into the 21st century. *Health Promot Int* 2000; 15: 259–67

Palm Island Preppies empowered to create healthy tuckshop options

Authors: Miss Katherine Cacavas¹

Affiliations: ¹James Cook University, Cairns/Townsville, Australia, ²St Michael's School, Palm Island, Australia

Abstract:

Background: With a professional background in Dietetics and current journey as a Masters of Teaching and Learning student, the opportunity to create and deliver a nutrition-inspired unit while on a teaching placement was an exciting prospect. Through embedding Public Health Nutrition within Australian Curriculum (AC) requirements, Prep students at St Michael's School (SMS) on Palm Island were supported to use systems thinking and design creative solutions to an identified problem within their own school community. The unit set out to increase students' health literacy, with the overall goal of encouraging healthy and balanced eating and impacting community wellbeing.

Body: With a school enrolment comprising entirely of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students, SMS provided a unique community context to explore connections between nutrition and education. Through a series of lessons, students were engaged to: learn about healthy food choices, interpret nutrition texts, taste healthy foods, identify community food sources (including bush tucker) and finally create their own healthy 'snack pack' for sale in their school tuck shop.

The designed unit aligned with the AC Key Learning Area of Design and Technologies, in which 'Food specialisations' is an identified sub-strand. Further, it demonstrated a cross-curricular approach through incorporating opportunities to access Literacy, Numeracy and Information and Communication Technology capabilities.

Summary: Throughout the unit, students demonstrated increased knowledge and understanding of healthy foods. Students proudly presented designed solutions to key stakeholders, including the tuck shop manager, with their snack packs increasing the nutritional quality of the previously provided tuck shop menu.

Learning Objectives:

1. Create opportunities within the Australian Curriculum for students to design community-led solutions to an identified health problem
2. Discover methods for engaging Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities to lead health behaviour change through targeted approaches

The school and wider community of Bwgcolman (Palm Island) have supported the implementation, analysis and dissemination of this research project that took place with the Prep students and staff of St Michael's School, Palm Island in August/September 2017.

4E – Sovereignty – Government Regulation & Policy

Jen 4, 1:15pm - 2:45pm

A new National Nutrition Policy for Australia: evidence and scope

Authors: Prof Amanda Lee¹

Affiliations: ¹The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre, Ultimo, Australia

Abstract:

Introduction: The scoping study for a new National Nutrition Policy (NNP) for Australia was released under Freedom of Information in 2016.

Methods: Nineteen databases and organisation's websites were searched systematically for content/evaluation of OECD countries' NNPs to identify what policy actions were working and why, and what weren't and why not. Quality was assessed; data were extracted and synthesised. Extracted data are compared with relevant recent research findings, including the NOURISHING framework.

Results: Of 34 OECD countries, 30 NNPs and 26 evaluations (including 4 economic) were identified for 21 countries. Content focused on education strategies promoting healthy eating, predominantly in children. Relatively few NNPs targeted differential availability, affordability or advertising of healthy and discretionary choices. Regulatory and legislative reforms were the most cost-effective, but were included rarely. Barriers and enablers will be detailed. Recommendations included that four principles should frame the new nutrition policy: food, nutrition and health; social equity; environmental sustainability; and monitoring and surveillance, evaluation and review. An exemplar NNP framework will be presented.

Conclusion/Recommendations: Few examples of comprehensive, evidence-informed national NNPs were identified; therefore, it is unsurprising that rates of obesity and diet-related chronic diseases continue to increase globally. In Australia, the need for a comprehensive NNP aligned with international best-practice persists.

What drives political commitment for nutrition? A framework and evidence synthesis

Authors: Dr Phillip Baker¹, Ms Kate Wingrove¹, Dr Anne Marie Thow²

Affiliations: ¹*Institute For Physical Activity And Nutrition, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia*, ²*Menzies Centre for Health Policy, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Political commitment will be critical to driving food and nutrition policy reform to promote public health in Australia and internationally. In this study, we ask: what factors generate, sustain and constrain political commitment for nutrition, how and under what circumstances? Our aim is to inform strategic 'commitment-building' actions by advocates.

Methods: We adopted a framework synthesis and review method to build a framework on the determinants of political commitment. Five steps were undertaken: initial theoretical framework development; search for empirical nutrition policy literature on the drivers of political commitment; study selection and quality appraisal; data analysis and framework modification.

Results: We drew upon studies spanning 81 countries to identify 18 factors that drive commitment, organised into five categories: actor power; institutions; political and societal contexts; knowledge, evidence and framing; and, capacities and resources. Irrespective of country-context, effective nutrition actor networks, leadership, civil society mobilisation, supportive political champions and administrators, societal changes and focusing events, cohesive framing by advocates, robust data systems and available evidence enabled commitment. Food industry interference frequently undermined it.

Conclusion: Political commitment for nutrition can be created and strengthened over time through strategic action. Ultimately, generating commitment will require actions by cohesive, resourced and strongly led nutrition actor networks that are responsive to the multi-factorial, multilevel and dynamic political systems in which they operate and attempt to influence.

Learning objectives: Audience members will: develop an understanding of the drivers of political commitment; and draw important lessons from countries where strong political commitment for nutrition has emerged.

Building a case for food marketing regulation over the last 10 years

Authors: Ms Wendy Watson¹, Ms Lyndal Wellard-Cole¹, Ms Korina Richmond¹, Ms Clare Hughes¹

Affiliations: ¹*Cancer Council NSW, Woolloomooloo, Australia*

Abstract:

Context: Reducing children's exposure to unhealthy food marketing has been recognised by the World Health Organization as a priority strategy for the prevention of obesity-related chronic disease. In 2009 the Australian food industry introduced two voluntary self-regulatory initiatives on responsible marketing to children. In 2010 the government committed to monitoring the impact of the self-regulatory initiatives, in response to the Australian National Preventative Health Taskforce recommendations. However, no formal government monitoring has been conducted. This presentation will critique the self-regulation of food marketing over the last ten years and outline Cancer Council NSW advocacy efforts over that time.

Process: The presentation discusses Cancer Council NSW's advocacy efforts using research to build the case for regulation and taking advantage of policy opportunities. It also presents a summary of recent evidence of the extent of advertising in Australia and the community support for regulatory change.

Analysis: Minor changes have been made since the initiatives were introduced in 2009. The determination of complaints is limited by the loopholes within the current self-regulatory initiatives. Children's exposure to the marketing of energy-dense nutrient-poor foods has not reduced and Australia is lagging behind other countries.

Outcomes: Self-regulation of food advertising in Australia is ineffective. Public health and community advocacy for improved regulation of food marketing to children can play a role in providing a healthy supportive environment for children.

Learning objectives:

1. Understand Australian and international progress on food marketing regulation
2. Learn what we can do together to influence policy change

Nutrition-sensitivity across the Australian food system: a policy coherence analysis

Authors: Dr Jessica Bogard¹

Affiliations: ¹*CSIRO, Brisbane, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Objectives of a food system are numerous, including but not limited to; providing food in sufficient quantity, providing the basis for healthy diets, protecting natural resources, contributing to economic growth and supporting appropriate employment conditions. Policies acting at different points in the food system often have different objectives. In some cases, these will act in concert with each other; and in others these will conflict and undermine other objectives.

Process: Policy coherence analysis provides a methodology for examining policies across the food system, and the extent to which they support or undermine various objectives. This can assist in identification of opportunities to realign the food system to maximise synergies and minimise trade-offs.

Analysis: Existing evidence indicates that even at the most basic level of availability, current agricultural production is not sufficient to provide the Australian population with a diet consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines. A content analysis of the Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper, a key policy document relevant to the agricultural production stage of the food system reveals zero consideration of diet or nutrition outcomes for Australians, reflecting potential incoherence. Proposed next steps include a deeper assessment of the specific policy levers that influence availability and affordability of key foods of nutritional concern, and assessment of whether these support or undermine shifts towards healthier diets for Australians.

Learning objectives: to articulate the value of policy coherence analysis in a 'systems approach' to addressing nutrition issues; to explore methods for policy coherence analysis relevant to the Australian food system.

The Commercial Determinants of Health and the Australian Food Industry

Authors: Ms Cassandra de Lacy-Vawdon¹

Affiliations: ¹*School of Public Health & Preventive Medicine, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: In recent decades, public health and health promotion have focused increasingly on the social determinants of health. However, it is increasingly recognised that commercial interests often inhibit health, and inhibit policies and programs that aim to make healthy choices easy for consumers. Such influences are detrimental to health and are a product of the commercial determinants of health (CDoH).

Methods: This research uses key informant interviews, document analyses and analyses of Australian political donations data to present in-depth food industry case studies. The study applies a CDoH framework to document the characteristics, activities, and associated outcomes of the Australian food industry.

Results: Whilst not prolific donors, the food industry undertakes a number of corporate activities to influence policy and debate, and facilitate continued prioritisation of industry profits over public health. These include internationalisation and outreach, lobbying and marketing, and controlling all aspects of the supply chain and food environment.

Conclusion: The effects of the CDoH are readily observable within the Australian food industry. This work highlights imperatives for action on the CDoH in order to minimise non-communicable disease and maximise health and wellbeing.

Learning objectives: This presentation will:

- Introduce a CDoH framework and illustrate how this can be applied to the Australian food industry;
- Describe the CDoH characteristics, activities and associated outcomes of key players within the Australian food industry; and,
- Highlight the need to consider the CDoH in all facets of public health research, program planning, advocacy, and public policy in order to minimise the associated harms.

Australia's Foodborne Illness Reduction Strategy 2018-2021+

Authors: Ms Sophie Dwyer¹

Affiliations: ¹*Queensland Health, Herston, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: In April 2017 the Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation (the Ministerial Forum) agreed the food regulation system is producing strong food safety outcomes overall and identified three priority areas for 2018 to 2021 and beyond to further strengthen the system.

One of these priorities is to reduce foodborne illness, particularly related to *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella*. Ministers requested the development of an Australian strategy, noting New Zealand has an existing strategy, and recognised success requires concerted national effort, collaboration and partnerships across the food supply chain.

Process: Consultation commenced on 12 February 2018 and closed on 6 April 2018. A total of 51 submissions were received. In addition to reports being received from five national forums and eleven jurisdictional roundtables, submissions from 17 industry organisations; one consumer organisation; one public health organisation; 21 government organisations and nine other stakeholder organisations were received.

Summary: The strategy has six focus areas, national engagement; food safety culture; sector based initiatives for horticulture, poultry, egg and food service sectors; consumer and industry education; monitoring and surveillance; and research.

The Food Regulation Standing Committee will be the governing body for implementing the strategy and reporting back to Ministers on progress.

Learning objectives:

1. Identifying the current state of foodborne illness in Australia and why a national strategy is necessary
2. Clearly articulating a vision supported by all jurisdictions and sectors
3. Practical through chain approach to achieve the vision from paddock to plate

Poster Presentations

Tuesday 20 & Wednesday 21 November, Parkland 1, 1:00pm - 1:15pm

P1.001 - Festival21: Our Future through Food

Authors: Dr Alexander Bowden¹, Ms Imogen Thomas¹

Affiliations: ¹*Sandro Demaio Foundation, Northcote, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Food is emotive, universal, and powerful. Yet today, the way we grow, process, purchase, and consume food is causing serious harm to our health, our communities, and our planet. Food represents some of our greatest challenges, but it can also provide the solution.

Methods: Conceived and convened by a concerned group of young change-makers, Festival21 is an unprecedented concept aimed at inspiring, educating, empowering, and engaging up to 10,000 individuals in efforts to address the greatest challenges of our times using a humble universal toolkit – food. Heading into its second iteration in 2019, Festival21 is a free public event held in Melbourne that aims to demonstrate and celebrate the transformative ‘power of the plate’, by showcasing local and international individuals and companies that are actively championing solutions through food, inspiring and equipping attendees with a practical “toolkit” for using their food choices to improve health, connect communities, and support the environment. Festival21 seeks innovative ways of delivering evidence and ideas through the lenses of public health, design, art, food and philosophy, ultimately influencing positive change in food policy by educating, engaging, and mobilising the public.

Learning Objectives:

- Food provides an often missed opportunity to tackle issues of human health, climate change, and social inclusion up to three times a day, every day of our lives.
- There is a need to find new ways of inspiring and engaging people in global citizenship, contributing to meaningful positive changes through individual action.

P1.002 - Mediators of intervention effects for discretionary food consumption among ShopSmart participants

Authors: Dr Rachelle Opie¹, Dr Gavin Abbott¹, Professor David Crawford¹, Professor Sarah McNaughton¹, Professor Kylie Ball¹

Affiliations: ¹*IPAN, Deakin University, Burwood, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Behaviour change interventions can successfully promote fruit and vegetable consumption. However, few studies have investigated whether promoting healthy eating impacts discretionary food intake. Moreover, understanding mediators of intervention effects on eating behaviours can help inform future program design.

Methods: The analyses included 213 women (104control, 109intervention) from ShopSmart, a randomised controlled trial that investigated effects of a 6-month behaviour change intervention for increasing fruit and vegetable consumption. Linear regression models examined intervention effects on discretionary food consumption post-intervention. Indirect (mediated) effects were tested by the product of coefficients method with bootstrapped standard errors using Andrew Hayes’ PROCESS macro for SPSS. The food choice process model was the theoretical model utilised for guiding mediator selection (e.g., personal-factors, resources, contexts, food-choice-values).

Results: Compared with controls, intervention participants consumed fewer discretionary serves post-intervention, after adjusting for key confounders ($B = -0.116$, 95%CI: -0.374 to -0.021 ; $p = 0.028$). While some mediators were associated with the outcome (taste, health, skills and convenience), there was no evidence that they mediated intervention effects.

Conclusion: A decline in discretionary foods was observed amongst participants, despite the intervention focus being on fruits and vegetables. Although specific mediators were not identified, researchers and public health professionals should continue searching for mediators by which interventions have an effect to guide future program design.

Learning objectives: This study demonstrates that promoting healthy eating may have subsequent benefits for reducing discretionary food consumption. Additionally, it provides an example of how public health professionals can investigate mechanisms underlying program success using a theoretical model.

P1.003 - What's in a Chicken? Nutrients and costs of whole vs frozen chickens.

Authors: Hilary Chan¹, Johanna Wong^{2,3}, Peter Thomson³, Robyn Alders^{2,3}

Affiliations: ¹*School of Veterinary Science, Faculty of Science, The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia*, ²*Charles Perkins Centre, The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia*, ³*School of Life and Environmental Sciences, The University of Sydney, Camden, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: Chicken offal is a rich source of micronutrients, yet global consumers favour frozen chickens containing only the meat and bones. Despite increasing global poultry production, micronutrient deficiencies persist throughout the global population. The present study compares whole and frozen chickens in terms of key nutrient values, ability to meet household daily nutrient requirements, and price-nutrient effectiveness. Despite the focus on Timor-Leste households due to its high rates of micronutrient deficiencies, its implications can be extended to high-income nations e.g. Australia, where children, women and the elderly are vulnerable to micronutrient deficiencies.

Methods: 'Whole' chickens were classified as carcasses with giblets (heart, gizzard, liver), neck and feet, while 'frozen' chickens were classified as those without. Nutrient values for each body part were obtained from food composition tables. Nutrients in whole and frozen chickens were measured as a proportion of key nutrient dietary requirements in modelled Timorese households. Individual nutrient costs were measured using US market retail broiler prices.

Summary: Whole chickens had significantly higher levels of vitamin B12, vitamin A, and folate, with giblets contributing to 80-90% of these nutrients. Whole chickens and giblets alone, had a greater potential to meet daily nutrient requirements of households than frozen chickens. For every dollar, there was more iron, vitamin B12, vitamin A and folate in whole chickens and giblets, rendering these products a more cost-effective source of key micronutrients than frozen chickens.

Learning Objectives:

- To identify nutrient benefits of chicken offal consumption over whole chickens.
- To identify health-cost-effectiveness of chicken offal consumption.

P1.004 - New Zealand School-Food Environment Review and Support Tool (School-FERST): Policy and Practice

Authors: Miss. Erica D'souza¹, Professor Boyd Swinburn¹, Dr Stefanie Vandevijvere¹

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Abstract:

Background and Objectives: Research consistently demonstrates the positive links between healthy school environments, educational outcomes and student wellbeing. Yet New Zealand (NZ) school food and nutrition environments are not consistently monitored and evaluated necessitating a need for a valid, efficient and valuable monitoring and feedback system.

Methods: Participants from 819 (Response Rate = 33%) schools completed a cross-sectional, validated survey (School-FERST). Policies were analysed using an adapted version of the Well-SAT. Canteen menus were analysed using the NZ Food and Beverage Classification System for schools. A sample of menus (n=54) were validated using fieldworker observations. Key informant interviews (n=18) were conducted to ascertain the best ways in which to feedback results.

Results: Forty percent of schools reported having a food and nutrition policy. Most (n = 146) were vague, lacked comprehensiveness and contained weak statements. Seventy one percent of schools sold food and beverages to students during the school day, with 58% offering only milk and water as beverages. The average menu score was 2 out of 5, indicating only 20-40% of items on canteen menus were 'healthy'. A large proportion of schools (81%) used food and beverages for fundraising with 90% of them using 'unhealthy' items. Most schools had fruit orchards and/or vegetable gardens (80%), included nutrition education in curriculum (90%), are not sponsored by food and beverage companies (94%), and do not have commercial advertising on school grounds (97%).

Conclusion: Students remain exposed to inconsistent messages and practices across the school that contribute to unhealthy food choices.

P1.005 - Educator perspectives of children's mealtimes in Australian early childhood education and care

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Abstract:

Background: Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings have been identified as ideal behaviour settings for public health nutrition intervention. Little is known of how mealtimes are enacted or what impact eating in ECEC may have on children's eating behaviours. This research aimed to explore the perceptions of directors and educators in relation to mealtimes at ECEC services.

Method: An in-depth case study of two long day care services was undertaken in Brisbane, Australia focusing on 3-5 year old children. Guided by a Constructivist Grounded Theory approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with directors (n=2) and educators (n = 6). Data included voice-recorded interviews, transcriptions, and field notes. Continuous and iterative analysis was undertaken to develop key themes.

Results: Directors and educators emphasised social aspects of eating, along with mealtime rules and rituals unique for each centre. Key themes that emerged included: control, enculturation, child agency and food preference development. Educators reported children were influenced by peers to try new foods, both healthy and unhealthy. Whilst educators felt it was part of their role to discuss healthy eating with parents at mealtimes, they also felt uncomfortable about raising nutrition topics for discussion.

Conclusions: Mealtime interactions have potential to impact children's eating behaviours whilst attending ECEC. These perspectives highlight outcomes of children's mealtimes and knowledge gaps to better inform professional learning for educators.

Learning Objectives: To identify a grounded theory of children's mealtimes in ECEC. To identify outcomes for children at mealtimes to support healthy eating strategies.

P1.006 - An Evaluation of the KickStart for Kids School Breakfast Program

Authors: Mrs Michelle Watson¹

Affiliations: ¹*Flinders University, Bedford Park, Australia*

Abstract:

Background: School breakfast programs play an important role in providing adequate and nutritious food to children. The South Australian Kick Start for Kids school breakfast program was established in 2009 to address the issue of child food insecurity. The program delivers around 40,000 breakfasts to 300 schools per week and relies on volunteer and non-government organisation support. The program continues to grow yet has not been evaluated. As such, this study sought to determine if the program is being implemented and delivered effectively.

Methods: This qualitative study employed a combination of one-on-one and focus group interviews with representatives from the charity board, charity donors, and breakfast club volunteers. A case study design was utilised to evaluate their perceptions and experiences of different aspects of the program. Interview data were transcribed verbatim and analysed thematically.

Results: Four themes emerged relating to: perceived benefits to the children, socio-economic disadvantage, drivers of the program's success, and sustainability of the program. From the stakeholder's perspectives, the program is deemed effective however concerns arose around continued support, life of the program, and lack of awareness about the function of a school breakfast program.

Conclusion: This study provides insight into the processes surrounding an Australian school breakfast program. More broadly, the study draws attention to the perceived benefits of school breakfast programs and important issues for successful implementation.

Learning objectives:

1. To understand how a school breakfast program is perceived by the key stakeholders.
2. Provide insight into the perceived benefits of a school breakfast program.

P1.007 - Research, camera, action! Advocating for food marketing regulation, an Australian case study.

Authors: Ms Jennifer Norman¹, Associate Professor Bridget Kelly¹, Dr Anne T McMahon¹

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Abstract:

Objective: Effective advocacy is a key role of the public health practitioner with an end game of bringing about policy change. This paper presents a case study of an early career researcher's challenge to extend the impact of research beyond the academic journal and early advocacy wins.

Background and methodology: Despite calls from the highest levels of international health agencies, Australian children continue to be exposed to significant levels of unhealthy food marketing. An issue impeding policy change has been the lack of evidence showing the direct link between food marketing and children's energy intake and weight. A randomised crossover trial was conducted across four, six-day children's holiday camps (n= 160, 7-12 years) to investigate the effect of food advertising on children's food intake whilst at camp. Children left camp on the food advertising days with a positive energy balance of 194 kJ (46 kcal); an amount that, overtime, can lead to the development of overweight. These findings provided strong, new evidence to press for further regulation to limit food marketing to children.

We describe the planned and serendipitous advocacy opportunities that have emerged, and continue to emerge, as we press for policy change. These include national broadcast, non-broadcast and social media, political engagement, and national and international obesity policy inquiries. Barriers and key factors that have contributed to progress are outlined.

Learning objectives:

- Describe the insights into navigating the media and political systems to advocate for policy change.
- Understand the barriers and key factors that have contributed to progress.

P1.008 - Making the Healthy Choice the easy choice at Central Gippsland Health

Authors: Mrs Linda Hunt¹

Affiliations: ¹Wellington Primary Care Partnership

Abstract:

Background: Central Gippsland Health (CGH) serve approximately 45,000 meals through their cafeteria each year and have the ability to make a difference to the health of their community by making the healthy choice the easy choice. A key recommendation of the CGH Health Plan 2012-2022 states the initiative 'Healthy choices: food and drink guidelines for Victorian public hospitals' (Healthy Choices) is to be fully implemented as a part of CGH's primary prevention strategy to address cardiovascular disease and obesity within our community.

Method: Working with Wellington Primary Care Partnership, Achievement Program under the guidance of Alfred Health, CGH demonstrate leadership in health promotion and population health by making the healthy choice the easy choice through a number of initiatives which include displaying posters, nudge cards, education and promotion about making healthier choices. Central Gippsland health have increased the availability and promotion of healthier food and drink choices and has reduced the availability and promotion of less healthy choices.

Results: Since the introduction of healthier choice promotions, CGH has seen 7% increase in "green" items being purchased and a 7% reduction of "red" items.

Learning Objections: Since seeing a reduction in "red" items being purchased, CGH are now in the midst of a café refurbishment which has been designed with new menu changes including the healthy choices traffic light system, making this a trendy café with a consistent message for staff and visitors.

P1.009 - Food insecurity in Victoria: problem representation and policy response within local government

Authors: Miss Vivien Yii¹, Dr Sue Kleve¹, Dr Claire Palermo¹

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Abstract:

Background: Food insecurity is considered an intractable problem requiring action from federal to local governments. VicHealth's Food for All (FFA) program (2005-2010) supported 10 Victorian local governments to address food insecurity, yet little is known about its longer-term influence on food insecurity being considered a policy 'problem'. This research examines the progression of policies to address food insecurity in this setting since FFA's conclusion.

Methods: A purposive sample of 10 Victorian local governments, funded to address food insecurity as part of FFA, were examined. Bacchi's 'What's the Problem Represented to Be' methodology informed document analyses of relevant council policies (2000-2018), and will guide semi-structured interviews with key council policy officers. Interviews, to be conducted and analysed by August 2018, will explore the representation of the 'problem' of food insecurity within council policy, including the origin and impacts of this representation.

Results: Document analyses have revealed that FFA local governments demonstrate varied policy support and ways of viewing food insecurity. This presentation will focus on the interview findings, including reasons for the diversity among these councils in how food insecurity is considered.

Conclusion: This research highlights how the Victorian FFA program has influenced policy action, an important strategy for addressing food insecurity within local government.

Learning objectives: Attendees will be able to discuss:

- (1) How food insecurity policy action by local governments in Victoria has progressed since FFA's conclusion
- (2) The origin and impacts of the representation of the 'problem' of food insecurity within a sample of Victorian local government

P1.010 - Removal of Sugary Drinks from Vending machines: An Australian University Case Study

Authors: Dr Carrie Tsai¹, Mr Scott Slater², Dr Rimante Ronto², Dr Klaus Gebel^{1,2,3}, Associate Professor Jason Wu^{4,5}

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Abstract:

Background: Sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs), particularly soft drinks, sports and energy drinks, are harmful contributors to obesity and related chronic diseases. Altering their consumption rates in universities, the educational centre for many young adults, is a positive step in encouraging healthy dietary choices. This study assesses the availability of SSBs at an Australian university.

Methods: An evaluation was conducted on the vending machine beverage offerings at Australian Catholic University (ACU). Vending machines were assessed to evaluate products available and proportions that were SSBs for sale between August 2017 & January 2018. Products were classified as 'core' vs. 'discretionary' beverages as defined by the Australian Dietary Guidelines. Results were compared against the New South Wales (NSW) Healthy Food and Drink for Health Facilities Framework, which sets out targets for product availability in NSW health facilities.

Results: 14 Vending machines were assessed across 5 campuses, including a total of 331 products. SSB's accounted for 56% of all products available, with a mean \pm SD, 56 \pm 14%, across machines. Furthermore, discretionary products made up 77% of all products, compared to the 25% limit per the NSW Framework. Following consultation with ACU management and the vending machine operator, vending machine offerings were changed at all ACU campuses to remove all SSBs to adhere to the NSW Framework.

Conclusion: Consistent with prior studies, our findings indicate high availability of unhealthy beverages at Australian University vending machines. Our results additionally suggest that an audit and feedback strategy for food environments, in combination with strong leadership, can affect positive change.

P1.011 - Regulating ready-to-use squeeze pouch infant foods for optimal health outcomes

Authors: Dr Catharine Fleming¹, Ms Libby Salmon², Dr Julie Smith²

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Abstract:

Introduction: Commercial pureed ready-to-use squeeze infant food pouches have emerged as a ubiquitous form of heavily marketed complementary food. However little is known about their potential harm to children's feeding development, dietary patterns and health outcomes. Healthy eating habits early in life help prevent diet-related chronic disease (1,2). When and how complementary feeding is introduced are key to the foundation of eating behaviours, dietary patterns and oral motor development (1,3). As part of a preliminary study of the effects of squeeze pouches on dietary intake and health outcomes for children, this paper examines regulation of the content, packaging and marketing of these products.

Methods: A qualitative document study compared the regulatory requirements applicable to squeeze pouches in Australian and international dietary guidelines and food standards for baby food composition, texture, packaging, labelling, health and nutrition claims, feeding methods and marketing.

Results: Australian policy for baby food was not consistent with international guidance on infant and young child feeding (3) and marketing (4). There was little regulation of premature introduction of solid foods (before 6 months) (5), delayed transition to textures that promote chewing, or cross-product marketing with infant formula.

Conclusion: Australian food policy fails to address oral motor development and timing for complementary feeding. Regulatory standards need to adopt functional, in addition to nutritional, criteria that recognise effects of food on children's immunological, motor and social development (6). Regulators must address the potential of squeeze pouch packaging and marketing to undermine breastfeeding as well as the transition to family foods.

P1.012 - Same same but different – barriers to addressing food and alcohol policy

Authors: Ms Maddie Day¹

Affiliations: ¹Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education, Deakin, Australia

Abstract:

Background: Alcohol and poor diet are two of four modifiable risk factors to prevent and control chronic disease. They both have overlapping health impacts including increased risk of cancer, heart disease, diabetes and obesity. According to the World Health Organization, food and alcohol policy have the same levers – price, promotion and availability. Dealing with chronic disease has become a Government priority in recent years. However, governments are still reluctant to invest in prevention and many policy recommendations continue to be neglected.

Body: Many of the most effective prevention policies are unpopular making it challenging for governments to adopt these or for prevention to become a Government priority. In particular, fiscal policies, advertising regulation and availability restrictions face implementation barriers. Five key barriers are: the politics of the day, industry, community and media, multiple players/ stakeholders and the economy/ budget.

Summary: The growing burden of chronic disease is severely impacting Australia's health system and the economy. There are significant barriers to policy change and a comprehensive advocacy approach must be taken. This requires support from stakeholders in public health, community and media. Advocates in these fields face the same challenges. It is important to recognise this, learn from the experiences of each other and work together to achieve change.

Learning objectives: Delegates will:

1. Critically reflect on the relationship between alcohol and food policy.
2. Develop an understanding of the barriers to policy change.
3. Better understand how to draw on the experiences of other public health advocates to overcome these barriers.

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