

# Healthy Eating Active Living



## Objective

To promote and support healthy eating and active living in NSW to reduce the impact of lifestyle-related chronic disease.

*A whole of government framework to promote and support healthy eating and active living in NSW.*



## Summary

Obesity is a major health burden for NSW.

Reducing the number of people who are overweight or obese will lead to substantial population health benefits and improved quality of life through the prevention of chronic diseases, in particular diabetes, cardiovascular disease and some cancers.

The *NSW Healthy Eating and Active Living Strategy: Preventing overweight and obesity in New South Wales 2013-2018* provides a whole of government framework to promote

and support healthy eating and active living in NSW through four key strategic directions:

- ▶ Environments to support healthy eating and active living
- ▶ State-wide healthy eating and active living support programs
- ▶ Healthy eating and active living advice as part of routine service delivery, and
- ▶ Education and information to enable informed healthy choices.

## Where we were

In 2008, the cost of overweight and obesity for NSW was estimated at \$19 billion.

The rise in rates of those who are overweight or obese is mostly a result of social, environmental and technological changes over the last few decades. These changes have led to environments which encourage people to eat more and move less. Even a small excess energy intake over time can lead to weight gain resulting in overweight and obesity.

### Adults

While still very high, the trend in NSW adults who are overweight and obese has stabilised since 2009. Population Health data for 2013 indicates that, 51.1 per cent of adults were overweight or obese, with rates higher in males (58.3 per cent) compared with females (43.9 per cent). For more information go to [www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au](http://www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au).

### Children

The 2010 Schools Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey (SPANS) indicated that while the prevalence of children aged 5 to 17 who were overweight or obese was stabilising, it was still concerning.

More than one in five (22.8 per cent) children were overweight or obese in 2010.

The 2013 Population Health Survey provides useful trend data, and indicates that 26.8 per cent of children in NSW were overweight and obese compared to 33.4 per cent in 2012. The decline between 2012 and 2013 was statistically significant and, although the data has been collected via self-reporting rather than objective measures, it may provide an early indication of improvement.



## What has changed

In less than a year several activities have already been implemented in line with the Healthy Eating and Active Living Strategy, achieving strong results.

The main priority in the first year of the strategy is to introduce new initiatives and build on existing programs to support healthy choices in the places where people live, work and play.

Healthy eating means consuming the right types and quantities of food from the five food groups to ensure intake of all key nutrients while obtaining the right amount of energy (kilojoules) to achieve a healthy weight.



The NSW Ministry of Health is also working on a social marketing approach to motivate the community to make healthy lifestyle changes, and to drive people to evidence-based support programs according to their needs.

## Progress on activities

### Adult Programs

The Get Healthy Service continues to successfully support NSW adults to achieve a healthier lifestyle. More than 25,000 people have already benefitted from the service. Those who completed the six month program have achieved an average weight loss of 3.8kg and waist circumference reduction of 5.1 cm. These changes reduce the risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

The NSW Food Forum held in March in 2014 brought together leading experts and decision makers to showcase and discuss NSW and national initiatives to create healthy food environments and identify future action in this area.

Results from the 8700kJ menu labelling legislation and campaign have shown a significant increase in consumer awareness of the average daily kilojoule requirement and a 15 per cent reduction in fast food kilojoules purchased.

The Knockout Health Challenge is a weight loss program for Aboriginal people delivered in partnership with communities across NSW.

In 2013, around 900 people from 20 Aboriginal communities across NSW participated in the Challenge, achieving a combined weight loss of more than one tonne.

### Childhood Programs

The Healthy Children Initiative includes programs in a range of environments to achieve the 2015 target of reducing overweight and obesity rates in children to 21 per cent. These programs have already helped stabilise levels of overweight and obesity in the community.

Across NSW, 80 per cent of early childhood services participate in the Munch and Move program which encourages healthy eating, increased physical activity and reduced screen time.

The Live Life Well at School program currently supports almost three quarters (71 per cent) of NSW schools to create environments that enable children to eat healthily and be physically active.

▶ Decrease in overweight and obesity rates for children compared to 2012 (2013 Population Health Survey).



▶ 3.8kg in weight loss and 5.1 cm off waist circumference on average achieved by Get Healthy participants.



▶ 80 per cent of early childhood services across NSW participate in the Munch and Move program.



▶ One tonne combined weight loss achieved by 900 people from 20 Aboriginal communities.



## Next steps

We will continue to implement programs in early childhood and school settings, and strengthen the Get Healthy Service through the addition of tailored modules for those at highest risk of diabetes and pregnant women.

NSW Health has been working closely with WorkCover NSW and key stakeholders to develop Get Healthy at Work, which aims to prevent lifestyle-related chronic diseases in the NSW working population by addressing healthy eating, physical activity, healthy weight, smoking and harmful alcohol consumption. Get Healthy at Work has been initially implemented in a number of businesses across Western Sydney and Murrumbidgee Local Health Districts within the Manufacturing and Transport and Storage industries. The program will be available to workers and businesses in NSW from 1 July 2014.



## More Information

The *NSW Healthy Eating and Active Living Strategy 2013-2018* is available at [www.health.nsw.gov.au/priorities](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/priorities)



Health

[www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)

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