

TOOL 8: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS TO GUIDE THE RETAILER CONVERSATION



Why has NSW Health launched the *Healthy Food and Drink in NSW Health Facilities for Staff and Visitors Framework*?

Reducing overweight and obesity is a priority for the NSW Government as it is associated with a wide range of chronic health conditions including Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, stroke and some cancers. Eating too many unhealthy foods and not enough healthy foods is a major contributor to overweight and obesity – one in two adults and more than one in five children in NSW are overweight or obese. However no single action will be able to tackle overweight and obesity. Providing healthier food and drink options in food outlets in NSW Health facilities is part of a range of initiatives that the NSW Government is introducing to make healthy normal. NSW Health has a responsibility for the wellbeing of our staff and visitors. This includes creating a healthy food and drink environment that makes the healthy choice an easy choice.

What is the *Framework*?

The *Framework* is a NSW Health policy document that outlines how NSW Health facilities can move towards a healthier food and drink offering over the next few years. NSW Health facilities will be asked to work initially towards removing all sugary drinks with no nutritional value for sale by December 2017 and then work to meet the recommendations for a healthy food offering by December 2018. Tools and resources will be provided to support implementation. The *Framework* and *Toolkit* can be found at: www.health.nsw.gov.au/heal

What is the overall aim of the *Framework*?

The *Framework* aims to support our staff and visitors to make the healthy choice an easy choice by increasing the availability of healthy options to 75% or more of the menu and decreasing the availability of less healthy options to no more than 25% of the menu, including the removal of sugary drinks for sale.

Will all NSW Health facilities implement the *Framework*?

While the *Framework* constitutes a Guideline document that establishes best practice, the intention is that the *Framework* is adopted across applicable NSW Health Organisations unless a sound reason exists for departing from the recommendations. Furthermore, the *Framework* has broad support from Senior Executives and managers who have been involved in its development.

How could the policy affect retailers who have a current contract or lease agreement in place?

If the existing retail lease contains clauses or specific references for compliance with the Landlord's / NSW Health's policies and guidelines, as amended from time to time, a transition plan to work towards achieving the new requirements in the *Framework* can be discussed and agreed between the retailer and the relevant manager in the NSW Health facility to work towards achieving the new healthy food and drink requirements.

Where clauses or specific references are absent, independent legal advice should be sought to review the current lease and to understand the legal position in seeking a variation to the lease.

How could the policy affect retailers who are about to sign a new contract or lease agreement?

An updated lease template is available to use in new tenders and retail leases. The updated template includes 'additional provisions' that are supportive of healthy food provision as set out in the *Framework*, with a particular emphasis on the Food and Drink Benchmark. The template is available from the NSW Procurement Portal.

Will customers choose to purchase healthier products?

There is an increasing demand for healthier foods in general in Australia¹. Through implementation of the *Framework*, NSW Health facilities will increase the availability and promotion of healthy options to make the healthy choice the easy choice. Promotional materials will also be available to communicate the benefits of making healthy choices to customers.

Will retailers be able to source healthy foods and drinks?

In practice, it is expected that retailers will be able to comply with the new *Framework* by increasing their existing range of healthy food options and replacing sugary drinks with a range of alternative drinks that are available such as water, diet soft drinks, 99% juices, flavoured milk products, smoothies, milkshakes, tea and coffee. The *Toolkit* provides a list of meals, snacks and drinks that comply with the Food and Drink Benchmark and a food and drink database will be available at the end of 2017 to assist retailers with identifying compliant products.

How can retailers support NSW Health to make healthy food and drink normal in Health facilities?

The *Framework* provides a great opportunity for retailers to support their customers to make the healthy choice the easy choice. There are already a number of examples where retailers and Local Health District staff are working closely together to create a healthier food and drink offering for staff and visitors. Communication about the *Framework* to all staff and visitors in Health facilities at the time of launch will further assist in creating customer support for making healthy food and drink normal.

NSW Health anticipates that retailers will work closely with staff in Health facilities and use the *Toolkit* to make the required changes to meet the recommended Food and Drink Benchmark. They will also be expected to participate in an annual audit against a set of key practices that reflect the Food and Drink Benchmark.

Where can I obtain further information?

More information on the *Framework*, including the *Toolkit* and details of the Helpline to contact can be found at: www.health.nsw.gov.au/heal.

¹ Food facts, fiction and fads – How Australia eats, thinks about and shops for food <http://ipsos.com.au/food-facts-fiction-and-fads-how-australia-eats-thinks-about-and-shops-for-food/> (The **top five food priorities in 2016** for Australians were: eating more fresh fruit and vegetables (40%), smaller portion sizes (31%), reducing sugar intake from food (24%), eating healthier snacks (23%) and cutting down on fat (23%).)