

**NSW Food
and Nutrition
Monitoring Project**



Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW



The University of Sydney

NSW HEALTH
Better Health Good Health Care

Health
Working as a Team
The Way Forward

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Abbreviations used in this document

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACHPER	Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation
AGPS	Australian Government Publishing Service
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ANZFA	Australia and New Zealand Food Authority
BMI	Body mass index
FSI	Fat and sugar index
HDL	High density lipoprotein
LDL	Low density lipoprotein
NATSIS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NHS	National Health Survey
NNMS	National Nutrition Monitoring System
NNS	National Nutrition Survey
NPHP	National Public Health Partnership
SIGNAL	Strategic Inter Governmental Nutrition Alliance
YRBS	Youth Risk Behaviour Survey

Contextual note - Links with the Australian Food and Nutrition Monitoring Unit

The work undertaken in the development of this document preceded the establishment of the Australian Food and Nutrition Monitoring Unit. The Unit was established at the University of Queensland in 1999 by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care to develop an ongoing nationally coordinated food and nutrition monitoring system for Australia.

Many of the modules and recommendations contained in this document are still current and relevant to NSW. However, since the writing of this document, the Australian Food and Nutrition Monitoring Unit has begun work on several key areas which will contribute to and enable better food and nutrition monitoring at the State and Area level in NSW.

Key projects of the Australian Food and Nutrition Monitoring Unit include:

Compendia of data sources, Methodological Guidelines, and Indicators

- a food and nutrition data sources catalogue, and a framework for its use;
- guidelines for the use and interpretation of dietary data from the 1995 national nutrition survey;
- guidelines for using and comparing existing national dietary survey data;
- specifications of standard questions and guidelines for measuring selected food habits in the Australian population (including the prevalence of breastfeeding);
- a set of nationally agreed indicators for monitoring the nutrition situation in Australia

Reports on the food and nutrition situation in Australia

- a comprehensive report on the food and nutrition intake trends of Australians
- a status report on the diet and health of the Australian population
- an interim evaluation of the effects of folate fortification, and
- collation of data on food and nutrition status of population subgroups.

It is within this context that the information and recommendations contained herein should be considered. Further work in nutrition monitoring in NSW will need to be undertaken in collaboration with AFNMU, and focus on those monitoring activities which are best undertaken at State and Area levels.

Further information about the Australian Food and Nutrition Unit can be found at the website address <http://www.sph.uq.edu.au/nutrition/monitoring> or contact

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Executive Summary

What is the purpose of the Recommendations document?

Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW makes recommendations for meeting food and nutrition monitoring needs in NSW which:

- provide timely, high-quality, accessible and appropriate data for decision-making about nutrition policy and programs, and
- complement national, State and local monitoring initiatives.

The recommendations outlined in this document suggest future directions for food and nutrition monitoring in NSW and will be used by NSW Health to guide the development of the Food and Nutrition Monitoring system in NSW.

Recommendations made relate to:

- indicators for nutrition monitoring in NSW,
- appropriate tools and mechanisms for collection, analysis, reporting, feedback and dissemination of data on chosen indicators,
- appropriate roles for the various agencies and levels of government in relation to data collection, analysis, and dissemination.

Why make recommendations for food and nutrition monitoring in NSW?

Up-to-date information is needed to make good management decisions about nutrition policies and programs. Monitoring systems can contribute valuable information to meet many of these requirements, such as: tracking progress towards goals and targets; assessing the impact of the total effort to improve nutrition; and planning and improving policies, programs and services.

Food and nutrition monitoring is important at the national, State and local levels of the health system. The **monitoring responsibilities** and the **types of information** which are relevant at the three levels vary. A planned approach to nutrition monitoring at the State level is needed to ensure that State priorities are addressed, that local monitoring activities relevant to these priorities are well coordinated, and that State monitoring complements national and local monitoring initiatives.

Who are the recommendations for?

1. **NSW Health Department:** Sun Exposure, Nutrition and Physical Activity Unit; Health Promotion Branch; Research and Clinical Policy Branch; Epidemiology and Surveillance Branch; and the Chief Health Officer,
2. **NSW Area Health Service personnel:** Area Planners, Area Health Promotion and Public Health Unit personnel, Community Nutritionists, Health Outcomes Councils, and

3. **Other** potential suppliers and users of nutrition information, including: federal agencies, researchers and public health academics, nutrition-related non-government organisations and other State governments.

In order to meet the needs of users, **consultations** were conducted with health professionals throughout NSW. Participants identified the most important issues and indicators needed for State-wide monitoring and how they use nutrition information. This consultation process, together with an extensive literature review and liaison with national groups contributed to determining which components to include in *Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW*.

Components of the Recommendations:

- **Short modules:** Short sets of questions have been compiled which are suitable for use in population-based surveys, including the NSW Health Survey. These measure key aspects of dietary habits, such as intake of fruit, vegetables, breads and cereals; and habits related to fat, saturated fat, calcium and iron intake; breastfeeding and other infant feeding practices; food security; barriers to dietary change and meal patterns. Questions have been extensively researched and the rationale for inclusion of each are given in detail.
- **A guide for monitoring overweight and obesity in NSW:** This includes recommendations on what should be measured and how to measure overweight and obesity; standards for classifying weight status; and options for obtaining information on various population groups in NSW.
- **A validity study of self-reported weights and heights:** The error associated with self-reported weight and height data differs between population groups, over time, and with the mode of questions, (e.g., telephone questions versus face-to-face interviews). Estimates of the error were therefore required from the NSW Health Survey. A detailed proposal was developed for the measurement of weights and heights on a sub sample of respondents from this survey and a validation study was subsequently conducted.
- **The National Nutrition Survey NSW data:** Specifications for information required from the 1995 National Nutrition Survey are outlined, including recommendations for analysis, presentation and dissemination of NSW data.
- **Update of Catalogue:** Recommendations are made for the production and dissemination of the first update of □Food and Nutrition in NSW - a catalogue of data□. This catalogue provides a comprehensive source of data and is widely used by health and nutrition professionals in NSW.

- **Other activities:** Recommendations are made concerning other monitoring activities which require development, implementation and support in NSW including:
 - Identifying and monitoring indicators of the food 'environment'
 - Development of short questions for population-based surveys of vulnerable groups, including selected ethnic groups and children;
 - Growth monitoring of children in vulnerable population sub-groups;
 - Improved documentation of outcomes of recent nutrient fortification programs;
 - Surveys of household food insecurity among disadvantaged groups;
 - Improved information about the initiation and duration of breastfeeding;
 - Monitoring meals available in institutional settings, e.g. child care centres, hospitals;
 - Establishing a National Network for sharing expertise, methods, and development of assessment tools for food and nutrition monitoring.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The role and importance of nutrition monitoring

1.1.1 What is food and nutrition monitoring?

The terms ‘**monitoring**’ and ‘**surveillance**’ have been defined in many different ways and are sometimes used interchangeably (Mason et al 1984, Marks 1991, Lester 1994, Coles-Rutishauser and Lester 1995, LSRO 1995). For the purpose of this document, the term ‘**nutrition monitoring**’, is defined as:

‘A description of trends in indicators of the food and nutrition situation useful for decision-making that will lead to improvements in the nutritional status of populations.’

Effective nutrition monitoring systems have the following characteristics, they:

- have some person or unit responsible for coordinating the activities,
- focus only on data necessary for making important decisions,
- address all components of the food and nutrition system, i.e., food production and distribution, food and nutrient intake, nutritional status and related health outcomes of the population,
- pay particular attention to subgroups of the population which may be at risk,
- include appropriate and timely analysis, interpretation, presentation and dissemination of information,
- include mechanisms for evaluation and feedback on the information’s usefulness for decision-making, and
- are practical and cost-effective (United Nations 1975, Mason et al 1984, MMWR 1988, Marks 1991, Habicht and Mason 1983, Thacker and Stroup 1994, Lester 1994, Coles-Rutishauser and Lester 1995, LSRO 1995).

1.1.2 What nutrition information do managers require and how much of this information can be provided by a monitoring system?

Up-to-date information of various types is needed to make good management decisions about nutrition policies and programs. The types of information required are shown in Figure 1.1. Monitoring systems can contribute valuable information to meet many of these requirements (highlighted in Figure 1.1), but not others. For instance, documentation of the prevalence of nutrition problems in the general population and vulnerable groups can be supplied as part of a monitoring program. However, conclusive evidence about the causes of nutrition problems cannot be supplied by monitoring systems; experimental and/or quasi-experimental studies are required.

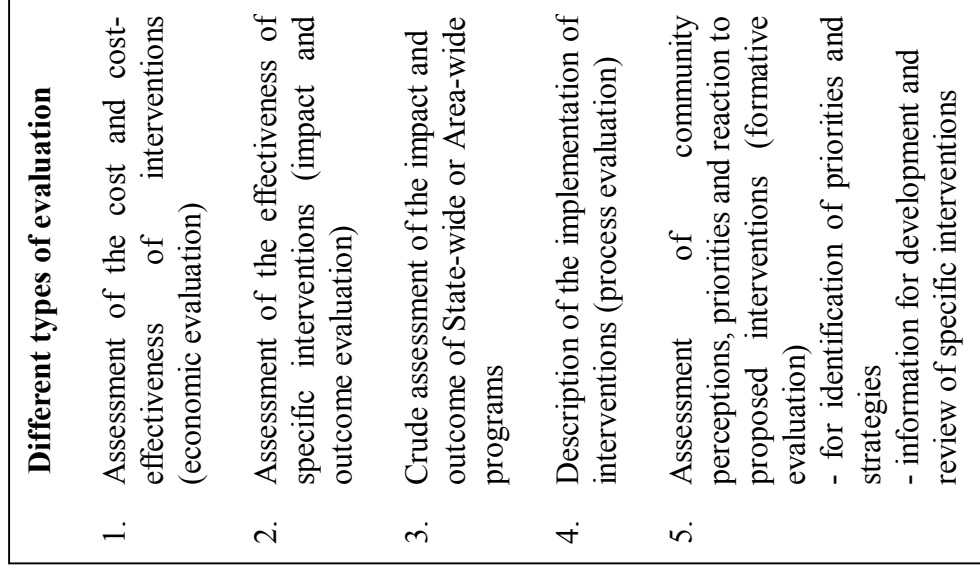
The relative burden of nutrition-related diseases can be described using monitoring data, but costing of such diseases involves complex economic analysis. Tracking of changes in the food system, behaviours and/or nutritional and health status of the population is a major part of the

monitoring process, but only the highest priorities for information can usually be afforded. Tracking provides a crude assessment of the impact of State-wide or Area-wide nutrition policies and programs, but it is difficult to be sure that the effects seen are the result of particular programs. Monitoring can be used to indicate uptake of particular strategies and provide consumer information for selection of priorities and strategies. The more detailed evaluation results required for assessment of the effect of specific programs, process evaluation for program management, and economic evaluations are beyond the realms of monitoring systems.

The types of information represented in Figure 1.1 are used for a variety of purposes, including:

- tracking progress towards goals and targets,
- assessing the impact of the total effort to improve nutrition,
- policy formulation,
- planning and review of policies, programs and services,
- identifying intervention priorities, resource allocation,
- selection and development of interventions,
- initiating and sustaining political support for particular policies and programs,
- identification of further research priorities,
- predicting future trends,
- development of goals and targets, and
- education of health professionals and the public (Mason et al 1984, Marks 1991, Habicht and Mason 1983, Thacker and Stroup 1994, Pelletier and Shrimpton 1994, Lester 1994, Coles-Rutishauser and Lester 1995, Pelletier 1995).

Figure 1.1: Information used by managers and policy-makers - how much can be supplied by monitoring^a?



^aTypes of information which can be supplied by monitoring initiatives are shaded and italicised

1.1.3 The role of nutrition monitoring at different levels of the health system

Food and nutrition monitoring is important at the national, State and local levels of the health system. There are organisational links between these three levels and each can support the others in the development and implementation of monitoring initiatives. However, the **monitoring responsibilities** and the **types of information** which are relevant at the three levels vary.

For instance, some initiatives are most appropriately carried out at the **national level**, such as:

- the development of standard definitions and questions for monitoring - to ensure comparability of survey results across States and Territories, and
- ensuring the adequacy of trend data for reporting progress on the achievement of national nutrition goals and targets and for meeting Australia's international reporting commitments, such as OECD reports on food supply for member countries.

At the **State level**, monitoring should:

- specifically address State priorities and involve coordination of local monitoring relevant to these priorities. Most of the initiatives proposed in *Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW* will be useful and appropriate at the State-wide and local levels, involving State-level coordination and local-level cooperation (and in some cases local data collection and analysis),
- include State-wide surveys which provide sufficient sample sizes to allow Area-based comparisons, and
- include sentinel site monitoring of specific issues (i.e., selection of sites based on demographic characteristics and/or risk profiles of their residents).

Local monitoring systems:

- should be tailored to program and organisational needs, as well as reporting requirements of funders and needs of State and national nutrition monitoring systems,
- should include Area-wide monitoring of some nutrition indicators, such as those included in the NSW Health Survey (refer to Chapter 4) and suggested for inclusion in Area Performance Contracts. Most of these local monitoring initiatives, however, are best coordinated and directed at the State level to allow meaningful comparisons between the results obtained in different Area Health Services,
- include the evaluation of specific nutrition interventions, including process evaluation of program implementation, providing useful information not strictly within a monitoring framework, but nonetheless valuable for decision-making by public health planners and practitioners,
- may be supplemented with external data for overall program management purposes, such as needs assessment and assessing a program's contribution toward State and national goals and targets.

The priorities for food and nutrition **issues** to be monitored also vary at the local, State and national levels. For instance, the assessment of the adequacy of the food supply in relation to the energy and nutrient needs of the population is best made using national apparent consumption statistics which are not available at the State or local level. Conversely, the assessment of the quality of the food supply in school canteens is appropriate at the State and local levels. Other issues, such as food intake in relation to current goals and targets, the prevalence and duration of breastfeeding and the weight status of the population, are important issues for monitoring at all three levels. Where issues are of common interest, the use of standard health and nutrition indicators will assist in comparison of results. In addition to priorities which have been identified at the national and State levels, Area Health Services may identify specific nutrition issues for monitoring at the local level which are of particular interest because of the demographic profile of their population or the programs and services which require tracking.

1.2 The NSW Food and Nutrition Monitoring Project and Recommendations document

1.2.1 What is the NSW Food and Nutrition Monitoring Project?

The NSW Food and Nutrition Monitoring Project was a time-limited project funded by the NSW Department of Health with the following goals and objectives:

Goals

1. To provide timely, high-quality, accessible, appropriate data for decision-making for nutrition in NSW.
2. To complement national, State and local initiatives relevant to nutrition monitoring.
3. To take particular account of the needs of nutritionally vulnerable groups such as Aboriginal communities and lower socio economic groups.

Objectives

1. To recommend indicators for nutrition monitoring in NSW, with an appropriate balance between process and outcome indicators.
2. To specify appropriate tools and mechanisms for collection, analysis, reporting, feedback and dissemination of data on chosen indicators.
3. To recommend appropriate roles for the various agencies (including Area Health Services) and levels of government in relation to data collection, analysis, and dissemination.
4. To ensure that the proposed systems are feasible and affordable.

1.2.2 Documents produced by the NSW Food and Nutrition Monitoring Project

Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW

This document (which you are currently reading) is an overview of recommendations for meeting food and nutrition monitoring needs in NSW. Each chapter is devoted to a specific aspect of NSW monitoring as follows:

- Chapter 2 contains *Recommendations for specific monitoring initiatives in NSW*. This includes a recommendation for the NSW Health Department to establish strategic partnership with a suitably experienced group to carry out or support the development of specific monitoring initiatives,
- Chapter 3 - *National Networking to enhance NSW Food and Nutrition Monitoring*, contains recommendations for discussion of issues to enable and support States and Territories to conduct more effective monitoring systems, and
- Chapters 4-6 address specific methods (*Short modules for measuring key aspects of food habits and food intakes in population-based surveys in NSW*), surveys (*Information required from the National Nutrition Survey*) or issues (*Recommendations for monitoring overweight and obesity in NSW*).

Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW is intended primarily for people working in NSW health services who require nutrition-related information to set policies and priorities, or who manage or conduct nutrition-related programs and services, including:

- the NSW Health Department: Sun Exposure, Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy Unit; Health Promotion Branch; Research and Clinical Policy Branch; Epidemiology and Surveillance Branch; and the Chief Health Officer, and
- NSW Area Health Service personnel: Area Planners, Area Health Promotion and Public Health Unit personnel, Community Nutritionists, Health Outcomes Councils.

It is also intended for:

- federal agencies that use or supply nutrition information, such as the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care: Public Health Division Nutrition Group, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the National Public Health Partnership group, and
- researchers and public health academics, nutrition-related non-government organisations and other State governments.

Such agencies have an interest in the direction that NSW takes with regard to food and nutrition monitoring initiatives, and how NSW efforts can complement and contribute to national efforts.

Two separate reports accompany *Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW*, and provide more detail for those who wish to assess and monitor the issues and indicators addressed by the reports:

1. *Measuring key aspects of food habits and food intakes in population-based surveys in NSW: recommendations for short modules* (Hewitt et al 1998).
2. *Recommendations for monitoring overweight and obesity in NSW* (NSW HD 2000).

1.2.3 Issues and indicators addressed by Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW

Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW and accompanying reports do not address **all** of the nutrition issues and indicators which have the potential to be used in decision-making at the State and local levels in NSW. The main aim of the NSW Food and Nutrition Monitoring Project was to enhance food and nutrition monitoring in NSW in relation to current priority needs. It was not designed to fulfil all State and local monitoring requirements, but instead, to:

- focus on information that managers and policy-makers currently use and which can be provided by a monitoring system,
- enhance current initiatives, and
- make recommendations regarding appropriate future monitoring directions.

Given that there may be few new resources available for food and nutrition monitoring in NSW in the immediate future, the 'list' of initiatives has been kept relatively short and the cost implications kept as low as possible. The elements of *Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW* were designed with flexibility in mind, so that new priorities or issues which may emerge in the near future can be incorporated into the ongoing NSW monitoring program.

The subset of indicators which are addressed by *Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW* are highlighted in Table 1.1, and the component of *Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW* which addresses each indicator is included.

Table 1.1: Nutrition-related issues and indicators for monitoring

	Nutrition issue	Potential topics for indicators^a	Component of the document which addresses highlighted indicator^b
Anthropometry	Weight status of adults	◆ weights, heights, BMI	◆ R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, M, OO
		◆ waist-hip ratio	◆ R2, R3, R5, R6, OO
Nutrient intake	Growth and weight status of children	◆ weights, heights, BMI	◆ R2, R3, R5, R6, OO
		◆ weight for age,	◆ R2, R6, OO
		◆ weight for height ratio	◆ R2, R6, OO
		◆ total fat intake	◆ R2, R3, R5
		◆ saturated fat intake	◆ R2, R3, R5
Iron intake	Iron intake	◆ intake of cereals and meat	◆ R4, M
		◆ iron intake	◆ R2, R3, R5
Calcium intake	Calcium intake	◆ intake of milk and milk products	◆ R4, M
		◆ calcium intake	◆ R2, R3, R5
Folate intake	Folate intake	◆ folate intake	◆ R2, R3, R5
		◆ blood cholesterol	◆ R3
Blood pressure status	Blood pressure status	◆ blood pressure	◆ R3
		◆ iron deficiency anaemia	◆ R3
Folate status	Folate status	◆ folate status	◆ R3
Physical and Biochemical Measures			

	Nutrition issue	Potential topics for indicators ^a	Component of the document which addresses highlighted indicator ^b
Attitude and beliefs	Weight status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ weight related attitudes 	
Food habits	Intake of core food groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ breads and cereals, fruit and vegetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ R2, R3, R4, R5, M
	Breastfeeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ prevalence and duration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ R2, R4, M
	Infant feeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ age of introduction of formula, cow's milk and solids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ R4, M
	Meal patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ number of eating occasions, breakfast, takeaways and meals outside home ◆ usual way of eating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ R2, R3, R4, R5, M ◆ R4, M
	Fat consumption habits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ use of reduced fat dairy products, fried foods and high fat meats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ R2, R3, R4, R5, M
	Salt consumption habits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ salt added to foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ R2, R3, R5
	Alcohol consumption habits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ alcohol consumption habits 	
	Dietary change patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ self-reported changes to diet and reasons ◆ desire to change diet ◆ barriers to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ R4, M ◆ R4, M ◆

	Nutrition issue	Potential topics for indicators^a	Component of the document which addresses highlighted indicator^b	
Food habits continued	Food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ missing meals for reasons of money ◆ more detailed investigations of food security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ R2, R3, R4, R5, M 	
Other health-related habits	Weight status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ weight related behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ R2, R4, M 	
Food system	Food production (agriculture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ farms/farmers, hectares ◆ value and quantity of production ◆ local farmers markets 		
	Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ salt content of staple foods ◆ fortification of foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ R3 ◆ R3 	
	Food retailing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ sales, price, availability and promotion of healthy choices ◆ supermarkets/shops to population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ R2, R3 ◆ R2 	
	Food safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ food handlers trained ◆ compliance with hygiene ◆ compliance of labeling ◆ micro biological contamination ◆ prevalence of reported food borne illness ◆ consumer confidence in food supply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ R3 ◆ R3 ◆ R3 ◆ R3 ◆ R3 ◆ R3 	
Food system	Food service in institutions (hospitals,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ purchases of selected wholesale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ R3 	

	Nutrition issue	Potential topics for indicators ^a	Component of the document which addresses highlighted indicator ^b
continued	child care centres, schools, nursing homes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ menus/recipes consistent with products ◆ catering practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ R2, R3 ◆ R3
	Food service in commercial settings, e.g., takeaway shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ purchases of selected wholesale products ◆ menus/recipes consistent with criteria ◆ catering practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ R3 ◆ R3 ◆ R3

^aThose addressed by the Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW are shaded and italicised

^b Key to abbreviations for various components of Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW and accompanying reports:

R2= Recommendations, Chapter 2: Recommendations for specific monitoring initiatives in NSW

R3= Recommendations, Chapter 3: National networking to enhance NSW Food and Nutrition Monitoring

R4= Recommendations, Chapter 4: Short modules for measuring key aspects of food habits and food intakes in population-based surveys

R5= Recommendations, Chapter 5: Information required from the National Nutrition Survey

R6= Recommendations, Chapter 6: Recommendations for monitoring overweight and obesity in NSW

M= Report on *Measuring key aspects of food habits and food intakes in population-based surveys in NSW: recommendations for short modules* (Hewitt et al 1998)

OO= Report on *Recommendations for monitoring overweight and obesity in NSW* (NSW HD 2000)

1.2.4 What influenced the choice of components for Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW?

In 1994, the NSW Health Department published *Food and Nutrition in NSW - a catalogue of data* (Stickney et al 1994). This document provided a comprehensive collation and interpretation of the information available at that time about the food supply, food intake and nutritional status of the NSW population. ‘The *Catalogue of data*’ was instrumental in identifying the major gaps in nutrition data collection, analysis and interpretation for use by those working in public health nutrition in NSW. It was essentially the first step in the development of *Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW*.

In order to ensure that *Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW* will meet users needs, the Project consulted a wide variety of people working in the field of public health nutrition. Community nutritionists, Area Health Promotion and Public Health personnel, NSW Health Department administrators and policy-makers, academics and non-government organisations were contacted to identify:

- the most important issues and indicators for State-wide monitoring,
- how these people use nutrition information, and
- how they prefer to receive information about food and nutrition.

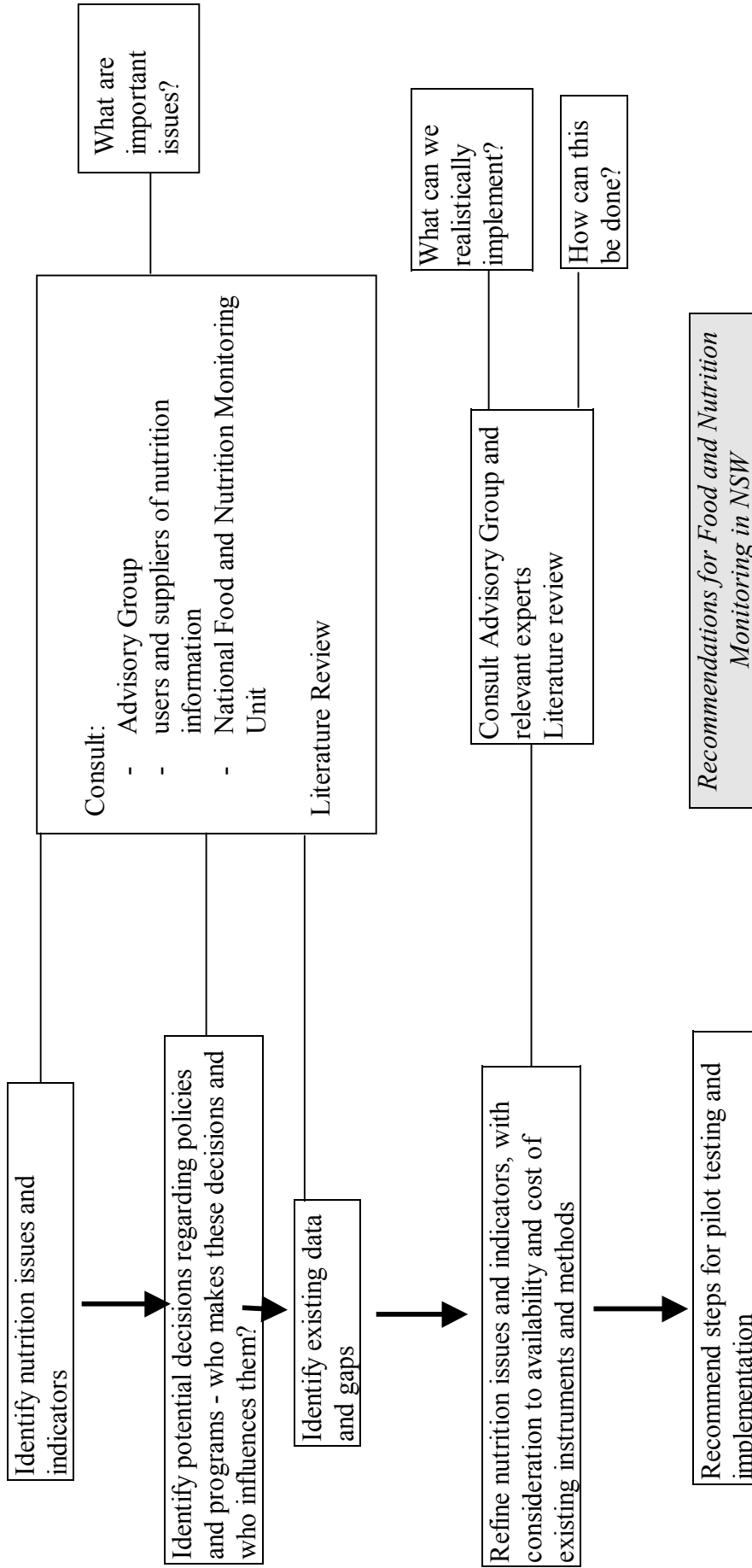
A summary report of these consultations can be found in Appendix 1.

A formal Advisory Group was established to guide the work of the NSW Food and Nutrition Monitoring Project and consisted of representatives of several units of the NSW Health Department, selected members of the NSW Food and Nutrition Monitoring Team and a regional nutrition representative. The Advisory Group assisted with decisions at all stages of the development of *Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW*. Figure 1.2 shows the development process for the document. The Advisory Group was particularly important for keeping the Project informed of current national, State and local initiatives which were relevant to monitoring in NSW (refer to Figure 1.3 below). These initiatives also had a major influence on the content and structure of the document.

In addition to these consultations, liaison with the National Food and Nutrition Monitoring Unit of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and an extensive literature review, were conducted to identify the most appropriate issues and indicators, the kinds of decisions which were likely to be made based on nutrition information, and the current availability of NSW food and nutrition data (including identification of gaps in the information system).

Further consultations with the Advisory Group and relevant experts were conducted to refine the list of nutrition issues and indicators for monitoring, with consideration to the availability and cost of existing instruments and methods. *Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW* contains recommended steps for pilot testing and implementation of monitoring initiatives in NSW.

Figure 1.2: Development process for Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW



1.2.5 Current initiatives that will benefit from a planned approach to nutrition monitoring in NSW

There are many initiatives currently underway at the national, State and local level which are relevant to a planned approach to nutrition monitoring in NSW. Some examples of these initiatives are shown in Figure 1.3 and a description of how the major initiatives relate to *Recommendations for Food and Nutrition Monitoring in NSW* is contained in Appendix 2.