

# Year in Review 2010–2011



The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) is a statutory authority established by the Victorian Parliament in accordance with the *Tobacco Act 1987*. It has a mandate to promote good health for all Victorians.



**Our vision**

VicHealth envisages a community where:

- health is a fundamental human right
- everyone shares in the responsibility for promoting health
- everyone benefits from improved health outcomes.

**Our mission**

Our mission is to build the capabilities of organisations, communities and individuals in ways that:

- change social, economic, cultural and physical environments to improve health for all Victorians
- strengthen the understanding and the skills of individuals in ways that support their efforts to achieve and maintain health.

**Our objectives**

(as mandated by the *Tobacco Act 1987*)

- To fund activity related to the promotion of good health, safety or the prevention and early detection of disease.
- To increase awareness of programs for promoting good health in the community through the sponsorship of sports, the arts and popular culture.
- To encourage healthy lifestyles in the community and support activities involving participation in healthy pursuits.
- To fund research and development activities in support of these activities.

*Cover image: Health promotion actions and initiatives targeting young people aim to develop the skills and actions necessary for them to make positive health choices and achieve good health now and in the future.*

# Year in Review 2010–2011



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# Chair and Chief Executive Officer's report

This has been a year of significant change in both the external health promotion and illness prevention environments across Australia, and also internally within VicHealth.

Various developments this year have opened up new possibilities for VicHealth to drive and support change from its unique vantage point as a locally based, internationally recognised leader in health promotion.

At a state level, the Health Minister The Hon. David Davis MLC released *The Victorian Health Priorities Framework 2012–2022*, which will shape health expectations and initiatives across governments and sectors in the state into the future, and will influence the development of the next VicHealth strategic plan.

The Victorian Government also released the *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2011–2015*, which takes a high-level, cross-sector view of preventive health. In addition to actions on health promotion, it describes the settings and partnerships for a coordinated approach to health and wellbeing. Notably, the plan focuses on those who experience poorer health than others. This plan reaffirms our direction and work on the prevention agenda.

Nationally, this year has seen the formation of the new Australian National Preventive Health Agency. Two former VicHealth CEOs have been instrumental in its establishment – Dr Rhonda Galbally AO as transitional CEO and Professor Rob Moodie as Deputy Chair of its Advisory Council.

We will work with the National Agency to complement its work on tackling chronic disease caused by alcohol, obesity and smoking, to both avoid duplication and to leverage

opportunities to improve the health of Victorians.

Within VicHealth, we have seen changes at the CEO and board levels. Following CEO Todd Harper's departure to head the Cancer Council Victoria, Associate Professor John Fitzgerald ably stepped into this role in the interim. We also saw a number of longstanding board members leave after their terms of appointment had expired, and the appointment of a distinguished new board.

In the midst of these changes, it has been very much business as usual with staff continuing to progress the objectives as outlined in our *Strategy and Business Plan 2009–2013*.

**Highlights of our work in 2010–2011 include the following:**

- The Victorian Health Minister The Hon. David Davis MLC and VicHealth are working with partners including Quit Victoria and the Municipal Association of Victoria to move Victoria's **smokefree agenda** forward. Tobacco smoking remains one of the principal causes of death and disease in Victoria and across Australia. Many Victorian local councils have put the significant prevention initiative of smokefree outdoor dining on their agenda, several are already trialling this initiative, and more have banned smoking near playgrounds and on beaches.
- Australia is on the cusp of introducing world-first legislation requiring tobacco companies to use **plain packaging**. VicHealth has been a strong advocate for plain packaging and believes its introduction will be an effective deterrent for young people considering taking up smoking.
- Our research revealed **low carbohydrate beer drinkers** mistakenly believe these products are healthier and will keep the kilos off – and that they still binge as much as other drinkers.
- VicHealth's longstanding commitment to boosting participation in physical activity is stronger than ever. Thirty **State Sporting Associations** will share in almost \$10.2 million over the next three years in a bid to make sports in Victoria more welcoming.
- We announced 484 **Active Club Grants** to assist smaller clubs to buy essential sporting equipment, injury prevention equipment, portable shade and volunteer training, and the deadline and total fund allocation for the grants was extended to include 387 clubs that were directly affected by the devastating Victorian floods over the previous summer.
- As VicHealth community attitudes research revealed, Victorians want their fresh produce green, cheap and local and are concerned about the **impact of junk food ads** and marketing in schools and on TV. Our partner, the Obesity Policy Coalition (OPC), unveiled their plan for legislation to protect children from unhealthy food advertising.
- A five-year local government and VicHealth food security project **Food for All** wrapped up and resources from what we learned through the process



Jane Fenton, Chair (left)  
and Jerril Rechter, CEO

were distributed to all local councils in the state. A major piece of VicHealth research out of Melbourne University examined the intricacies of **Food Supply Scenarios** to 2060 for Victoria. We also produced several reports designed to get stakeholders thinking about food security at a grassroots level.

- We published a research report that shows excessive pressure at work is costing Australia's economy \$730 million a year due to **job-stress related depression**. We are also developing five **workplace evidence reviews** to form the building blocks for employers to start thinking about workplaces as a place to nurture good health, rather than a place that causes ill health. We can now say with confidence that healthy workplaces are also good for the businesses' bottom line.
- This period has been an important time to mobilise our stakeholders to join us in **preventing violence against women**. VicHealth and our local government partners hosted two forums with local governments and community leaders from the western and eastern regions of Melbourne. More than 300 people attended. In addition, we took a leading role in Melbourne's premiere White Ribbon Day event *Not 1 More*, where comedian Dave Hughes joined emergency and health services, unions, sports and entertainment stars to demand that 'not one more' woman becomes a victim of family violence.
- We also continued our work to foster positive

attitudes towards women and inclusive sports with the development of the **Everyone Wins toolkit for local sports clubs**, which was launched by Minister for Women's Affairs The Hon. Mary Wooldridge MP.

- Reducing race-based discrimination is a key priority for VicHealth. In June 2011, we launched our **See Beyond Race** community awareness campaign, which ran to September 2011 on television, radio, billboards and newspapers in the Shepparton and Whittlesea areas. This campaign is designed to reduce racial stereotyping.
- VicHealth's **Arts About Us** program to promote cultural diversity and challenge racial discrimination is now in full swing, with a range of arts projects performing across Victoria, including appearances at the 2011 Melbourne International Comedy Festival and Australia's first all-Indigenous opera.
- Social isolation has been strongly associated with increased death rates, particularly from heart disease and stroke. Our **Technology, Arts and Social Connection (TASC)** program is currently supporting 14 arts projects that creatively use information and communication technologies to develop initiatives that promote participation, social connection and community engagement.
- Advocacy ensued following the publication of a groundbreaking report into how health budgets could be directed. The **Assessing**

**Cost-Effectiveness in Prevention** report contains 123 recommendations from a five-year review of all the available evidence about what works to prevent illness and the cost-benefits of investing in those measures.

- Finally, the joint VicHealth and Department of Health Indigenous health framework, **Life is health is life**, was formally launched by Health Minister The Hon. David Davis MLC. This framework will be an important component of addressing the gap in Indigenous health in years to come.

VicHealth could achieve nothing in isolation and we would like to acknowledge our many partners for their willingness to work with us as well as the many state government departments who engage with our work, especially the Department of Health.

We pay tribute to the outgoing board members who made a great contribution to our work, to Todd Harper and John Fitzgerald, and to their very capable and dedicated leadership team who ensured that the good work of the organisation continued seamlessly. We thank all of the VicHealth staff for their hard work and support over the last 12 months.

Finally, we are grateful for the support we have received over this year from the former Minister for Health, Daniel Andrews, and from the current Victorian Health Minister, The Hon. David Davis MLC. We appreciate the bipartisan support for VicHealth, which remains one of its key strengths.

VicHealth will soon be undertaking a review of its priority areas in order to map out our work well beyond 2013. The future for health promotion, reducing health inequalities and achieving sustained health gains for all Victorians is a challenging one, but there are great opportunities ahead. We recognise that it is crucial for VicHealth to continue to respond to current and emerging health promotion challenges with evidence, intelligence and integrity.

*Jerril Rechter joined VicHealth as Chief Executive Officer on 17 October 2011. She comes to us from Leadership Victoria and has extensive experience in leadership across the areas of arts, community and not-for-profit sectors. Jerril was a member of VicHealth's Board from 2004 to 2010.*

Ms Jane Fenton, AM  
Chair of the Board

Ms Jerril Rechter  
Chief Executive Officer

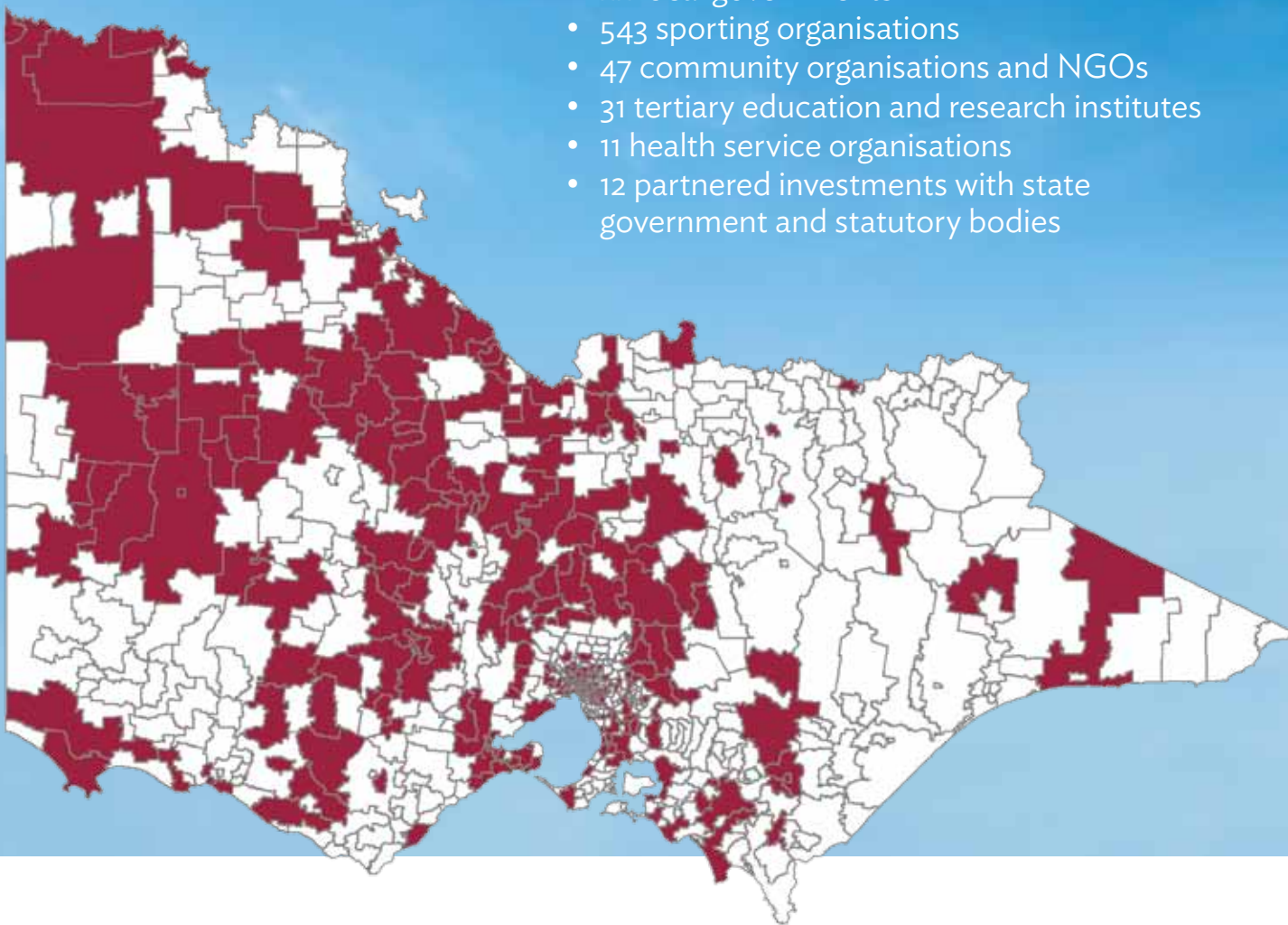
#### Further reading

- **Annual Report of Operations and Financial Statements**  
[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)
- **Lists of projects we funded in 2010-2011**  
[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)
- **Strategy and Business Plan 2009-2013**  
[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/strategic](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/strategic)
- **Board of Governance for 2011-2012**  
[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/board](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/board)
- **Advisory Committees**  
[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/committees](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/committees)
- **Staff**  
[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/staff](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/staff)

# Our performance 2010–2011

\$27,255,000 of our Victorian Government funding was invested in 798 grants in Victoria

## Our reach



We funded:

- 22 local governments
- 543 sporting organisations
- 47 community organisations and NGOs
- 31 tertiary education and research institutes
- 11 health service organisations
- 12 partnered investments with state government and statutory bodies

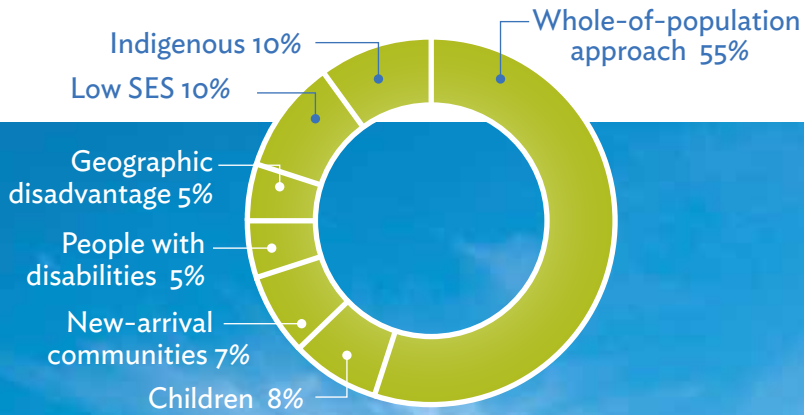
\$10,494,000 was invested through sporting bodies (30.2%\* of our appropriation)

\$16,761,000 was invested in other health promotion activity (48.2% of our appropriation)

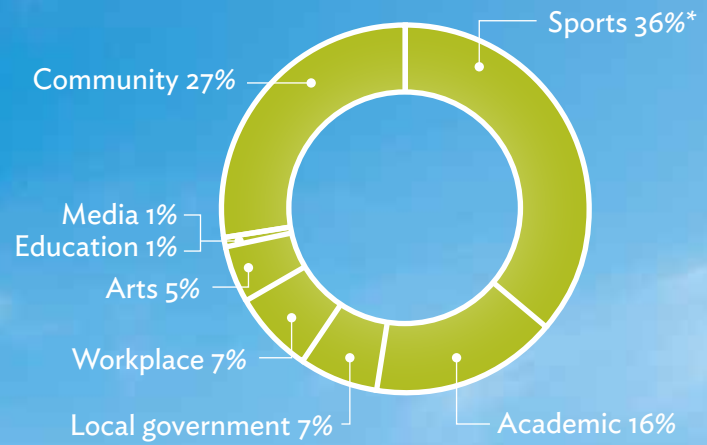
\$6,101,000 was invested towards research and evaluation across our strategic priority areas (17.5% of our appropriation)

\* The discrepancy between sports figures (see grant expenditure, next page) is because some of the work that occurs within the sports setting is not undertaken by sporting bodies.

## Grant expenditure across target population groups



## Grant expenditure across settings



\* The discrepancy between sports figures is because some of the work that occurs within the sports setting is not undertaken by sporting bodies.



On pages 8–33 you’ll find highlights from the past 12 months for each of our priority areas.

# Action in health priority areas

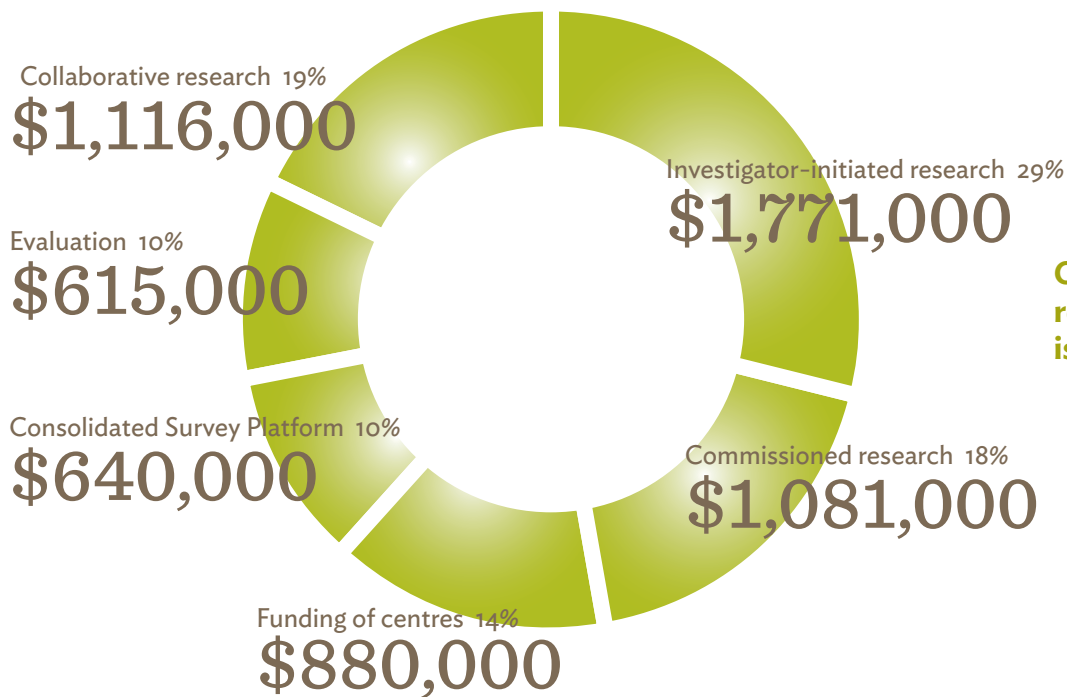
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Effective health promotion has the capacity to improve health, reduce the costs of treating chronic disease, enhance economic productivity, bridge the health divide between population groups, and add healthy years to life expectancy. The past year has seen many of VicHealth's partnerships and investments deliver considerable outcomes.

On the following pages you'll find highlights from the past 12 months.





**Our annual investment in research and evaluation activity is approximately \$6.1 million.**

## What we've done

This year we worked in diverse ways to strengthen the public health research community by providing the evidence to inform and contribute to a healthy and productive Victoria. Here are some highlights:

**Consolidated Survey Platform** VicHealth began building a consolidated survey platform to integrate our data on the social and economic determinants of health, health behaviours, attitudes and knowledge gaps. The centrepiece is the *VicHealth Indicators Survey* – a triennial local government area telephone survey of 23,700 adult Victorians. The findings from these powerful datasets will help guide our interventions.

**Innovation Grants Scheme** This year, our Innovation Grants Scheme was listed on the Australian Competitive Grants Register, which details schemes that provide competitive research grants to higher education providers. Until now, our scheme was open only to researchers based at Victorian not-for-profit organisations. Expanding and enhancing our research networks and collaboration offers significant potential for improving population health in Victoria as we draw on the expertise of Australia's most promising researchers.

**Conference Support Scheme** Through this scheme, VicHealth provided support to 10 conferences conducted by other providers. This scheme enables VicHealth to support organisations that are facilitating knowledge transfer in the field of health promotion and public health to inform, debate and educate.

**Healthy Australia: Public Support for Prevention Strategies** The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA), in partnership with VicHealth, conducted an online survey of almost 3,000 Australians. Findings from the survey showed strong community support for government-led health promotion strategies and increased spending on prevention activities.

**Assessing Cost-Effectiveness in Prevention** This five-year study by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) into more than 120 illness prevention measures revealed the most cost-effective measures and smartest ways to save lives in years to come. The report (funded by VicHealth and the PHAA) is the most comprehensive evaluation of illness prevention measures ever done anywhere in the world and is the perfect platform for leadership to improve health, reduce health inequalities and give better value for the health dollar.

## Partnership grants

As an industry partner, VicHealth supports researchers and research organisations applying for grants from a range of funding bodies. This approach demonstrates our commitment to working collaboratively with individuals, groups and organisations from many sectors. This year, several research projects were successful in receiving funding:

- **Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grants** This scheme is a federal government initiative that supports collaborative research projects between higher education researchers and industry. This year, two joint research projects in partnership with VicHealth were successful in receiving ARC funding: Dr Yin Paradies (The University of Melbourne) – *Using bystander anti-racism to reduce race-based discrimination: Examining the frequency, potential, benefits, facilitators and obstacles of bystander anti-racism*; and Prof. Dan Lubman (Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre) – *Alcohol and caffeinated energy drinks: Exploring patterns of consumption and associated harms*.
- **Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Program** This highly competitive federal government scheme supports collaboration between researchers, industries, communities and governments to solve major challenges facing Australia. Projects can run up to 10 years. This year was the first time VicHealth has been involved in a CRC grant, and one project was successful: The Cooperative Research Centre for Young People, Technology and Wellbeing. This is a big win for public health. See p17 for more information.
- **National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Partnership Project Grants** These grants provide funding and support to create new opportunities for researchers and policymakers to not only work together to define research questions and undertake research, but also to interpret and implement the findings. This year, one research project was successful in receiving NHMRC funding: Dr Sarah Durkin (Cancer Council Victoria) – *Which types of emotions in anti-smoking ads motivate smokers to quit, especially disadvantaged smokers?*

See the following pages for information on the research investments that specifically support our health priority areas.

VicHealth promotes health promotion activities that are evidence based. We derive evidence to support our strategic objectives by reviewing existing research and evaluation; funding external research; and implementing our own research and evaluation.

## 1 Investing in health promotion knowledge

For a full list of our program investments in public health research, go to [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)



*Incolink researcher Dr Karin du Plessis received funding from VicHealth to examine the dietary habits of young apprentice tradesmen.*

### Where we are headed

- As part of our **Consolidated Survey Platform** project, VicHealth is working with the Department of Health to begin using InstantAtlas software to display indicators from the 2011 *VicHealth Indicators Survey*. Reports on the health, lifestyle and wellbeing of Victorians will be available to each local government area, giving them easily retrievable data to identify priorities for action.
- Work is underway to establish a **VicHealth Ethics Committee**, which will streamline our research processes and ensure that research practice is of the highest standard possible.

### VicHealth research fellows

VicHealth supports outstanding public health/health promotion research by awarding five-year Public Health Research Fellowships. These sought-after fellowships allow for longer-term research to be undertaken and are designed to attract and support high quality public health research talent in Victoria. For more information, go to [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/researchfellows](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/researchfellows)

Health inequalities are related to disparities in access to the things we all need for good health, such as income, education, housing, and good living and working conditions. These determinants are largely beyond an individual's control. That's why VicHealth focuses on making changes in society to provide everybody with the opportunity to live a healthy life.

## 2 Reducing health inequalities



*Doug Stevens and Lenis Lister: members of the Lakewood Cooperative Committee, which is elected by, and comprises, Lakewood residents.*

For a full list of our program investments to reduce health inequalities, go to [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

## What we've done

This year our work has again focused on improving the health of people from lower socio-economic groups, Indigenous people, people from culturally diverse communities, and people with disabilities – the population groups that do not experience the same health status that other Victorians enjoy. Here are some highlights:

**Life is health is life: Taking action to close the gap** Written by VicHealth for the Victorian Government Department of Health, this Victorian Aboriginal evidence-based health promotion resource brings together stories of promising health promotion practice from across Victoria and a review of the scientific literature to guide health promotion policy and practice.

**The McCaughey Centre** VicHealth provides ongoing support for this centre, which aims to build knowledge about the social and economic determinants of community wellbeing and mental health, with a focus on reducing health inequalities.

**Australian National Development Index (ANDI)** VicHealth has contributed to the development of ANDI, a new national approach to measuring Australia's progress and the wellbeing of the population based on issues identified as important to Australians through community consultation.

**New arrival sport program** VicHealth is supporting Football Federation Victoria to promote diversity through its operations and address barriers to participation in soccer for newly arrived communities and communities from the Horn of Africa through the United Through Football program.

*All of our health promotion programs seek to reduce health inequalities. See pp14 to 33 for information on our other program highlights.*

## Where we are headed

- VicHealth will launch the organisation's first **Indigenous Health Plan** that, among other things, will identify priorities for future investment.
- We are working in partnership with Surfing Victoria to expand the **Indigenous surfing program**, which aims to create training and employment opportunities in the surfing industry and other water-based activities for Indigenous young people.
- We will work with the Onemda VicHealth Koori Health Unit to appoint a **senior research fellow** to strengthen Onemda's focus on the contribution of social and economic factors to Indigenous health.
- We will contribute to the evidence base for **housing and health** by publishing and disseminating new research, developing indicators to measure the health impact of housing interventions, and trialling the use of the indicators by evaluating the Lakewood model (see box).
- We will scope the issue of **disability and health inequalities** to create a framework for understanding and a resource to support health promotion action to address health inequalities, based on the best available evidence.
- We will develop a new **health inequalities framework** for VicHealth that will outline the mechanisms through which health inequalities are created in our society and guide the organisation's approach to reducing inequalities in health status in the Victorian population.

### VicHealth's housing and health program

Recognising the significant impact that housing has on health and wellbeing, VicHealth is supporting the ongoing development of Lakewood Housing Cooperative in Ringwood. Lakewood is the first vertical (high rise) community of its kind in Australia and aims to create a strong and sustainable community of social housing residents. Common Equity Housing Ltd (CEHL) and partner organisation Eastern Access Community Health invested significantly in the community development aspect of the housing model well in advance of residents moving into the building. This is also unique. VicHealth funding is now contributing to the continuation of this community development with Lakewood residents. VicHealth is also funding the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) to evaluate the potential benefits of the Lakewood model in terms of the health and wellbeing of the residents. Many housing interventions have not measured health and wellbeing impact, so we will be making a significant contribution to the evidence base in the housing and health sectors.

## What we've done

This year we again worked with different sectors at national, state, regional and local levels to encourage participation in sport and active recreation to improve health and wellbeing. Here are some highlights:

### State Sporting Association Participation Program

**2011–2013** 30 State Sporting Associations are sharing in almost \$10.2 million over three years from VicHealth in a bid to make sports in Victoria more welcoming. Beyond simply encouraging more people to play, the new grants aim to bring about sustainable organisational and cultural change.

**Active Club Grants** 484 sports clubs in Victoria received funding to purchase essential equipment, fund training of volunteers and purchase injury prevention equipment and portable shade through VicHealth's annual Active Club Grants round. Priority was given to assisting people in flood-affected communities, junior clubs, Indigenous communities, people with a disability and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Sport and active recreation clubs and organisations in rural and low socio-economic areas were also a priority for funding.

**Let's Get Moving 2: inspiring better practice** VicHealth facilitated this symposium, which brought together more than 200 attendees from across the sport and active recreation sector, government and universities to share knowledge and translate findings from work undertaken in VicHealth's Participation in Community Sport and Active Recreation (PICSAR) program (see box).

**Everyone Wins** Developed through a collaboration of sport, government, education and community organisations, this comprehensive toolkit reflects best practice in the areas of sport and inclusion. It will be piloted through VicHealth's State Sporting Association Participation Program 2011–2013 and Healthy Sporting Environments Demonstration Project to determine its effectiveness to increase participation through the development of safe, accessible, inclusive and equitable sporting environments.

### Healthy Sporting Environments Demonstration Project

Sports clubs throughout the greater Barwon region are set to become the healthiest in Australia by focusing on a range of standards to create healthier clubs. Actions within clubs will focus on responsible use of alcohol, healthy eating, reduced tobacco use, sun protection, sports injury prevention, creating safe and inclusive environments for women, and reducing race-based discrimination. In an Australian first, VicHealth teamed up with regional sports assembly *Leisure Networks* to pilot the \$2 million 2½-year program, which involves 78 sporting clubs across a diverse range of codes. For a full description of this project, see p25.

## Where we are headed

- We will undertake research exploring **parental fear** as a barrier to children's independent mobility and consequent physical activity.
- We will develop an evidence-informed **Physical Activity Participation Framework** to guide future practice, programs and policies to increase participation.
- VicHealth, in partnership with Sport and Recreation Victoria, YMCA and Playgroup Australia – Victoria branch, will facilitate a series of forums and discussions featuring **Tim Gill**, one of the **UK's leading thinkers on childhood**. The focus will be on how to balance protection of children and provide opportunities to expand their physical, emotional and social skills.
- A comprehensive evaluation of the **organisational change** outcomes of the State Sporting Association Participation Program will commence.
- We will review **Victoria Walks** (which encourages more people to walk more often) to determine possible future funding commitments and key recommendations to increase walking access and participation.
- We will conduct the third annual **Let's Get Moving symposium**, presenting key findings from the PICSAR program.
- We will develop a **new funding program** to increase active recreation participation in partnership with local government.
- We will work closely with key sporting bodies as they undertake in-depth work designed to **increase participation** of particular priority population groups (approximately \$3 million over three years). AFL Victoria will focus on women; Football Federation Victoria will focus on culturally and linguistically diverse communities; Surfing Victoria will work with Indigenous communities; and Basketball Victoria will work with people with disabilities.
- We will trial education and training with the **Everyone Wins** toolkit (see left) with State Sporting Associations and local sports clubs.

### Participation in Community Sport and Active Recreation (PICSAR)

VicHealth's PICSAR program provided funding from 2007 to 2011 for initiatives that aimed to increase participation, build skills and address health inequalities. The program has had a very positive impact on promoting and supporting inclusion in the sport and active recreation sector. Cricket Victoria is one of more than 60 organisations funded by VicHealth through PICSAR. Its 'Cricket4Me' program won a VicHealth award this year (see p46). To read more PICSAR success stories, go to [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/picsar-success-stories](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/picsar-success-stories)

## References

1. Begg S, Vos T, Barker B, Stevenson C, Stanley L & Lopez A, 2007. *The burden of disease and injury in Australia 2003*. AIHW cat. No. PHE 82, Canberra.

For a full list of our program investments to increase participation in physical activity, go to [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

Regular physical activity is ranked second only to tobacco control as the most important factor in preventing chronic disease in Australia.<sup>1</sup> That's why VicHealth advocates for and supports change that makes everyday living more active.

### 3 Increasing participation in physical activity



*Sport is a universal language that can bring people together, no matter what their origin, background, religious beliefs or economic status.*

Belonging and being connected and engaged in group and civic activities are intrinsic to good mental health and wellbeing. Social isolation is associated with stress, anxiety, depression and increased death rates, particularly from heart disease and stroke.<sup>1,2</sup> To improve health, VicHealth supports initiatives that increase opportunities for participation and social connection.

## 4 Increasing opportunities for social connection

For a full list of our program investments to increase opportunities for social connection, go to [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

### What we've done

This year we continued to invest in programs and research that build people's skills, self efficacy and ability to connect with others in their community; increase a sense of group belonging and purpose; and encourage civic engagement and voice on important issues. Highlights this year include:

**Action plan for building health through arts and new media** Building on good work requires a framework and a plan, which is why VicHealth launched its action plan for improving health through social connection and participation. It outlines VicHealth's strategies for building mental and physical health and wellbeing through arts, new media and technology activities in 2010–2013.

**MOTION pilot program** This new program explores how arts and physical activity can be combined to build social connection. VicHealth selected seven projects to support over

18 months. Through evaluation and assessment of those projects, we aim to strengthen the evidence about the health benefits of participating in arts activities.

**Localities Enhancing Arts Participation (LEAP) program** This three-year program with three local governments aims to strengthen the organisations, networks, partnerships, resources and events that are able to facilitate participation in – and sustain – arts and cultural activities. It is being implemented by Mildura Rural City Council, the City of Casey and Ballarat City Council. Additionally, we have partnered with the University of Melbourne's School of Population Health to engage a research leader to evaluate the LEAP program.

**Technology, Arts & Social Connection program** VicHealth is exploring the potential of technology to increase participation and create innovative opportunities for social connection. This new program is supporting

14 arts and community organisations to design activities that build social connection through engagement with the digital environment. (See p40 for details of the Museum Victoria project that won a VicHealth award this year.)

**The Book Well Program** In 2009 we supported the Get Into Reading Program, a collaborative initiative between the State Library of Victoria, the Public Libraries Victoria Network and VicHealth. Based on a UK program, it promotes the participation of people from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds in a reading group to improve their sense of group belonging and literacy. The program (now called Book Well) is run by trained group readers and being expanded to different institutional locations including public libraries. There will be a deeper evaluation of the outcome for participants.

**Schools as Core Social Centres** The final stage of VicHealth's partnership with the Catholic Education

Office of Melbourne's Schools as Core Social Centres program has seen the full integration of this program into the Catholic education system. The learnings from this sustainable model will be transferable to other educational systems.

**Heartlands Refugee Art Prize** This prestigious art prize celebrates the creative contribution refugees bring to the Victorian community. Finalists were showcased at an exhibition during the Emerge Festival, which coincided with Refugee Week. As part of the capacity building component of the project, the first prize winner has started her residency at Werribee Park and will have a solo exhibition at Point Nepean National Park. Now in its second year, this Art Prize is presented by AMES (Adult Migrant Education Services) and Multicultural Arts Victoria in partnership with VicHealth, Parks Victoria and South East Water.






Melbourne Fringe Festival staff rehearsing for *Crowd Play*, an outdoor song and dance project supported by VicHealth and designed to get audiences involved in the festival. (For more information about the festival, go to [www.melbournefringe.com.au](http://www.melbournefringe.com.au))

## Where we are headed

- In the spirit of true collaboration, VicHealth is one of 13 essential partners of the **Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Young People, Technology and Wellbeing**, comprising 64 agencies. Through an international research agenda, and by engaging young people at key stages, this centre will collect data, build knowledge, and develop tools and resources for end users, which will enhance the mental health and wellbeing of young people.
- Civic engagement is about having ideas, opinions and input into issues that affect our daily lives. As an important component of being socially connected VicHealth is scoping the role of **technology and new media** in developing social connection. We will draw our funded projects into an online town-hall style environment to drive rich communication and greater participation in our communities.
- We will distil and consolidate **learnings** from a range of VicHealth projects to build **new opportunities**, tools and resources to address social connection through technology, physical activity, local government planning and other sectors.
- We are funding the Australian School of Performing Arts to engage refugee and newly arrived migrants in **performing arts activities** and to develop a scholarship program that will enhance connection, network development and bridging capital for participants.

## References

1. Bunker SJ, Colquhoun DM, Esler MD, et al, 2003. 'Stress' and coronary heart disease: psychosocial risk factors. National Heart Foundation of Australia position statement update, *MJA* 178(6): 272-276.
2. Barefoot JC, Grønbaek M, Jensen G, Schnohr P & Prescott E, 2005 (15 May). Social Network Diversity and Risks of Ischemic Heart Disease and Total Mortality: Findings from the Copenhagen City Heart Study. *Am. J. Epidemiol*, 161(10): 960-967, doi: 10.1093/aje/kwi128

- 
- A. MICROBIOLOGIST
  - B. AVID GARDENER
  - C. MOTHER OF THREE
  - D. ALL OF THE ABOVE

SEE BEYOND RACE .

*VicHealth's See Beyond Race campaign featured local people and their real-life interests, including Shepparton resident Fatima Al-Qarakchy (pictured).*

## 5 Reducing race-based discrimination and supporting cultural diversity

For a full list of our program investments to reduce race-based discrimination and support cultural diversity, go to [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

Social cohesion and a 'fair go' for all are important for healthy people and communities. Valuing Victoria's cultural diversity and Aboriginal heritage and making sure our communities and organisations are free from race-based discrimination are key steps in achieving this. Exposure to discrimination is linked with poor health, especially poor mental health.<sup>1</sup>

For these reasons, VicHealth works with the wider community to support diversity and reduce race-based discrimination.

## What we've done

This year we again worked to raise awareness of the problem and prevalence of race-based discrimination, increase knowledge about the health, social and economic impacts, and work with a range of partners to trial new approaches and build skills and knowledge to reduce it. Our work – which focuses on how we all respond to cultural diversity – complements existing discrimination legislation and other programs that provide direct support to those affected by discrimination and disadvantage. Here are some highlights:

### Local government programs

**See Beyond Race campaign** Featuring local people and their real-life interests, this was the first Australian social marketing campaign to reduce race-based discrimination conducted alongside an intensive community education program across a localised geographic area. The campaign was a partnership between VicHealth, the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, the City of Whittlesea and the Greater Shepparton City Council. It is part of VicHealth's broader **Localities Embracing and Accepting Diversity (LEAD)** pilot program to prevent discrimination and support cultural diversity within local communities, which is also being funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and *beyondblue*. Participating councils are working with local workplaces, retail operators, sporting clubs and schools to strengthen policies and cultures to minimise unfair treatment and ensure that cultural diversity is valued.

### Arts programs

**Arts About Us** Through the Arts About Us program ([www.artsaboutus.com.au](http://www.artsaboutus.com.au)) we are funding 18 projects to open up conversations about the benefits of cultural diversity and the harmful impacts on health and wellbeing caused by race-based discrimination. Arts About Us offers myriad ways for people to be entertained, get involved and, most importantly, think about race-based discrimination and its impacts. One of these projects – Museum Victoria's 'Identity: yours, mine, ours/Talking Difference' – won a VicHealth award this year (see p40).

### Research

**Freedom of religious belief research report** VicHealth conducted an investigation into the effects that freedom of religion and belief can have on individual health and community wellbeing, and whether discriminating against people on the grounds of their religion contributes to poor health.

**Aboriginal young people** Racism has been identified as a determinant of health but few studies have explored associations between racism and health outcomes for Australian Aboriginal young people in urban areas. This VicHealth-funded research examined the health effects of racism among Aboriginal people aged 12–26 years living in Melbourne. It found that more than 50% of all participants had experienced racism and that this was linked with a poor sense of wellbeing.

**McCaughey Centre** We are funding a program of research at the University of Melbourne's McCaughey Centre that is dedicated to supporting our program development and increasing our understanding of race-based discrimination and acceptance of diversity.

**Other research projects** We are supporting a range of research projects that are exploring the following topics: the economic costs of racism; the role of parental socialisation in children's response to racism; the impact of racism on child health; and the health benefits of a climate in which diversity is valued.

## Where we are headed

- Since VicHealth and its partners released the *Building on our strengths* framework, which synthesises the current evidence and knowledge base, there has been increasing interest from all levels of government. VicHealth is well placed to support the Victorian Government's implementation of the **Multicultural Victoria Act 2011** and to contribute to the **national anti-racism strategy** to be developed by the Australian Government.
- We will be sharing the lessons learned from and the **resources developed in the LEAD sites** with a wider range of local governments and others so that promising approaches can be replicated elsewhere.
- The Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs & Citizenship and VicHealth will support the **Reconciling Divided Communities Project** designed to bring together leaders of communities affected by conflict in order to increase mutual understanding and respect.
- We will build on the initial **More Than Tolerance survey** (conducted in 2006) by focusing on experiences of race-based discrimination and community attitudes towards race and cultural diversity in Victoria.
- We are supporting the Shepparton-based Aboriginal organisation, the **Rumbalara Football and Netball Club**, to film the story of the establishment of the club and the sporting and other achievements of its members and take these to a wide audience.
- We will encourage and support people to take action on witnessing intolerance and discrimination (when it is safe and constructive to do so) by **strengthening the positive role of the bystander**.
- The evaluation of the **Building Bridges scheme** will soon be released. The scheme involved community groups promoting cultural diversity through positive contact and cooperation between people from a range of ethnic backgrounds, including those of Anglo-Australian heritage.
- Recognising that workplaces can promote healthy and respectful cultures in the broader community, we are developing **workplace programs** to prevent race-based discrimination and promote acceptance of diversity as part of our Creating Healthy Workplaces program (see p22).
- In addition, we are developing a **short course** that will increase the capacity of key workforces to plan and implement activity to reduce discrimination and support diversity.

*This program – focusing on how we all respond to cultural diversity – complements other VicHealth programs: reducing health inequalities (p12), increasing participation in sports and physical activity (p15), increasing opportunities for social connection (p16), and building knowledge in workplace education and training (p22). In these areas, work with Indigenous Australians and culturally diverse communities themselves is being supported.*

### References

1. Paradies Y 2006, 'A systematic review of empirical research on self reported racism and health', *International Journal of Epidemiology*, vol. 35, pp. 888–901.

## What we've done

This year VicHealth worked in partnership with government, local councils, community and health services, the sport and recreation sector, workplaces and women's health organisations. Our program of research, community strengthening, organisational development and advocacy is focused on building evidence and promoting best practice in primary prevention. Here are some highlights:

### Respect, Responsibility and Equality program

VicHealth has supported the development of in-depth prevention programs in workplaces, local councils, faith communities, and health and community organisations. We are supporting the development and evaluation of new activity through five long-term partnership projects:

- **Baby Makes 3** Whitehorse Community Health Service has developed a group work program for first-time parents, assisting them to maintain healthy and respectful relationships during the transition to parenthood. This project won a VicHealth award this year (see p50).

- **Respect and Equity** Maribyrnong City Council works across all internal sections and departments of council to integrate prevention of violence against women into policy, programs and planning. Maribyrnong also works with the local community to raise awareness and influence attitudes and behaviour towards women.
- **Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships Project** Darebin City Council is working with faith leaders across the northern region of Melbourne to build peer mentoring models and promote respectful relationships across congregations and communities.
- **Take a Stand: Domestic Violence is Everyone's Business** Women's Health Victoria has developed a comprehensive workplace program to address violence against women. The *Take a Stand* program enables workplaces to take leadership, provide training and promote messages of respect in their organisation.

- **Partners in Prevention Network** The Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria has developed a network for professionals working in prevention with schools and young people. The network connects practitioners across Victoria and promotes best practice in respectful relationships education.

### Local Government and Community Leaders' Conference 2010

More than 250 Australian and international community leaders met in Melbourne to discuss the role of local councils and communities in addressing violence against women. The conference was the largest gathering of local government representatives and decision makers ever held in Australia with a focus on violence against women. The event was organised by VicHealth and Darebin City Council, with support from the Victorian Office of Women's Policy. A series of regional events was also held for local leaders.

### Fair Game: Respect Matters

We continued our partnership with AFL Victoria to develop safe, respectful and inclusive environments for girls and women in community football clubs in Victoria.

### Preventing Violence Against Women Short Course

VicHealth conducted a two-day course in several regions of Victoria with practitioners from local government, health, community and other sectors. The short course provides the training, tools and resources for on-the-ground workers to plan, implement and evaluate evidence-based strategies to prevent violence against women. For a full description of the short course, see p22.

### Love: the good, the bad and the ugly

A new website was created for young people to answer the awkward questions about sex, relationships, abuse, sexual harassment and online interactions in the digital age. The website is an initiative of the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria and VicHealth through the Partners in Prevention Network.

**Not 1 More** VicHealth worked with a range of partners to support Melbourne's premiere White Ribbon Day event *Not 1 More*. The event calls on all Victorians to demand that 'not one more' woman becomes a victim of family violence.

*VicHealth's key strategy to prevent violence against women is to build more equal and respectful relationships between women and men at every level of society.*



## Where we are headed

- We will translate learnings from our **Respect, Responsibility and Equality program** (see p20) into a range of tools, resources and guidelines to enable more organisations to undertake best practice primary prevention activities.
- We are undertaking research to build our **bystander program** and better understand what motivates Victorians to intervene in support of preventing violence against women.
- We will support La Trobe University to evaluate the **AFL Respect and Responsibility program** and highlight the most effective strategies to support cultural change in major sporting organisations.
- We are supporting researchers at the University of Melbourne to investigate trends in the portrayal of **violence against women in news and print media**. This research will provide an insight into the ways that media reporting can be improved in Australia.
- As part of the **Creating Healthy Workplaces** program, we are undertaking a major project to build more equal and respectful relationships between women and men at work. For a full description, see p22.

Intimate partner violence is more damaging to the health of Victorian women aged 15 to 44 years than any other well-known risk factor, including high blood pressure, obesity and smoking.<sup>1</sup>

VicHealth focuses on preventing violence against women before it occurs by promoting respectful relationships and non-violent cultures within families, organisations and communities.

For a full list of our program investments to prevent violence against women, go to [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

# 6 Preventing violence against women



### References

1. VicHealth 2004. *The health costs of violence: measuring the burden of disease caused by intimate partner violence*. Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne.

Participating in school, work and training enhances health and wellbeing.<sup>1,2</sup> That's why VicHealth funds projects designed to increase people's access to these opportunities and improve the quality of working conditions, education and skills through training.

### What we've done

Workplaces play an important part in building good health, which is why our program and research activity has been focused on this setting. Here are some highlights:

#### Creating Healthy Workplaces program

This program comprises two parts. The first component collected international evidence into reviews about the following health areas:

1. Preventing race-based discrimination and supporting cultural diversity
2. Preventing violence against women and building equal and respectful relationships between men and women
3. Reducing alcohol-related harm
4. Reducing prolonged sitting
5. Reducing workplace stress

The second component will design and implement interventions that address the above five health issues in the workplace. Ultimately we want this program to enhance workplace health promotion research, policy and practice in Victoria. See boxed text opposite for more information.

#### Estimating the economic benefits of eliminating job strain

This research looked at the costs associated with workplace stress and found that job strain (where workers have little control over their job, but are under high pressure to perform) accounts for 17% of depression in working women and 13% in working men. This study was funded by VicHealth and conducted by the University of Melbourne's School of Population Health, McCaughey Centre, and the Menzies Research Institute, Tasmania.

#### VicHealth Short Course program

Since 2004, VicHealth has delivered a unique model of training to develop health promotion skills across diverse sectors and settings in the community. Our short course has now been delivered to over 2,000 organisations in Victoria, NSW, Queensland and New Zealand and has been expanded to address a range of health issues including preventing violence against women, reducing race-based discrimination and supporting diversity for health, and creating welcoming sports environments. To strengthen the uptake and sustainability of these courses, we developed complementary courses specifically for executive managers and CEOs.

#### Ganbina Indigenous School-to-Work project

This VicHealth-funded project continued to exceed expectations with its highly successful placement and retention of Aboriginal students in schools, training and employment. VicHealth has worked with Ganbina Koori Economic Employment & Training Agency and The RE Ross Trust to secure ongoing funding to strengthen the model.

**METEOR** This VicHealth-funded project, based on a Finnish workability model to retain and retrain aged care workers in employment, is in its fifth and final year. The work promotes productivity in an ageing workforce and has engaged a large number of partners from employment, philanthropic, corporate and the aged sectors, both nationally and internationally.

#### Where we are headed

We will translate and disseminate findings from the **Creating Healthy Workplaces program** and develop resources which will enhance the implementation of good practice across workplaces in the areas of race-based discrimination, violence against women, alcohol-related harm, prolonged sitting and workplace stress.

### The workplace as a health promotion environment

Workplaces are an important environment for health action and improvement. VicHealth identifies the workplace as a priority setting in its *Strategy and Business Plan 2009–2013* because:

- Employment and working conditions are important social determinants of health. There is strong evidence linking fair, safe and secure employment arrangements with good health. Conversely, poor job security and conditions are associated with poor health.
- Workplaces play a critical role in the health of society. The workplace directly influences the physical, mental, economic and social wellbeing of employees, and in turn the health of their families, communities and society. Effective workplace health promotion can therefore result in a multitude of beneficial outcomes across all levels.
- The workplace provides an ideal setting and infrastructure to support the promotion of health to a large audience. Approximately two-thirds of working age Australians are in paid work – many spending up to a third of every day at work.

#### References

1. Bond L, Butler H, Thomas L, Carlin J, Glover S, Bowes G & Patton G, 2007. Social and School Connectedness in Early Secondary School as Predictors of Late Teenage Substance Use, Mental Health, and Academic Outcomes, *Journal of Adolescent Health*, Volume 40, Issue 4, pp 357.e9–357.e.18.
2. Creed PA, Machin MA, Hicks RE. Improving mental health status and coping abilities for long-term unemployed youth using cognitive-behaviour therapy based training interventions. *J Organiz Behav* 1999; 20: 963–978.



## 7 Building knowledge in workplace education and training

For a full list of our program investments to build knowledge in workplace education and training, go to [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

*Reducing prolonged sitting in the workplace is one of five areas of focus for VicHealth's Creating Healthy Workplaces program.*



*Our local environment drives many of our actions.  
It determines our capacity to be healthy and  
maintain good health in both subtle and overt ways.*

## 8 Creating environments that improve health

Behavioural risk factors for chronic disease are shaped not only by individual preferences but by built, social, natural and economic environments. VicHealth collaborates with a range of partners to ensure health is factored into our future environments.

For a full list of our program investments to create environments that improve health, go to [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)



## What we've done

This year we have continued to work with a diverse range of partners, including local government, the sport and recreation sector and community organisations. Highlights include:

### Healthy Sporting Environments Demonstration Project

This \$2 million, 2½-year demonstration project involves 78 sporting clubs across a diverse range of codes throughout the greater Barwon region. The project aims to create environmental and socio-cultural change by supporting sporting clubs to attain minimum standards in six areas of health/club development: responsible use of alcohol; healthy food choices; reduced tobacco use; protection from harmful effects of UV; creation of an inclusive, safe and supportive environment for women, girls, Indigenous people and people from culturally diverse backgrounds; and injury prevention and management. Successful initiatives tested by clubs will help to form a model for implementation across Victoria, in partnership with other Regional Sports Assemblies.

**Selandra Rise housing development** Our built environment work has focused on the new growth area developments of Melbourne, where we are aiming to embed health promotion in the statutory planning process. We have funded a research practice fellow to evaluate the effectiveness of the Selandra Rise Stockland property development of 1132 residential lots in the City of Casey. Selandra Rise is the result of an innovative partnership between Stockland, the City of Casey, the Planning Institute of Australia, the Growth Areas Authority and VicHealth. The aim is to create a healthy and engaged community by promoting physical activity and active transport, and encouraging social interaction. This project won a VicHealth award this year (see p38).

**Food sustainability through planning and design** We completed two workshops with ARUP (environmental and planning consultants) to investigate how food sustainability could be embedded into the planning and design of new communities.

## Where we are headed

- We are interested in investigating the links between **air quality** and health outcomes to determine if there are any socially mediated solutions to air pollution problems, as well as exploring opportunities to influence health in **recreational outdoor spaces**.
- We will contribute to the development of liveable communities in Greater Geelong's **Armstrong Creek growth area**, which will provide physical and social infrastructure at an early stage, rather than just releasing land for development. In particular, we will share our knowledge about creating sporting environments that are safe, accessible, inclusive and equitable.
- We will develop a **framework** to guide future practice, programs and policies to create environments that improve health.

*See the following pages for information on our work to create safer social, physical and economic environments relating to healthy eating (p26), tobacco (p28), alcohol (p30) and UV exposure (p32).*

Healthy eating is essential for good physical and mental health, which is why VicHealth invests in programs and research to increase the accessibility, affordability and sustainability of healthy food and create a culture that supports the consumption of healthy foods.

*The key to supporting healthy eating throughout the community is to ensure everybody has access to a variety of affordable, culturally appropriate, nutritious foods.*



## 9 Promoting healthy eating

For a full list of our program investments to promote healthy eating, go to [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

## What we've done

This year VicHealth continued to provide expert advice to guide policy and regulation, invested in research to further understand the barriers to healthy eating, and funded projects that support the development of environments that encourage healthy eating. Highlights include:

**Protecting children from unhealthy advertising** The Obesity Policy Coalition (OPC) released the first Australian plan for legislation that offers real protection for children from unhealthy food advertising – one of the key drivers of childhood obesity. As well as overwhelming public support for reform, the initiatives in the blueprint have been endorsed by a host of public health organisations. The Parents' Jury, supported by VicHealth and other leading health organisations, also campaigned strongly for reforms. (The OPC won a VicHealth award this year, see p42.)

*OPC partners include Diabetes Australia (Vic), Cancer Council Victoria, the WHO Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention at Deakin University and VicHealth.*

**Food for All** VicHealth has helped to strengthen the role of local government authorities in promoting food security as a public health issue. This year, Food for All, the five-year local government and VicHealth food security project, wrapped up and the evaluation report led to the

development of resources to assist local government in advancing future work in this area. The project to disseminate these Food for All learnings won a VicHealth award this year (see p48).

**Victorian Food Supply Scenarios** VicHealth funded Melbourne University researchers to examine the intricacies of food supply scenarios to 2060 for Victoria. The Australian-first research has built an evidence base for examining how cumulative changes in complex modern food systems can have an impact on the food that ends up on our tables. It is vital research that will ultimately inform food policy so that fresh, nutritious food is available for everyone. The project was a collaboration between VicHealth, the Victorian Eco-Innovation Lab (VEIL), the CSIRO, Deakin University and the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development.

**Food-sensitive planning and urban design** This important report gives practical advice to local government planners, architects, urban designers, engineers, policymakers, community members and elected representatives on how to incorporate sustainable food production into urban design. The Heart Foundation commissioned David Lock Associates and the Victorian Eco-Innovation Lab (VEIL) at the University of Melbourne to develop the resource with partial funding from VicHealth.

## Healthy Sporting Environments Demonstration Project

Through this program, which involves 78 clubs in the greater Barwon region, VicHealth is supporting initiatives to improve healthy food choices in sporting environments. For a full description of this project, see p25.

**Consumers' views of fruit and vegetable policy options** Research by VicHealth and Deakin University showed that Victorians want their fresh produce green, cheap and local and are concerned about the impact of junk food ads and marketing in schools and on TV. The study of 500 Victorians revealed overwhelming public support for more farmers' markets, increases in local production of fruit and vegetables, monitoring large supermarket chains to keep prices competitive and creating community fruit and vegetable gardens.

**The Food Alliance** VicHealth supported expert and community voices through our investment in The Food Alliance, which sits within the Food Policy Unit at Deakin University and develops policies and legislation that improve the food and agriculture system in Victoria.

## Where we are headed

- VicHealth is supporting a demonstration project scoping the **local food supply in the City of Casey**, which will focus on the types of interventions required to change the scale of activity and viability of local and regional food distribution systems.
- We have commissioned the Centre for Health Economics at Monash University to analyse data on the purchasing of **sugar sweetened beverages**, which will underpin a campaign to raise community awareness about healthier alternatives.
- Through various **research grants** we are investigating food security; parental influences on food choices; policy options for reducing obesity; and the environmental and cultural determinants of obesity.
- We are engaging with the **Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation** to develop healthy eating policies and innovative implementation strategies, such as healthy catering guidelines and workplace healthy eating policies.

## What we've done

VicHealth is at the forefront of research, advocacy and program development in the anti-smoking arena.

VicHealth is a key partner of the Victorian Government in the implementation of its Tobacco Control Strategy 2008–2013 and a major funder of both Quit Victoria and the VicHealth Centre for Tobacco Control at the Cancer Council Victoria. Highlights this year include:

### Plain packaging for tobacco products

In partnership with Quit and other leading health organisations, VicHealth was instrumental in engendering public and political support for legislation for plain packaging for tobacco products. VicHealth and the Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) also called on governments to legislate for complete bans on all tobacco industry advertising and force tobacco companies to release full details of lobbying, political donations and marketing plans and budgets.

### Nicotine replacement therapy subsidised

VicHealth supported Quit's efforts to successfully lead

the advocacy for nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) patches to be subsidised for Australians through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. For the first time it is cheaper to quit than smoke. Quit predicts that this will result in an additional 96,000 quitters in the first five years, 31,000 premature deaths avoided, and \$54 billion in taxpayer savings.<sup>1</sup> This project won a VicHealth award this year (see p44).

**Quit campaign** For the first time, Quit unveiled a public awareness campaign aimed at encouraging smokers to give quitting another go, rather than using graphic images of tobacco harms. The new approach of the 'Never give up giving up' campaign was well received by smokers and non-smokers alike.

### Healthy Sporting Environments Demonstration Project

Through this program, which involves 78 clubs in the greater Barwon region, VicHealth is supporting initiatives to reduce tobacco use in sporting environments. For a full description of this project, see p25.

## Where we are headed

- VicHealth will continue its support of Quit's increased efforts to **decrease smoking prevalence** amongst smokers in low socio-economic groups as well as highly disadvantaged smokers. This will require a focus on people suffering from mental health issues, people in/exiting Victoria's prison system, Indigenous people in Victoria, and pregnant women from highly disadvantaged areas.
- With VicHealth's support, Quit will work with and engage schools in low socio-economic status areas to ensure that students have access to anti-smoking mass social marketing through **school programs** and curricula activities, and cessation support through health programs in schools.
- VicHealth will continue to support **national level tobacco policy reform**, including the implementation of the plain packaging of tobacco products and national anti-smoking campaigns.

### Plain packaging of tobacco products

Plain packaging of tobacco products will remove the last opportunity for the tobacco industry to promote its product directly to consumers, given the bans on advertising and promotion at point of sale already in place. Research shows that smokers have strong brand loyalty and make repeat purchases of particular tobacco products. This will be eroded by the introduction of plain packaging.

Research also shows that plain packaging will reduce the appeal of smoking to young people, reduce deception around the harmfulness of cigarettes and strengthen the impact of graphic health warnings. Australia will be a world leader in tobacco control if legislation to introduce plain cigarette packaging is passed in the Senate. The legislation, if successful in the Upper House, will mean all tobacco products will have to be sold in olive-brown packets in a bid to reduce smoking rates to below 10%. This legislation will put Australia ahead of the world in public health efforts to stop people smoking.

### Reduced Victorian smoking rates

Smoking rates continue to decline, with 15.3% of Victorian adults now regularly smoking, down from 18.3% in 2005. Victorian secondary school students' smoking rates have also declined.<sup>2</sup> These findings put Victorian adult smoking rates within reach of the 13.8% target set for 2013 by the Victorian Government.

In Victoria, smoking costs around 4,000 lives and \$5 billion every year.<sup>3</sup> Though much progress has been made, smoking remains the leading preventable cause of many cancers and respiratory, cardiovascular and other diseases. VicHealth was set up specifically to reduce tobacco harm and has been investing in this area for over 20 years.



## 10 Reducing smoking

For a full list of our program investments to reduce smoking, go to [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

*Quit's new positive campaign encourages people to never give up quitting.*

### References

1. Quit Victoria, Tobacco Control Unit Review 2011.
2. Ibid.
3. The Cancer Council Victoria 2005, *The Tobacco Tragedy: Deaths caused by smoking in Victoria 1999–2013*, Cancer Council Victoria, Melbourne.

## What we've done

This year VicHealth has strengthened efforts to reduce alcohol-related harm, including acting on policy regulation, inducing cultural change, and gathering further evidence on effective strategies to reduce harm from alcohol. Highlights include:

**Health warnings on alcohol labels** Previously released figures from VicHealth showed that 85% of Victorians support health advisory labels on alcohol. We have continued to campaign for the introduction of mandatory, government-regulated evidence-based alcohol labels that are developed independently of the alcohol industry. This research is highly relevant because a national revision of food and drink labelling is underway.

**Australians fooled by low carb beer myths** Research by VicHealth revealed that low carbohydrate beer drinkers mistakenly believe these products are healthier and will keep the kilos off, but they still binge drink

as much as other drinkers. The results of the national survey to measure attitudes and behaviours of low carb beer drinkers were released in the lead-up to the festive season.

### **Healthy Sporting Environments Demonstration Project**

Through this program, which involves 78 clubs in the greater Barwon region, VicHealth is supporting initiatives to reduce alcohol-related harm in sporting environments. For a full description of this project, see p25.

### **Footy clubs kick-off reduced alcohol initiative**

AFL Victoria and VicHealth joined forces to promote a safe, welcoming and family-friendly environment at local football matches by moderating the level of alcohol content sold during these events. The Essendon District Football League, Western Region Football League and the Central Highlands Football League sold only lower strength

alcohol or non-alcoholic drinks at certain matches during the 2010 final series. VicHealth evaluated these initiatives and is using the results to develop a larger scale program in this area.

### **Alcopops drinking down**

The Alcohol Policy Coalition (of which VicHealth is a member) welcomed Australian Bureau of Statistics data showing a 35.8% drop in alcopop consumption since the alcopops tax was introduced in 2008. (VicHealth was instrumental in advocating for the introduction of the tax.) The per capita level of consumption of spirits also dropped, but there is a sharply rising increase in wine consumption. The release calls for a more consistent approach to alcohol taxation so that all products are taxed by the amount of alcohol they contain.

### **National Alliance for Action on Alcohol (NAAA)**

The NAAA is a national coalition of more than 50 health and community organisations, including VicHealth, who are pooling their expertise to address Australia's drinking problems. VicHealth led the development of NAAA's position statement: *Reducing harm from alcohol – creating a healthier Australia.*

This year also saw the NAAA call on the major political parties to make an election commitment to reduce the \$15 billion toll of alcohol-related harm.

**National minimal price on alcohol** The release of groundbreaking evidence from the Cancer Council Australia that any amount of alcohol can cause cancer prompted VicHealth to join others to call for a major overhaul to alcohol taxation and to set a minimum price to put an end to the availability of cheap alcohol.

While the social use of alcohol is widely accepted, alcohol causes 60 medical conditions, including cancer, obesity, liver failure, brain damage and stroke.<sup>1</sup> Alcohol-related harm is a significant preventable health issue in Victoria, which is why VicHealth contributes to debates about alcohol use and supports policies and programs that aim to reduce the harm from alcohol.

## 11 Reducing harm from alcohol

For a full list of our program investments to reduce harm from alcohol, go to [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

### References

1. AMA 2009, *Alcohol Use and Harms in Australia - Information Paper*, Australian Medical Association, <http://ama.com.au/node/4762>

**Alcohol and violence** We funded Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre to examine the relationship between alcohol-related violence, hospital admissions and public holidays in Victoria. The research provides an important insight into Victorian drinking cultures, giving policymakers important baseline research from which to establish projects that may reduce alcohol-related harms surrounding public holidays and events. This project won a VicHealth award this year (see p36).

**Asking questions about alcohol use in pregnancy** VicHealth funded the Murdoch Childrens Research Institute to develop effective tools to document and assess the level of drinking that is occurring in Australian pregnant women. Although there is much research that demonstrates the harms, there is almost no research that accurately describes the epidemiology of alcohol use in pregnancy.

## Where we are headed

- On behalf of the Department of Health and the Department of Justice we are partnering with the Australian Drug Foundation to develop a communication and education campaign to inform parents and teenagers about amendments to the *Liquor Control Reform Act 1998* that **bans the supply of alcohol to minors** in a private setting without parental consent. This legislation is backed by the majority of Victorian adults.
- VicHealth, in partnership with Responsible Alcohol Victoria (RAV) and the Victorian Law Enforcement Drug Fund, is undertaking a study of the social harms associated with **packaged liquor** in Victoria.
- In partnership with the **Australian National Preventive Health Agency** we will be updating the 2009 evidence review on the prevention of alcohol-related harm.
- We will evaluate the **FebFast** program to find out if participating in this annual event has any impact on future alcohol consumption and whether it raises awareness about the long-term harms associated with alcohol.
- As a member of the National Alliance for Action on Alcohol (NAAA), VicHealth is funding **tax modelling research** to form the basis of NAAA's proposal for alcohol taxation reform in Australia.
- As part of our **Creating Healthy Workplaces program** (see pp22 and 23), we will be exploring how to reduce alcohol-related harm in the workplace.



*Intoxicated teenagers face memory loss, blacking out and the potential for violence and sexual risk-taking.*



*Parents can be supported to make responsible, informed decisions about their children's exposure to drinking.*



*VicHealth is campaigning for the introduction of mandatory health warning labels like these.*

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world – at least two in three people will be diagnosed before the age of 70.<sup>1</sup> The good news is that skin cancer is one of the most preventable cancers in Australia. That’s why VicHealth invests in the Cancer Council Victoria’s SunSmart program – it leads the world in promoting the balance between the benefits and harms of UV.

### What we’ve done

VicHealth continued to fund and support SunSmart, one of the longest running and most successful skin cancer prevention programs in the world. Some of the highlights from the year include:

#### **‘Dark Side of Tanning’ media campaign**

Preliminary data showed that this graphic melanoma awareness campaign, which ran in the summer of 2010–2011, was successfully challenging pro-tanning attitudes and creating behaviour change in the target audience – adolescents and young people. Joint advocacy by VicHealth, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre and the Cancer Council Victoria resulted in a \$1 million grant from the state government to extend the campaign, in partnership with the Victorian Department of Health.

#### **Farmers targeted for skin cancer prevention**

New data showed that melanoma incidence rates among men and women in rural Victoria are more than one-third higher than for those in urban areas, putting this demographic in the most high-risk group for skin cancer in Victoria.<sup>2</sup> In response, SunSmart targeted farmers and rural outdoor workers to raise awareness of skin cancer prevention and early detection.

**Solarium regulation** In response to preliminary findings from the Cancer Council Victoria solarium compliance study, the Victorian Government announced stricter legislation and changes in compliance monitoring protocols. The number of tanning units across Victoria has dropped dramatically (approximately 61%) since the introduction of legislation.

#### **SunSmart iPhone app**

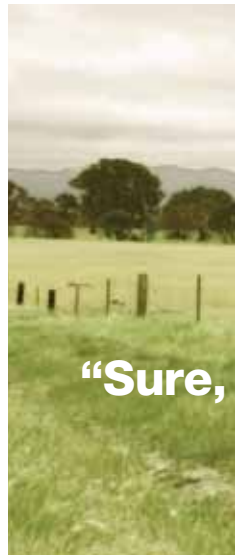
SunSmart launched an iPhone app, making it easier than ever for Australians to be SunSmart. The app was developed to provide people right across Australia with free, easy-to-access information on when you do and don’t need sun protection and when it’s safe to get some sun for vitamin D.

#### **Vitamin D campaign**

SunSmart initiated a vitamin D campaign for 2011, encouraging Victorians to get safe sun exposure to help with vitamin D levels.

#### **Healthy Sporting Environments Demonstration Project**

Through this program, which involves 78 clubs in the greater Barwon region, VicHealth is supporting initiatives to reduce harmful UV exposure in sporting environments. For a full description of this project, see p25.

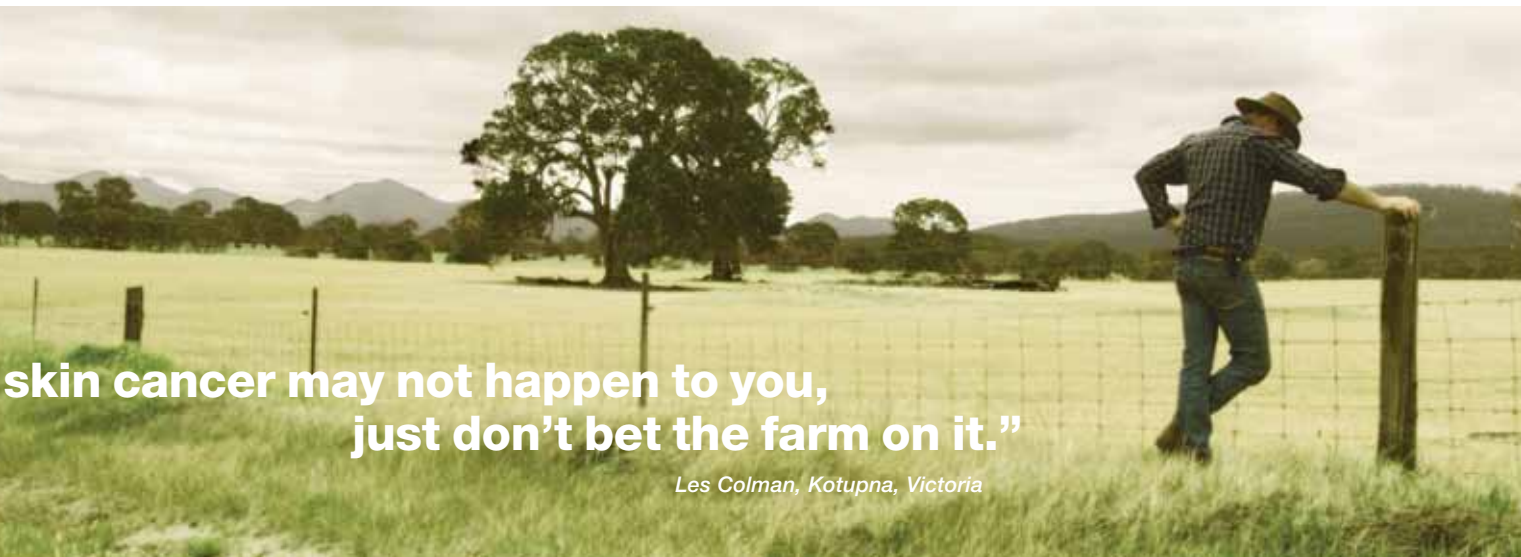


## 12 Reducing harmful UV exposure

For a full list of our program investments to reduce harmful UV exposure, go to [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)



SunSmart's print advertisement from the Farmers' campaign.



skin cancer may not happen to you,  
just don't bet the farm on it."

Les Colman, Kotupna, Victoria

### 30 years of Slip! Slop! Slap!

2010 marked three decades of the iconic Slip! Slop! Slap! message. Since Sid the singing Seagull first brought Victorians the sun protection message, the SunSmart program has developed into an internationally recognised and multi-faceted UV protection program.

Today the sun protection message has expanded to Slip! Slop! Slap! Seek! and Slide! and SunSmart plays a leadership role by promoting a balance between the risks of skin cancer from too much sun exposure and maintaining adequate vitamin D levels.

### Where we are headed

- To see sustained changes in **sun protective attitudes and behaviours**, SunSmart will continue to build on its successful campaigns to improve awareness and knowledge about UV among priority population groups, including secondary school students.
- SunSmart will contribute to the **Victorian Government's UV strategy**, with set targets around changing the sun protection behaviour of Victorians, particularly children, teenagers and young adults.
- In addition, they will advocate for **supportive environments** and infrastructure to ensure a balanced approach to UV exposure.

### References

1. Staples M, Elwood M, Burton R, Williams J, Marks R, Giles G. Non-melanoma skin cancer in Australia: the 2002 national survey and trends since 1985. *Medical Journal of Australia* 2006; 184: 6-10.
2. Source: the Victorian Cancer Registry 2011.

# Introducing VicHealth awards

## Awards for excellence in health promotion



Each year, VicHealth presents awards to recognise outstanding achievements and innovative contributions to health promotion in Victoria through VicHealth-funded projects.

The awards, like our business activities, are defined by drawing on the health promotion actions identified in the Ottawa Charter. All projects were funded or completed during the 2010–2011 financial year.



**36 Award for creating and using knowledge acquired through research and evaluation**

Drinking Cultures and Social Occasions: Alcohol harms in the context of major public holidays, sporting and cultural events

*Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre*

**38 Award for creating environments that foster good health**

Selendra Rise Demonstration Project

*Stockland, Planning Institute of Australia, City of Casey, Growth Areas Authority, RMIT*

**40 Award for communicating about priority health issues**

Identity: yours, mine, ours/Talking Difference

*Museum Victoria – Immigration Museum*

**42 Award for contributing to and advocating for healthy public policy and regulation**

Obesity Policy Coalition

*(joint winner) Cancer Council Victoria, Diabetes Australia–Victoria, WHO Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention at Deakin University, VicHealth*

**44 Award for contributing to and advocating for healthy public policy and regulation**

‘For the first time it is cheaper to quit than smoke’

*(joint winner) Quit Victoria*

**46 Award for developing communities that are inclusive, accessible, equitable and safe**

Cricket4Me

*Cricket Victoria*

**48 Award for supporting organisations to plan, implement and evaluate health promotion activity**

Food for All Dissemination Project

*Victorian Local Governance Association*

**50 Award for facilitating participation and skill development**

Baby Makes 3

*Whitehorse Community Health Service*

VicHealth award winner

# Drinking Cultures and Social Occasions:

Alcohol harms in the context of major public holidays, sporting and cultural events

*Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre*

**Researchers have provided a detailed account of the relationship between cultural and social events and elevated alcohol-related harms, while incorporating factors that influence drinking behaviour, such as weather and weekends.**

Dr Belinda Lloyd, of Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre, led the research project, 'Drinking Cultures and Social Occasions'. She said its approach is innovative both in Australia and also internationally in drawing upon datasets from five sources: ambulance attendances, VicRoads serious vehicle incidents, police recorded assaults, hospital admissions and emergency room presentations. The alcohol-related harms it examined included acute alcohol intoxication, assault and motor vehicle accidents. Patterns related to gender, age and general population groups were also analysed.

"This is the first study to focus on a range of events across the calendar year for an extended period of 10 years, while taking into account the impact of seasonal and day of week variations." Dr Lloyd said.

"We know that alcohol-related harms peak at weekends and that hot weather affects alcohol consumption and related harms. This project takes these factors into account in modelling the true burden of alcohol-related harms. For example, if a public holiday like New Year's Eve or a sporting event occurs on a weekend, we are able to take these background effects into account."

This more nuanced information would enable more sensitively targeted public prevention campaigns, she said. "That allows more cost-effective, targeted prevention and intervention that has a greater benefit for the community."

The project's results offer a broad range of other potential applications. These include providing benchmarks for future research, and predictive modelling to help emergency service agencies in dealing with alcohol-related harms.

One of the study's surprising findings was that acute intoxication was more likely to rise among young men the day before the Melbourne Cup or the AFL Grand Final than on the day itself.

Also surprising was a low correlation between alcohol-related harms, such as emergency room presentations, and motor vehicle injuries. The fact that motor vehicle injuries did not rise in line with other alcohol-related harms suggests that the drink-driving campaigns have worked, she says, and, if so, that is an encouraging indication that public attitudes and behaviour can be changed around drinking culture and alcohol-related harms.

"The findings from this project have the potential to make a real difference in terms of preventative health policy development not just in Victoria but more broadly," Dr Lloyd said. "Agencies in other jurisdictions have shown strong interest in this research."



VicHealth provided \$94,000 funding over two years for the project 'Drinking Cultures and Social Occasions', which has seen Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre win this year's Professor David Hill Award for Knowledge and Translation.



Health promotion award for creating and using knowledge acquired through research and evaluation

VicHealth award winner

# Selandra Rise Demonstration Project

*Stockland, Planning Institute of Australia,  
City of Casey, Growth Areas Authority, RMIT*



**The Selandra Rise Demonstration Project is a real-world model of how health concepts and principles can be incorporated into a master planned community.**

Located in the City of Casey, this 115-hectare community-branded development was launched in July 2010 and its first residents will move in from November 2011. It will ultimately house about 4,000 residents.

As Melbourne experiences unprecedented growth, VicHealth has recognised the importance of working with major developers, such as Stockland, to assist with the creation of healthy communities in the growth areas.

The Growth Areas Authority created the project in order to deliver world's best practice on a range of different fronts. Developer Stockland, the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA)

and the City of Casey then came on board to form a partnership to start the project.

The three key objectives of this project are to create a healthy and engaged community, provide local employment opportunities, and create a diverse and affordable choice of housing options. A number of key priority areas, such as promoting physical activity, social inclusion and safety, have been incorporated into

the infrastructure to make it easy for its residents to enjoy active, healthy lifestyles. A feature of the demonstration project is the construction of the Selandra Rise Community Place, which will demonstrate simple ways that residents can save money, improve their family's wellbeing, and connect with neighbours and the wider community.

Social infrastructure that would usually take years to develop in a new housing

project – like shops, schools, sporting and health care facilities – will be ready when the first residents move in. Having these facilities in place from the outset has highlighted the importance to the project of collaborative partnerships with a broad range of stakeholders.

Jason Black is the PIA's Project Director on the demonstration project, a role he likens to being an independent 'ideas broker',

## Health promotion award for creating environments that foster good health

The Selandra Rise Demonstration Project, a partnership between Stockland, the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA), the City of Casey and the Growth Areas Authority, won this year's Environments for Health Award. VicHealth's project commitment includes \$600,000 over five years for an evaluation in partnership with RMIT.

*Social infrastructure that would usually take years to develop in a new housing project will be ready when the first Selandra Rise residents move in.*



ensuring that input from all project partners is pooled. "This project is a first for Australia in embedding preventative health planning and health promotion solutions from conception to construction," he says.

Jason says health and wellbeing are integrated into the development's soft and hard infrastructures. "The project doesn't require special programs in order for the health benefits to be realised," he says. "Design

features will encourage walking, social connection and access to healthy food."

The project's success is being closely monitored. A five-year longitudinal study has already begun by Research Practice Fellow Dr Cecily Maller of RMIT. Dr Maller is investigating whether the Selandra Rise Demonstration Project meets its health promotion goals in the years ahead, while also delivering key evidence for future projects.

VicHealth sees the Selandra Rise Demonstration Project as setting new benchmarks in liveability and social sustainability and hopes it will encourage other developers to follow Stockland's lead.

VicHealth award winner

# Identity: yours, mine, ours/ Talking Difference

*Museum Victoria – Immigration Museum*

**Museum Victoria's projects *Identity: yours, mine, ours* and *Talking Difference* combine the power of modern digital media and the ancient art of story telling to explore a highly personal issue: identity.**

Young people from Brimbank and Hume municipalities explored this theme using images, film and text to tell their stories in digital form. In addition to the bonds formed among participants, Technology, Arts and Social Connection (TASC) funding allowed the museum to develop a practice model for integrating community created digital content.

Padmini Sebastian, the Immigration Museum Manager, says the museum proactively creates forums for thinking, reflecting and developing a better understanding of ourselves and each other.

“Our aim is to contribute to fostering respect for diversity and difference. It is in this context that *Identity: yours, mine, ours* and *Talking Difference* have been launched. Both projects aim to challenge and change perceptions and attitudes around race, religion and ethnicity,” she says. “These two projects are a powerful way to get people talking and thinking about these issues and maybe even changing some attitudes and beliefs.”

The Identity project has produced a permanent exhibition based at the Immigration Museum that can also be accessed online (see link opposite), with responses from website and gallery visitors contributing to the exhibition's content.

It taps into our natural curiosity about ‘people stories’ to confront the issues that shape identity, from ethnic diversity to family, politics and spirituality.

“The aim of the exhibition is to encourage people to reflect, to change and to act,” says Museum Victoria producer Monica Zetlin. “But we also want people to ultimately feel included – it doesn't matter what your identity is. We always had that clear idea of social change and purpose to how we develop the content and the look and the feel of the exhibition.”

*Talking Difference* is a separate but thematically linked project based around a portable studio and workshops that capture content from the community, particularly people from Indigenous and culturally diverse backgrounds. The portable studio is located at libraries and community centres around Victoria. People visiting the studio were drawn into virtual dialogue about cultural difference and diversity, with their contributions being videoed.

A fellowship has been provided to enable emerging media artists to create new works. VicHealth support has enriched the exhibition's development by expanding its interactivity and enabling the project team to contact like-minded groups across Victoria.

Tatiana Mauri, *Talking Difference* program manager, says the portable studio and the workshops have given access, a safe space to share experiences and a sense of validation to participants whose stories would not otherwise have been heard. “A lot of these participants are from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, including families who might recently have migrated,” she says. “As a museum we're saying ‘your story is important’.”

Visit *Identity: yours, mine, ours* at <http://museumvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum/discoverycentre/identity/>

Visit *Talking Difference* at <http://museumvictoria.com.au/discoverycentre/websites-mini/talking-difference/>

Images from top:  
*Two Muslim girls in animal-print headscarves, Melbourne, 2011*

*Chapatis being prepared in the Gurdwara community kitchen, Sikh Gurdwara Temple, Blackburn, Melbourne, 2007*

*A man wearing the colours of the Aboriginal flag on Brunswick Street, Melbourne, 2011*

*Group of punks standing opposite Finders Street Station, Melbourne, 1999*

Health promotion award for communicating about priority health issues





*Identity: yours, mine, ours/Talking Difference* won this year's Communications Award. It received VicHealth funding from two programs: \$25,000 under Technology, Arts and Social Connection (TASC), focusing on creative uses of technology to increase social connection; and \$150,000 under Arts About Us, which aims to encourage public conversations about the benefits of cultural diversity and the harm caused by race-based discrimination in the Victorian community.

VicHealth (joint) award winner

# Obesity Policy Coalition

*Cancer Council Victoria, Diabetes Australia–Victoria,  
WHO Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention  
at Deakin University, VicHealth*

**The Obesity Policy Coalition's advocacy efforts this year have helped to advance reforms in how food is advertised to children and 'traffic light labelling' on food products that would enable consumers to make better choices.**

The Obesity Policy Coalition (OPC) promotes policies and regulatory reforms that encourage healthy eating and active lifestyles. Its Senior Policy Advisor, Jane Martin, says its approach is a first for Australia in tackling obesity prevention by harnessing a coalition of highly influential public health agencies. Its flexible structure allows it to invite in other partners around particular issues, to pool resources and expertise, to generate higher media coverage for its campaigns

and to be a high-level participant at government decision forums. VicHealth is an OPC partner, along with Cancer Council Victoria, Diabetes Australia–Victoria, and the World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention at Deakin University.

Jane says her recent appointment to the Australian National Preventive Health Agency Expert Committee on Obesity is an indication of how the coalition is seen by other stakeholders. "To have the government recognising us as experts is a fantastic compliment to the work we are doing."

A testimony to Jane's own contribution is her Jack Brockhoff Churchill Fellowship win, which will fund her overseas trip to research other obesity advocacy models.

The OPC advocates a long-term, multi-strategic approach to stemming the rising rates of overweight and obesity. It calls for concerted action at all levels of civil society, the private sector and government.

She cites the OPC's blueprint for regulatory reform, presented to federal and state governments in May, as a major achievement of 2011. It is the first Australian plan for legislation that offers real protection for children from unhealthy food advertising, one of the key drivers of childhood obesity.

The evidence-based blueprint explains how different types of advertising should be restricted to protect children and proposes definitions of key terms, such as 'unhealthy food'. Its release coincided with new Cancer Council research which found that 84% of consumers believe children should be protected from unhealthy food advertising.

Enlisting the support of an impressive cast of outside partners, including the Australian Medical Association and the Australian Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance, ensured that the blueprint's launch received widespread media coverage.

"What makes this work is the commitment by all the people at all these organisations at very high levels," she says. "It makes it efficient in getting messages out there." The blueprint continues to inform the important advocacy work of the OPC.

Health promotion award for contributing to and advocating for healthy public policy and regulation

The Obesity Policy Coalition (OPC) is a joint winner of this year's Advocacy Award for its work to advance reforms in how food is advertised to children. VicHealth's funding commitment to the OPC in 2010–2011 was \$130,000.



*The Obesity Policy Coalition promotes policies and regulatory reforms that encourage healthy eating and active lifestyles.*

VicHealth (joint) award winner

# ‘For the first time it is cheaper to quit than smoke’

*Quit Victoria*



Quit Victoria is a joint winner of this year’s Advocacy Award for its work to have nicotine replacement therapy listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. In addition to project funding of \$200,000, VicHealth contributed funding to evaluate the project’s return on investment.



## Health promotion award for contributing to and advocating for healthy public policy and regulation

**The recent listing of nicotine patches on Australia's Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) is predicted to result in 96,000 additional 'quitters' and help avoid more than 31,000 premature deaths in the first five years.**

Between February and May 2011, about 91,000 prescriptions for nicotine patches were filled. Over three quarters of these (79%) were to people with 'concessional status', those occupying low socio-economic groups who are significantly over-represented in smoking and lung cancer statistics. With a GP's prescription, they can buy a four-week course of nicotine patches for \$5.60, instead of paying up to \$140.

Quit Victoria led the project, from lodging a detailed submission to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) to partnering with other health groups such as the Cancer Council Australia and the Heart Foundation, to drive an advocacy campaign to build support for the proposal.

Submissions to PBAC require extensive research and documentation concerning the safety, efficacy and likely cost-effectiveness of candidate medicines in comparison to therapies that are already listed. Quit's consultant pharmacoeconomist, Professor Susan Hurley, did detailed work on its proposal.

After negotiation with suppliers and government approval, the listing took effect in February 2011.

The PBS listing means the cost of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) is dramatically reduced.

Quit Victoria's executive director, Fiona Sharkie, says, "The ripple effect benefitting those individual smokers whose lives are saved, their families and the wider community will be far reaching".

"Our original aim in approaching the PBAC was to make access to quitting pharmacotherapies easier for smokers on low incomes," Fiona says. This group, which includes people who are single mothers, homeless, and/or have mental health problems, have smoking rates equally as high as Indigenous Australians, who had already had PBS listing of nicotine patches approved.

"In preventative health, things can take a long time," Fiona says. "This was the third attempt to get PBS listing for NRT. It finally succeeded, with the PBAC deciding to go even further than our submission by subsidising NRT for any smoker who obtains a GP's prescription. Factors that secured PBS listing this time included new evidence that confirmed the efficacy of NRT, the prioritising of tobacco control and smoking amongst disadvantaged people in the agenda of

the Preventative Health Taskforce, as well as the precedent set by PBS listing of NRT for Indigenous Australians."

An economic analysis of the project predicts this reform will provide a net return, including wider social benefits, of more than \$54 billion. The report projects that during the subsequent lifetime of the 96,000 additional smokers who quit because of the PBS subsidy, more than \$615 million in health care costs would be avoided. The predicted health benefits include the avoidance of almost 6,000 cases of lung cancer, 15,000 cases of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, 6,600 heart attacks, almost 800 strokes and over 31,000 premature deaths.

"Often Quit is recognised for its role as educating the public on the harms of smoking through our anti-smoking campaigns," says Fiona. "It's really good to be recognised for the work we do in advocacy to influence government action."

*Quit Victoria is a joint initiative of VicHealth, Cancer Council Victoria, the Department of Health and the Heart Foundation (Victoria).*

*The PBS listing means the cost of nicotine replacement therapy is dramatically reduced, making it more accessible for smokers on low incomes.*

VicHealth award winner  
**Cricket4Me**  
*Cricket Victoria*



**A flexible approach and shared knowledge powered the success of Cricket Victoria's Cricket4Me project in boosting diverse participation within a traditional sport.**

Cricket Victoria used VicHealth's Participation in Community Sport and Active Recreation (PICSAR) funding to generate cultural change under the leadership of Annie Hateley, Cricket Victoria's Community Programs Manager,

over the four-year funding period.

Cricket4Me helps to make cricket more accessible to disadvantaged communities, including people with a disability, Indigenous Australians, culturally and linguistically diverse communities (including new arrivals), and women and girls. "It's about creating a culture in cricket in which everyone is welcome to play regardless of his or her cultural background,

age, gender or ability," says Annie. Coaches developed various ways to teach a broader group of players, such as using batting tees and larger balls and modified rules that make the game shorter and more engaging.

PICSAR funding has changed many individual lives, sometimes through the efforts of one person, Annie says, citing the contribution of Waddington Mwayenga, a former Zimbabwean Test cricketer, as an example.

"Waddington Mwayenga, our multicultural cricket officer, is building the trust of African families and the cricket community," she says. "Sometimes he's getting kids to join a club after just one cricket clinic."

Funding from VicHealth has allowed Cricket Victoria to take a leading role in overcoming barriers to participation by such strategies as inclusion training and education programs for staff, coaches,

officials and club volunteers. It has also modified game development policies and programs to be inclusive of all participants and its own workforce is now more diverse.

Annie says that in addition to training programs, Cricket Victoria draws on expertise its staff has gained over many years, pooling their shared experiences within and beyond the organisation.

Annie says the fact that the role of her assistant, Cricket

Cricket Victoria's *Cricket4Me* project won this year's Community Development Award. The project received Participation in Community Sport and Active Recreation (PICSAR) funding of \$824,000 over four years from VicHealth.



Victoria's Community Programs Officer, has changed from being a contract position funded by PICSAR to a full-time Cricket Victoria job is evidence of her organisation's internal cultural change.

The award nomination was "a good reminder to everyone that we're all making a contribution".

Health promotion award for developing communities that are inclusive, accessible, equitable and safe

*Waddington Mwayenga, a former Zimbabwean Test cricketer, coaches some new recruits.*

VicHealth award winner

# Food for All Dissemination Project

*Victorian Local Governance Association*

**An intensive campaign to share practical strategies for boosting food security has reached more than half of Victoria's local government areas, achieving an extremely high return from a small funding investment.**

The 12-month Food for All Dissemination Project took a strategic and innovative approach to spreading the knowledge gained from VicHealth's five-year Food for All (FFA) program.

Food for All started in 2005 and funded nine local councils to improve integrated planning of key factors that influence access to food: transport, housing, economic development and land use.

Participating councils took the lead in reducing barriers

to accessing healthy foods in their communities. The FFA program was designed to increase regular access to, and consumption of, a variety of foods, particularly fruit and vegetables, by people living in disadvantaged communities.

By the end of the FFA funding period in 2010, participating councils, their communities and their partner agencies had improved knowledge and skills to deal with food security and had incorporated it into many of their plans, policies and strategic priorities.

VicHealth wanted to ensure the learnings from the FFA program would be disseminated to all local councils to encourage them to take on food security as part of their core business.

The dissemination campaign was highly targeted, using new media (micro-movies), workshops, networking and mentoring to spread information resources and build greater capacity to deal with food security issues in municipalities where it would have maximum impact.

The campaign was designed and driven by Leah Galvin, Food Security Policy and Project Officer for the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA).

Her efforts resulted in 44 local government areas and eight Primary Care Partnerships participating in the project. However, the project extended its reach more widely, to regional health services, community health services, universities and state government departments. In all, 191 key

stakeholders participated in activities that included five capacity-building workshops, culminating in a statewide forum.

Leah encouraged local governments to recognise that food security was part of their core business, through their statutory obligations to residents' health and wellbeing. Existing services such as Meals on Wheels and maternal and child healthcare addressed food security issues – it was just a matter of extending the council's involvement, using effective strategies that could be low cost or no cost.

She often asked council staff to adopt a fresh perspective and pose a simple question. "Put your food glasses on – am I making it better or worse for local residents to access healthy food?"

"The real success of the project is because of the enthusiasm of those local networks in local government and Primary Care Partnerships which helped us to bring the right people together," she says.

An ongoing part of the dissemination project is the establishment, by Leah and VLGA, of an online Community of Practice – an informal network of like-minded practitioners who focus on learning, enhancing and sharing their practice to broaden their knowledge and expertise.

To find out more about the resources, visit [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/foodforall](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/foodforall)

Health promotion award for supporting organisations to plan, implement and evaluate health promotion activity





VicHealth provided funding of \$60,000 to the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) for the Food for All Dissemination Project, which won this year's Organisational Development Award.

*Supporting residents to grow and harvest vegetables is one way local governments can advance the food security agenda.*

VicHealth award winner  
**Baby Makes 3**  
Whitehorse Community Health Service

*A key factor in the success of the Baby Makes 3 program is the group format.*



**The Baby Makes 3 project is helping to prevent violence against women by using maternal child health services to promote greater gender equality between new parents.**

Baby Makes 3 project coordinator David Flynn, of Whitehorse Community Health Service, says the project is internationally significant on two levels. “VicHealth’s application of health promotion principles to the issue of violence against women

is a world first. But then this program working with first-time parents on gender expectations, focusing on the relationship between the parents, rather than between the baby and parents, is a first in itself.”

The project targets couples during the transition to their new roles as first-time parents. It aims to sustain respect and equality in their relationships so that violence doesn’t ever occur. Through facilitated group discussions over three weeks, Baby

Makes 3 helps new parents understand how gender roles can subconsciously revert to more traditional patterns during this transition. “Before the baby’s birth, the couple’s relationship may have operated more as an equal partnership with each making similar contributions,” David says. “But they can have very different perceptions about how equal their relationship is after the baby arrives.” Typically, the new father returns to work and the

mother is at home caring for the baby and doing more housework. “If she wants to talk about the lack of equality, it’s very easy for her partner to be dismissive and say, ‘Get over it’. When they’ve sat in the group, dads can see that these are issues faced by all couples and it’s something they need to pay attention to.”

The group discussions help couples explore how gender-based expectations can influence their relationship in myriad ways, from practical

to attitudinal and emotional. It covers issues like the need for valuing each partner’s respective contribution equally.

A key factor in the program’s success is the group format: couples see that they are not alone. “They meet other new mums and dads who are also adjusting to big relationship changes as they learn how to be parents,” says David.

Looking ahead, David sees the program’s potential for promoting gender

Baby Makes 3 received \$270,000 in VicHealth funding between 2008 and 2011 for a project led by Whitehorse Community Health Service, in partnership with the City of Whitehorse Maternal Child Health Service. The project was funded through VicHealth's Respect, Responsibility and Equality Phase II program, which has supported the development of in-depth prevention programs in workplaces, local councils, faith communities, and health and community organisations.



equality across generations and achieving long-term reductions in violence against women. "You can imagine the effects of that baby growing up in a family that is more gender-equal and respectful. He or she will carry those gender equality attitudes through life."

The project team has used additional funding from VicHealth to prepare an implementation guide for local government. The Shire of Yarra Ranges will be the second to adopt

Baby Makes 3. With these resources, the program could roll out Australia-wide.

David says that winning the award raises the program's profile and will help with the roll-out to other local government areas. He applauds VicHealth's visionary approach of nurturing a community of best practice research and projects across Victoria aimed at the primary prevention of violence against women.

## Health promotion award for facilitating participation and skill development

## Credits

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### Victorian Health Promotion Foundation

PO Box 154 Carlton South VIC 3053 Australia

T. +61 3 9667 1333

F. +61 3 9667 1375

[vichealth@vichealth.vic.gov.au](mailto:vichealth@vichealth.vic.gov.au)

[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au)

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