

Healthy catering in NSW Health facilities

A 3-step guide to make healthy choices easy



This guide applies to catering for all events in NSW Health facilities. This includes functions, meetings, conferences, social events, workshops and training days arranged for staff.

Catering sits under the *Healthy Food and Drink in NSW Health Facilities for Staff and Visitors Framework* (the Framework).

Staff ordering or organising catering can use this guide to choose healthier and delicious food and drink options. It can also be used by businesses that provide catering to these events.

About this guide:

Use this 3-step guide and tips when organising catering for NSW Health events. What does healthier catering look like:



Providing mostly healthier food and drink options



Swapping sugar-sweetened drinks for healthier options



Providing smaller portion sizes

What is an **Everyday** or **Occasional** food and drink?

Everyday (healthier)

Everyday meals, snacks and drinks are foods from the five food groups such as grains, vegetables, fruits, lean meats, nuts, eggs and dairy. Most meals, snacks and drinks that are made from these foods or drinks are also **Everyday**. For example, sandwiches, salads, yoghurt, fruit and water.

They should make up most (at least 75% or more) of the catering offering.



Occasional (less healthy)

Occasional foods and drinks are high in saturated fat, sugars and/or salt. They often have little nutritional value. Meals, snacks and drinks made from these foods and drinks are also **Occasional**. For example, pies, chips, sweet muffins, and sweets (confectionery) like chocolate. Diet or sugar-free drinks sweetened with natural or artificial sweeteners such as stevia or aspartame are **Occasional**.

They should make up no more than 25% of the catering offering.



For more information about the five food groups, see the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating, visit eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/australian-guide-healthy-eating

Step 1 | Provide mostly **Everyday** options

Everyday (healthier) options should make up at least 3 in 4 (75%) of the food and drink provided at each meal or snack offering.



For each **Occasional** (less healthy) food or drink offered, provide three **Everyday** (healthier) food or drink options. Here are some examples of what a healthier catering menu for food could look like, using this approach:

Morning or afternoon tea	Light lunch	Formal lunch	Canapés/ savoury snacks
Fresh fruit skewers or platter	Sandwiches	Meat or vegetable curry	Meat or vegetable skewers
Cheese platter served with crackers	Wraps	Vegetable stir fry	Sushi
Dried fruit and nut mix	Salad pots	Rice or mashed potato	Rice paper rolls
Mini muffins	Mini quiches (with pastry)	Schnitzel	Samosas



If you are ordering less than 4 options at any meal or snack, aim to provide no more than 1 **Occasional** or no **Occasional** options. For example, if 3 options are provided, 2 in 3 should be **Everyday** and 1 in 3 should be **Occasional**. If 2 options or less are provided, aim to provide only **Everyday** options.

For more examples of **Everyday** and **Occasional** catering options to help you build your menu, see pages 5 and 6.



Step 2

Swap sugar-sweetened drinks for healthier options

Sugar-sweetened drinks are not provided

Sugar-sweetened drinks are drinks with no nutritional value and that have sugar added during processing, excluding milk drinks.

Examples of sugar-sweetened drinks are soft drinks, some flavoured waters, fruit drinks, cordials, iced teas, energy drinks and sports drinks.

Diet or sugar-free drinks sweetened with natural or artificial sweeteners such as stevia or aspartame are **Occasional**.

Swap sugar-sweetened drinks for **Everyday** (healthier) options.

Unsure if a drink is sugar-sweetened?



Use Healthy Food Finder, a free online product lookup tool to check whether a packaged food and drink is **Everyday** or **Occasional** or to check if a drink is classified as sugar-sweetened.

Sign up at foodfinder.health.nsw.gov.au

Water is always provided as the healthiest choice

Always offer water (still or sparkling) at your catering events.



Healthier hot and cold drink options

Here are some examples of **Everyday** (healthier) drinks that can be provided at catering events:

- Tea
- Coffee
- >99% fruit and vegetable juices
- Plain or flavoured milk (including plant-based milk with added calcium)
- Fruit smoothies



Alcohol service is not recommended

NSW Health does not recommend alcohol service within public health facilities. Where alcohol is provided, serve responsibly.

For advice on the responsible service of alcohol, including information on standard drinks and the Australian alcohol guidelines, visit: liquorandgaming.nsw.gov.au/working-in-the-industry/serving-alcohol-responsibly

There are requirements for the service of alcohol in NSW under the Liquor Act 2007, these include obtaining a licence and completing Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) training.

For more information, visit liquorandgaming.nsw.gov.au/operating-a-business/liquor-licences

Do not mix alcohol with sugar-sweetened drinks.



Step 3 | Provide smaller portions

Offering smaller portions is an easy way to help people make a healthier choice.

When ordering catering, choose smaller portion sizes of **Occasional** (less healthy) options where possible. Smaller portions can also help to reduce food waste.

Tips



For muffins and cakes, order smaller portions or cut portions in halves or quarters before serving.



For large savoury options, cut portions in halves or quarters before serving.



Provide smaller cups and plates where possible, to encourage people to enjoy smaller portions.



More tips for organising catering



- Ask attendees to confirm if they are coming to the event before planning catering. This will help you order the right amount of food and drinks to save costs and lower food waste.
- Think about ordering less for free events to help lower food waste. A good guide is to order food and drinks for around 70% of attendees who confirm they are coming.
- Think about portion sizes. For example, consider one sandwich or wrap and one piece of fruit per person.
- Try not to order food and drinks that come individually wrapped or in single-use packaging. Choose packaging and cutlery that is washable and reusable, or that you can recycle or compost after use.
- Offer water and other drinks in jugs with glasses instead of single-use bottles or cans. Ask attendees to bring their own reusable cup, mug or water bottle to the event.
- Have a plan for leftover food. Ask attendees to bring reusable containers or offer some if possible, so they can take home food if they wish. Consider placing leftover food in a building common area or donating to local food rescue groups like OzHarvest. To find out more, visit ozharvest.org/food/give-food
- Make sure you keep any leftover food safe, for more food safety advice, visit foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/consumer/keeping-food-safe

Examples of Everyday and Occasional food and drink options for catering

3 in 4		1 in 4
Everyday (healthier) options		
Morning or afternoon tea		
Hot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toast and fruit or raisin toast Scones, pikelets and pancakes served with fruit or small amounts of jam Steamed dim sum, dumplings and buns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schnitzels and other crumbed foods Meat pies, samosas, sausage rolls and other pastry based foods such as tartlets or quiches
Cold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breads such as focaccia, bagels, pita, tortillas, rolls, English muffins, crumpets Un-iced fruit buns Cereal served plain or with fruit and yoghurt Fresh fruits served whole, in skewers or as platters Savoury muffins Stewed fruit and yoghurt cups Cheese platters served with crackers or bread Vegetable sticks or pieces served with dips Dried fruits and nuts Nuts, seeds and popcorn without chocolate or other confectionery Muesli bars without chocolate or coatings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sweet biscuits Cakes Sweet muffins Banana bread Danishes, croissants and other sweet pastries Cheesecakes, puddings and other desserts Potato chips, corn chips and pretzels Platters of salami, chorizo, ham or prosciutto Confectionery and chocolate
Canapés		
Hot and cold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fruit skewers Frittata made with lean meats and vegetables Meat balls and falafels Vegetable and/or meat skewers Bruschetta Rice paper rolls with lean meat, tofu, seafood and vegetable fillings Sushi with lean meat, tofu, seafood and vegetable fillings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sausage rolls Party pies Spring rolls, samosas and other deep-fried foods Filo pastries Chicken nuggets Garlic and cheesy breads Sushi with tempura or crumbed seafood or meat
Drinks		
Hot and cold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water (still or sparkling) Tea Coffee >99% fruit and vegetable juices Plain or flavoured milk (including plant-based milk with added calcium) Fruit smoothies (with no added ice cream, gelato or sorbet) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diet or sugar-free drinks sweetened with natural or artificial sweeteners such as stevia or aspartame. Thick shakes or smoothies (with added ice cream, gelato or sorbet)

Examples of Everyday and Occasional lunch options for catering

3 in 4

Everyday (healthier) options

1 in 4

Occasional (less healthy) options

Lunch

Hot



- Toasties and melts made with lean meat, eggs, roast vegetable and salad fillings
- Meat, tofu or vegetable curry, stir-fried vegetables and fried rice
- Curried dishes such as chicken tikka masala, vegetable curry and lentil dahl
- Dishes with soft tortillas such as burrito, fajitas and enchiladas
- Risotto and rice dishes such as chicken or vegetable risotto and paella
- Pasta such as lasagne, spaghetti bolognese, ravioli, pasta bakes made with lean meats, cheese, seafood and vegetables
- Freshly prepared chicken or vegetable pizza
- Jacket (baked) potatoes with cheese, lean meat, beans and legumes and vegetable toppings
- Soups such as chicken, pumpkin, or noodle
- Noodle boxes with lean meat, seafood, tofu and vegetable fillings

Cold



- Sandwiches, rolls and wraps made with **Everyday** fillings such as lean meat, fish, eggs and roasted vegetable or salad fillings
- Cold platters made with lean meats, vegetables, egg, falafel, cheeses, hummus, dips
- Sushi with lean meat, seafood and vegetable fillings
- Rice paper rolls with lean meat, seafood and vegetable fillings
- Salad bowls (such as garden, bean, tabouleh, couscous, pasta)

- Pies
- Sausage rolls
- Quiche made with pastry
- Filo pastries
- Chicken nuggets, schnitzels and other crumbed foods
- Hot potato chips and wedges
- Hash browns
- Battered fish
- Pizza or pasta served with salami or bacon

Learn more about the Framework

Catering for events in NSW Health facilities is part of the *Healthy Food and Drink in NSW Health Facilities for Staff and Visitors Framework* (the Framework). To find out more, visit health.nsw.gov.au/healthy-food-framework



Find out why we are offering healthier food and drink options.

Contact the Healthy Food Information Service on

1800 930 966 healthyfood@health.nsw.gov.au

