

**YEAR
IN
(2013–14) RE-
VIEW**

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“ Like the NGV, VicHealth strives to be the leader in its field and enrich the lives of our community. We congratulate VicHealth on their achievements this year promoting good health and disease prevention. ”

TONY ELLWOOD
Director, NGV



“ With the launch of its *Action Agenda*, VicHealth's leadership role continues to be critical in creating health and wellbeing in Victoria. A key role is engaging partners who can create the conditions for good health. Go VicHealth! ”

PROFESSOR BILLIE GILES-CORTI
Director, McCaughey VicHealth Centre for Community Wellbeing

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About VicHealth

Health can be cultivated in all the elements of everyday life. Health ‘happens’ everywhere.

Health is more than being free from disease. It is a state of physical, mental and social wellbeing – and this means that health can be cultivated in all the elements of everyday life. Health ‘happens’ everywhere.

It’s from these spaces that our organisation takes its inspiration.

VicHealth is a pioneer in health promotion – the process of enabling people to increase control over and improve their health.

We create and fund world-class interventions. We conduct vital research to advance our state’s population health. We produce and support public campaigns to promote a healthier Victoria. We provide transformational expertise and insights to government.

But of all the things we do, above all we seek to make health gains among Victorians by pre-empting and targeting improvements in health across our population, fostered within the day-to-day spaces where people spend their time, and with benefits to be enjoyed by all.

Our origin

The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) is a world-first health promotion foundation. We were established with all-Party support by the State Parliament of Victoria with the statutory objectives mandated by the *Tobacco Act 1987 (Vic)*. The objectives of VicHealth as set out in the Act are to:

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

Our work

VicHealth has played a unique role since 1987. We have been at the forefront of health promotion and illness prevention. We have addressed sensitive and difficult issues – many that involved venturing into untested territory or affecting Victorians with limited capacity to have their voices heard. We have funded unproven but promising practice, including highly successful programs that are now recurrently funded by other sources. We have invested in exploratory research and grown a research culture in health promotion.

Pinpointing and preventing the negative influences on ill health and championing the positive influences on good health is central and exclusive to our work.

Our primary focus is on preventing chronic disease at a population level, rather than improving individual treatment or disease management.

Because much of individual lifestyle is a matter of personal choice, VicHealth focuses on creating the conditions in which good health can flourish – from better public health policy and healthy urban environments to more inclusive and respectful communities.

We advise governments and complement and contribute to the efforts of various government portfolios. We work closely with the Victorian Government to ensure there is no duplication of effort or program areas.

Our work is underpinned by robust evidence, and is integrated with evaluation, practice and dissemination.

We work in partnerships with governments, organisations, communities and groups across sectors and places where people live, study, work and enjoy activity.

VicHealth focuses on creating the conditions in which good health can flourish.



Our action agenda

Our *Action Agenda for Health Promotion* outlines our 3-year strategy within an extended decade-long horizon (2013–23). It provides an impetus for progressive actions for our five strategic imperatives:

01 Promote healthy eating

02 Encourage physical activity

03 Prevent tobacco use

04 Prevent harm from alcohol

05 Improve mental wellbeing.

VicHealth’s role has always been to push the boundaries and trial and test new ways to promote health, and this approach remains at the heart of the *Action Agenda*. Our vision – which complements and builds upon the Victorian Government’s health promotion work – is designed to help reduce the burden of treating chronic disease, enhance productivity, bridge the health divide between population groups and add healthy years to a person’s life.

As an agenda of action, its focus is on *doing*. And this begins with making a commitment.

We commit to these

- In partnership with others, we promote good health.
- We recognise that the social and economic conditions for all people influence their health.
- We promote fairness and opportunity for better health.
- We support initiatives that assist individuals, communities, workplaces and the broader society to improve wellbeing.
- We seek to prevent chronic conditions for all Victorians.

Find out more at: www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/actionagenda



“Addressing the burden of chronic disease is a challenge that can only be overcome through a coordinated approach across government, non-government and the private sector. Medibank recognises the leadership role that VicHealth plays, and we look forward to continuing our partnership as we work together towards ‘Better Health’.”

GEORGE SAVVIDES
Managing Director, Medibank



“The arts bring more than just beauty or entertainment into our lives – engagement with the arts can have a powerful and meaningful impact on health and wellbeing. VicHealth has known this since it began in 1987, and it continues to invest in opportunities for people to get creative, active and involved in our vibrant community.”

JULIA ZEMIRO
Actor/presenter

Health promotion highlights 2013–14

The past year has seen many of VicHealth's partnerships and investments deliver considerable outcomes.



“Poor mental health is a potent threat to personal fulfilment, social cohesion and economic productivity. Prevention, promotion and early intervention, particularly for young people, is key – and this is brilliantly supported by VicHealth.”

PROFESSOR PATRICK MCGORRY
Executive Director, Orygen Youth Health Research Centre

01 Promoting healthy eating



More people choosing water and healthy food options

- Projecting future trends for overweight and obesity (p. 22).
- Strengthening the case for state action on salt reduction (p. 21).
- A social marketing initiative to influence a switch to water from sugary drinks (p. 19).
- Improving access to healthy food using bright ideas and digital technology (p. 20).
- Connecting families, farms and food grown close to home (p. 21).
- Building knowledge about the use of land in Victoria (p. 20).
- Modelling policy interventions to protect Australia's food security (p. 20).
- Supporting healthy eating policies for Aboriginal organisations (p. 21).

02 Encouraging regular physical activity



More people physically active, participating in sport and walking

- Month-long 'Walk to School' campaign (p. 30).
- Getting Melbourne's city workers moving more (p. 28).
- Survey of 2000+ parents to understand their fears about letting children play and travel independently (p. 31).
- Inspiring more movement in children's daily lives (p. 28).
- TeamUp 20 Day Challenge with the AFL Players' Association (p. 27).
- Hundreds of small grants to sport and recreation clubs (p. 30).
- Supporting sports clubs to be healthier and more welcoming (p. 29).
- Getting physical through local arts initiatives (p. 29).
- 12-hour dance session at Melbourne's White Night (p. 52).
- *For You* dance floor at the NGV's *Melbourne Now* exhibition (p. 52).

03 Preventing tobacco use



More people smoke-free and less harm among resistant smokers

- Extension of smoking bans in Victoria to train and tram platforms, public playgrounds, swimming pools and under-age sporting events (p. 35).
- Longstanding partnership with the Quit program to prevent uptake and support people to quit (p. 37).
- Declining cigarette sales following the introduction of plain packaging (p. 37).
- Research into new trends and evidence to help those who find it hardest to quit (p. 37).

04 Preventing harm from alcohol



More people actively seeking the best ways to reduce alcohol-related harm

- Exploring the role of alcohol in Victorians' lives (p. 43).
- Online campaign to encourage young people to talk about Victoria's alcohol culture and challenge the social acceptability of getting drunk (p. 42).
- Research into the impact of alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts (p. 45).
- Survey of Australian cider drinkers (p. 43).
- Joining forces with Hello Sunday Morning to encourage Victorians to press pause on their drinking (p. 43).
- New research into 'preloading' (p. 43).
- Putting Victoria's 19,000 liquor licences on the map (p. 44).

05 Improving mental wellbeing



Building stronger approaches to resilience, focusing on young people

- Groundbreaking partnership to prevent violence against women (p. 50).
- Surveying community attitudes to violence against women so we are better placed to prevent it (p. 51).
- Empowering the football (soccer) community to respond to racism (p. 52).
- Reshaping the thinking behind Indigenous employment participation (p. 49).
- Understanding how children learn about cultural diversity (p. 53).
- Identifying best practice approaches for addressing stress, gender inequality, alcohol-related harm, race-based discrimination and prolonged sitting at work (p. 50).
- Thought-provoking suite of arts projects designed to celebrate cultural diversity (p. 53).
- Supporting the Victorian Indigenous Performing Arts Awards (p. 52).

Supporting our strategic priorities



Driving bold new ways to address our health priorities and broaden our impact

- Inaugural Leading Thinkers initiative to generate fresh ideas and inspire new solutions to contemporary health issues (p. 25).
- Action-oriented *Fair Foundations framework for health equity*, providing clarity about what we can do in each of our priority areas to improve health equity and close the gap in health (p. 39).
- VicHealth named as a new World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Leadership in Health Promotion, reflecting Victoria's world-leading status as a source of expert advice and best practice in health promotion (p. 47).

Fast facts

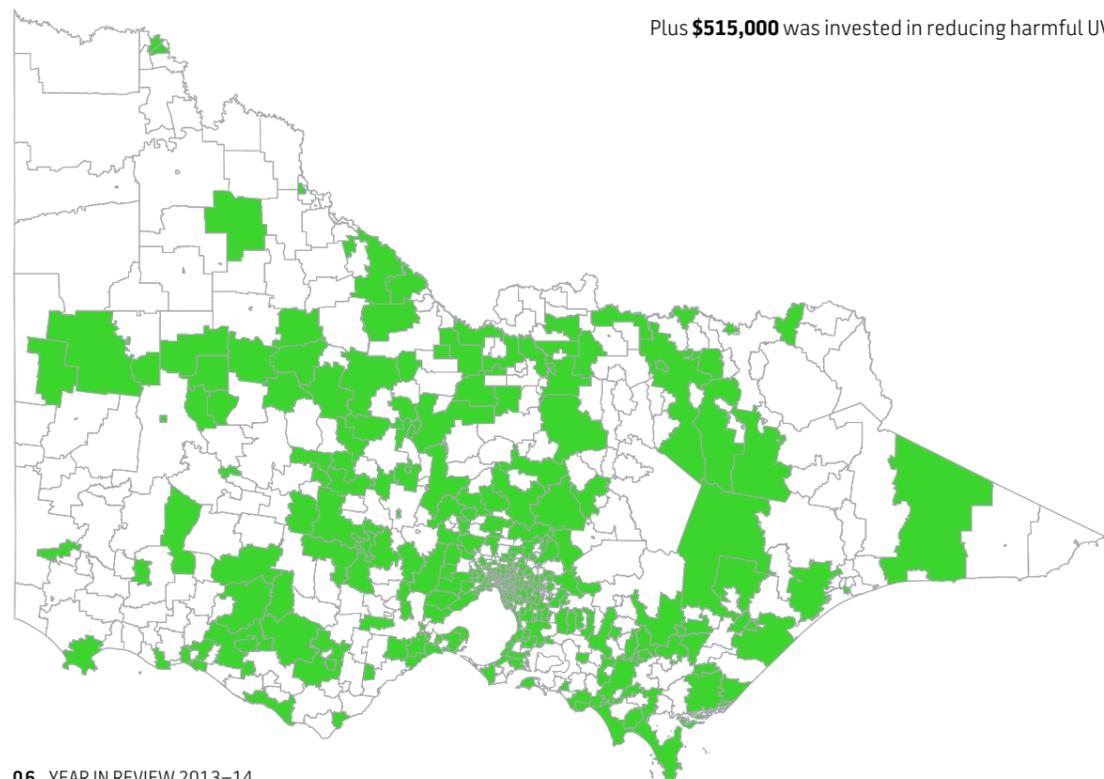
\$25,470,000 of our Victorian Government funding was invested in **1367** grants in Victoria.

VicHealth works in partnership with communities, organisations and individuals to promote good health and prevent ill health.

We funded:

- 797 sporting organisations
- 59 local governments
- 66 community organisations and NGOs
- 44 tertiary education and research institutes
- 33 arts groups
- 7 health service organisations
- 2 partnered investments with government and statutory bodies

Our reach



SUMMARY OF GRANT PAYMENTS

Strategic imperatives

- \$11,156,000 on increasing participation in physical activity
- \$3,606,000 on tobacco prevention
- \$3,413,000 on improving mental wellbeing
- \$2,055,000 on preventing harm from alcohol
- \$1,177,000 on promoting healthy eating

Integrated themes

- \$1,937,000 on sport and healthy communities
- \$910,000 on knowledge
- \$701,000 on health equity

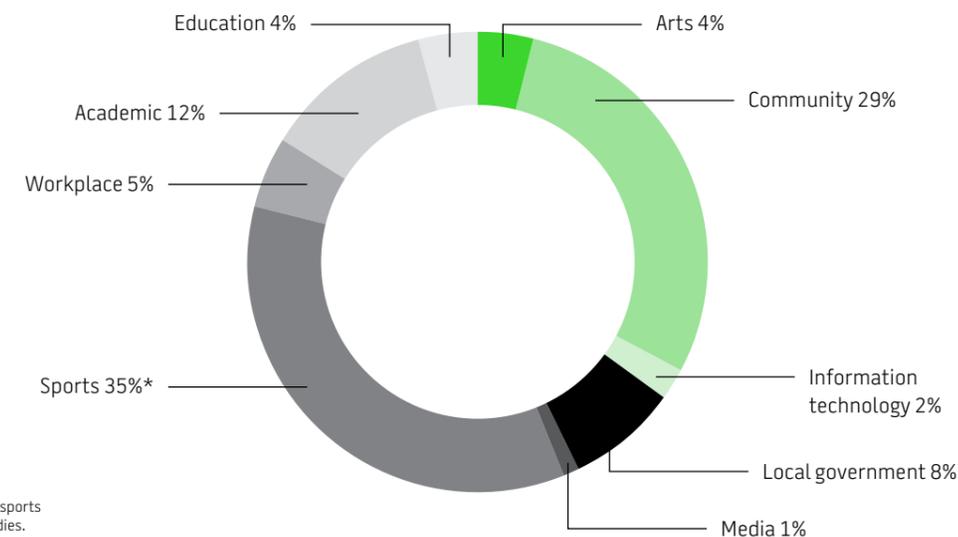
Plus \$515,000 was invested in reducing harmful UV exposure.

Our objectives

(as mandated by the *Tobacco Act 1987*)

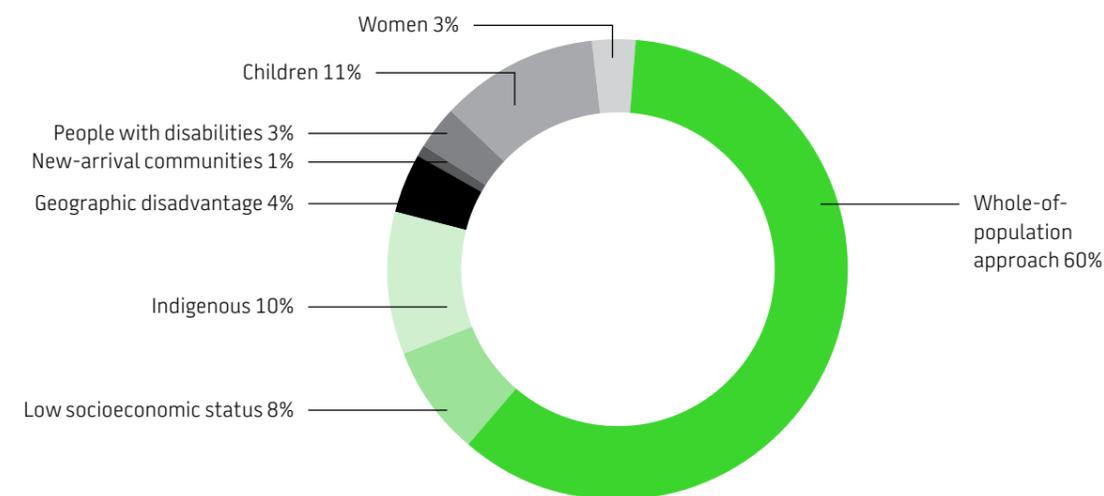
- To fund activity related to the promotion of good health, safety or the prevention and early detection of disease.
- To increase awareness of programs for promoting good health in the community through the sponsorship of sports, the arts and popular culture.
- To encourage healthy lifestyles in the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

Grant expenditure across settings



* Some of the work that occurs within the sports setting is not undertaken by sporting bodies.

Grant expenditure across target population groups



Chair's report

VicHealth's work and achievements for the financial year 2013–14 is the first full year of our 10-year *Action Agenda for Health Promotion*.

Professor John Catford
Chair, VicHealth Board

Already we can see the benefits of having a clear vision to enable the 'lifestyle' choices of Victorians towards better health.

Already we can see the benefits of having a clear vision to enable the 'lifestyle' choices of Victorians towards better health.

All of our organisation's energy and capacity is now being applied to the five areas where the most health gains can be made: promoting healthy eating, encouraging regular physical activity, preventing tobacco use, preventing harm from alcohol, and improving mental wellbeing.

This has never been more important – for the reality we face is stark. Nearly two in three Victorians are overweight and obese, and more of us are living with largely preventable diseases, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers, that greatly impact on our quality of life.

Poor diet, physical inactivity, smoking, risky alcohol consumption, and exposure to risk factors that cause depression or anxiety – these are the major influences contributing to ill health in Victoria and increasing the burden on the health system. Tackling these issues is the focus of the *Action Agenda*.

As the world's first health promotion foundation, VicHealth has considerable experience to draw on to support the work of the Victorian Government and our partner organisations in health, sports, research, the arts and community.

Only 12 months into our plan, we can see tangible outcomes where we are adding value to the Victorian Prevention System and complementing the work of Healthy Together Victoria. We have received significant support from the Victorian Government in a range of areas, from a partnership to prevent rising alcohol-related harms to the Premier's Active April Challenge, which encouraged Victorians outdoors in the autumn air. We are grateful to the Victorian Minister for Health, The Hon. David Davis MLC, for leading the extension of smoke-free areas, which has resulted in smoking bans on train and tram platforms, and within 10 metres of playgrounds, parks and public pools.

This year we also started a community conversation about our drinking culture, which has led to more Victorians questioning and changing risky behaviours. We are pleased that this work helped support the Government's *Reducing the alcohol and drug toll: Victoria's plan 2013–2017* launched by The Hon. Mary Wooldridge MP.

A partnership with the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation and the Emergency Services Telecommunications Agency resulted in an online liquor licensing map. This is a valuable interactive resource for councils and agencies about Victoria's 19,000 liquor licenses.

Being active every day is one of the best lifestyles we can pass on to young people, which has inspired our *Active for Life* resource and another successful Walk to School campaign. We broke all participation records last year with over 32,000 students from more than 300 Victorian primary schools taking part.

VicHealth is taking centre stage in inspiring more of us to move for our physical and mental health. We have invested in fun and innovative ways, like the giant game of Twister at the Australian Open and a marathon 12-hour dance session at Melbourne's *White Night* festival that got tens of thousands moving.

Our Active Cities partnership with the City of Melbourne and the Department of Health helped tackle sedentary behaviour in the city's workplaces. We also continued our investment in the arts as an important setting to reach people and promote health, by supporting a range of arts projects through large and small collaborations. A good example was the popular *For You* dance floor at the National Gallery of Victoria's *Melbourne Now* exhibition.

VicHealth has always been a pioneer in pushing boundaries and we are now making better use of new and emerging technologies for health promotion. The TeamUp digital platform is connecting more Victorians to physical activity when and where they want. Our Seed Challenge online market place has linked farmers and consumers to healthy food hubs, and unlocked underutilised land in Melbourne for people to cultivate their own food.

The Art of Play (Women's Circus), funded through VicHealth's MOTION program, invites children to act, juggle and play.



This year, VicHealth also laid the groundwork for its inaugural Leading Thinkers initiative to generate fresh ideas and inspire new solutions to contemporary health issues. We have engaged Dr David Halpern, Chief Executive of the United Kingdom's Behavioural Insights Team, an expert in applying behavioural economics and psychology to deliver better public policy and services. Dr Halpern's residency will focus on obesity – a complex issue requiring innovative approaches that encourage and enable people to make healthier choices.

VicHealth continued its legacy as a leader in promoting mental wellbeing through its partnerships and research. Our work in the prevention of violence against women was demonstrated through a partnership to develop a national framework to prevent violence, with Our Watch (formerly the National Foundation to Prevent Violence Against Women and their Children) led by its Chair, Natasha Stott-Despoja AM.

VicHealth's leadership in gathering and synthesising evidence in the area of reducing race-based discrimination continued with the release of a research review on the impacts of racism on young people's health.

VicHealth is deeply indebted to our partners, advocates and supporters, without whom our 10-year vision could not have progressed this far or this fast, and in so many creative ways.

On behalf of the VicHealth Board, I thank in particular The Hon. David Davis MLC, who as Minister for Health supported our *Action Agenda* and strategic imperatives at every stage, and all Members of Parliament for their ongoing support of VicHealth's work.

We have also been fortunate to have a diverse, knowledgeable and energetic Board. I would like to acknowledge the stewardship of Mark Birrell, who was on the Board of VicHealth for 3 years and Chair over the past 2 years. His many years' experience in public policy, starting with his lead role as Shadow Minister for Health in the passage of the *Tobacco Act 1987* and the creation of VicHealth, have been invaluable to the State of Victoria. Mark has made a profound and long-lasting impact on the health of Victorians for which we are all most grateful.

I would also like to acknowledge outgoing Board Members Ms Belinda Duarte, Mr Peter Gordon, Mr Neil Angus MLA, Mr Tim Bull MLA and Ms Danielle Green MLA for their service to the Board, and welcome new members Mr Nick Green OAM and Mr Stephen Walter, who are valuable additions to the team.

Together with our outstanding CEO, Jerril Rechter, and our skilled and experienced staff, we have positioned VicHealth to continue its unique role in promoting health, preventing ill health and reducing the burden of disease for all Victorians.

To our friends, partners and communities thank you for your tremendous support and willingness to work with us on new approaches in a complex and challenging environment.

I have great pleasure presenting this report on VicHealth's work and achievements.

Professor John Catford
Chair, VicHealth Board

Further reading

Action Agenda for Health Promotion
www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/actionagenda

Advisory Governance Framework
www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/committees

VicHealth Board
www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/board

VicHealth Staff
www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/staff

Health Promotion Awards
www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/awards

Chief Executive Officer's report

The year's highlights are a credit to our many partners and VicHealth staff who have started the conversations that will inspire Victorians to make healthier choices and live healthier lives.

Jerril Rechter
Chief Executive Officer, VicHealth



We have taken positive steps towards tackling our most pressing health issues by engaging people where health happens – in our homes, workplaces, online and in our communities.

In the first year of the VicHealth *Action Agenda for Health Promotion* we have taken positive steps towards tackling our most pressing health issues by engaging people where health happens – in our homes, workplaces, online and in our communities.

Change starts with recognising a problem, and we have started some of the most difficult conversations with Victorians in the last 12 months, including those about our risky drinking culture and the public health emergency that is obesity. Engaging young people to understand why they drink to get drunk has shown us the value of a positive and non-judgmental social marketing campaign that encouraged people to talk openly. Two out of three Victorians are now classified as overweight or obese, and this will rise to 83% of men and 75% of women by 2025 if we don't change our lifestyle.

Important conversations about time spent sitting, the impacts of racism and violence against women are now happening.

Building greater connections in the community and the digital world has helped us and our partners turn unused space into communal vegetable gardens, empowered football clubs to respond to racist taunts, and put Victoria's myriad liquor licences on a digital map to support better decision making.

We kicked off our Leading Thinkers initiative to help address the world's most wicked, intractable health problems by welcoming our first Leading Thinker, Dr David Halpern of the UK's Behavioural Insights Team, to tackle obesity.

From our groundbreaking partnership with Our Watch (formerly the Foundation to Prevent Violence Against Women and their Children) to sweeping changes to sporting clubs to become healthier and more welcoming places, I am extremely proud of what has been achieved in just 12 months of the *Action Agenda*.

The year's highlights are a credit to our many partners and VicHealth staff who have started the conversations that will inspire Victorians to make healthier choices and live healthier lives.

Operational and budgetary performance

The first 3-year phase of the 10-year *Action Agenda* has involved the alignment of investments to meet longer-term goals. Resulting from the new *Action Agenda*, an organisational restructure created two new offices reporting to the CEO – an Innovation Office and a Policy Development Office.

The *Action Agenda's* integrated themes of knowledge, health equity, and sport and healthy communities are flowing through to our work on the ground. A new Results Framework is evaluating the benefits of our investments, and we are building equity into our programs by filtering activity through our *Fair Foundations* framework.

VicHealth met all its statutory expenditure targets with 32%¹ of payments to sporting bodies and 37% invested in health promotion. More than 1300 grant payments worth \$25.5 million² were made: \$11.1 million on increasing participation in physical activity; \$3.6 million on tobacco prevention; \$3.4 million on improving mental wellbeing; \$2 million on preventing harm from alcohol; and \$1.2 million on promoting healthy eating.

Key highlights of our investments

Our largest health investments are aimed at improving the health of all Victorians with 60% supporting whole-of-population approaches to health promotion. Sport remains a top priority receiving 35%³ of our investments. Other beneficiaries were local governments, education, community, academia, arts, workplaces, media and new information technology initiatives.

To increase sport participation, \$3.5 million was invested through the State Sporting Association Participation Program (SSAPP); \$1.6 million in the roll-out of our Healthy Sporting Environments program; \$1.8 million to 742 community clubs through the Active Club Grants; and \$1.4 million in the TeamUp digital campaign to connect Victorians to casual sports and physical activity opportunities. After SSAPP, the next largest payment went to Cancer Council Victoria for the Quit program (\$3.4 million).

¹ The discrepancy between sports figures is because some of the work that occurs within the sports setting is not undertaken by sporting bodies.

² Figures rounded to nearest \$100,000.

³ See note 1.

VicHealth's water initiative aims to encourage a greater consumption of water by all Victorians.



This year, VicHealth's Active Club Grants assisted more than 200,000 members in 742 sport and active recreation clubs.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Promoting healthy eating: more people choosing water and healthy food options

With poor diet set to overtake smoking as the biggest killer in Australia, our **Seed Challenge** brought together innovators and healthy eating experts to use digital technology to improve local fresh food distribution and access. With support from The Australian Centre for Social Innovation, the two winners of the Seed Challenge have invested in online platforms to make it easier to access affordable local food. The 3000acres initiative is turning unused urban, suburban and rural spaces into food gardens, while the Open Food Network is growing an online market for farmers, consumers and independent food enterprises to connect, trade and manage their business. Online food hubs have been set up with over 40 farmers so far.

VicHealth is also supporting the **Food Alliance**, a network of health organisations, to protect food-growing areas on Melbourne's fringe, and mapping Melbourne's land capability as the city grows outwards. Another collaboration focused on young people's nutrition is the **Parents' Jury** and the Fame and Shame Awards, showing the worst and best of food advertising directed at children.

With nearly two-thirds of Victorians currently overweight or obese, reducing intake of excess kilojoules through drinks is one way to promote a healthier diet and improve health. VicHealth's **water initiative** (including the H3O Challenge) aims to encourage a greater consumption of water by all Victorians in preference to drinks with added sugar.

Encouraging regular physical activity: more people physically active, participating in sport and walking

Research has found that less than a third of Australians are getting enough physical activity to benefit their health.



“VicHealth has accumulated a wealth of experience and expertise, and has a culture of innovation and cutting edge research. We see VicHealth playing a key role in inspiring other countries to champion health promotion.”

DR SHIN YOUNG-SOO

World Health Organization Regional Director for the Western Pacific

We know being active every day is one of the greatest lifetime habits we can pass on to young people, yet 80% of Victorian school children aren't getting the daily hour of exercise crucial for good health.

Our month-long **Walk to School campaign**, now in its eighth year, highlights the benefits of walking to and from school for primary school aged children, while our **Active for Life** resource is designed to help teachers, sporting clubs and community leaders find new ways to integrate movement into everyday life.

A Victoria-wide **survey into parental fear** will help us develop strategies to overcome barriers to children walking and riding to and from school and within their neighbourhoods.

With obesity in Australian adults on a steep rise – costing our nation an estimated \$14 billion a year – we joined forces with the City of Melbourne and the Victorian Department of Health in the **Active Cities** initiative to offer 100 ways to get Melbourne's two million city workers moving with free activities before, during and after work.

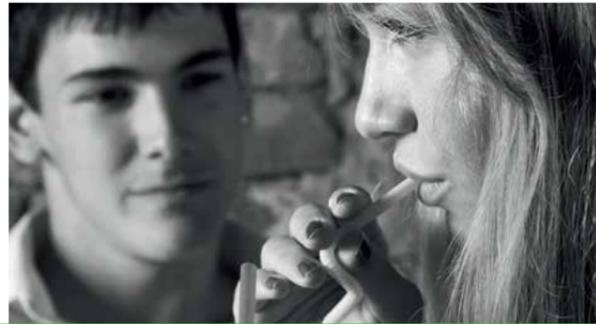
With research telling us the biggest barrier to exercise is finding the time, our **TeamUp campaign** has made it easy to connect people to more than 150 sports and activities from a casual kick in the park to a dance class. Our **MOTION** funding has supported tens of thousands of people to get physical through local arts initiatives, such as free community dance workshops and other participatory arts experiences.

Over 200,000 members in 742 sport and active recreation clubs across Victoria have been supported through **Active Club Grants**, while 73 clubs in the wider Barwon region have made sweeping changes in their operations and governance to make their clubs healthier, more welcoming and inclusive after being part of our **Healthy Sporting Environments** trial. We are also continuing to work with nine Regional Sports Assemblies to ensure that 250 clubs in regional and rural areas receive tailored support.

Smoking bans at underage sporting events will further reduce harm from smoking.



The Victorian Government tasked VicHealth with delivering an Alcohol Cultural Change Project to shift attitudes toward drunkenness among young people.



Preventing tobacco use: more people smoke-free and less harm among resistant smokers

Cigarette sales have fallen 3.4% in Australia since the introduction of world-leading plain packaging, and the **extension of smoking bans** in Victoria to train and tram platforms, public playgrounds, swimming pools and underage sporting events will reduce harm from smoking further. Next year smoking will also be phased out in all Victorian prisons. As well as continuing to support and fund the **Quit** program, VicHealth is **researching new trends** and evidence nationally and internationally to help those who find it hardest to quit.

Preventing harm from alcohol: more people actively seeking the best ways to reduce alcohol-related harm

Our **NameThatPoint** campaign exceeded all expectations in terms of exposure and engagement with young people into our drinking culture. With nearly 46,000 web visits, 140,000 views of its YouTube clips and over 1800 competition entries, the campaign asked people to name that point when clear thinking turns into more drinking. An unexpected and welcome result was that three in 10 campaign users reported drinking less alcohol as a result. The findings have shaped the second phase of the campaign.

VicHealth also joined forces with **Hello Sunday Morning** to encourage Australians to rethink their relationship with booze, and released important research with RMIT into the four **different types of drinkers** to better inform health messages. A VicHealth survey of 6000 drinkers on their attitudes towards **cider** – one of the fastest-growing alcohol categories for under 30s – has given us insights to fine tune our alcohol-harm messages.

Just how hard the task of shifting our drinking culture is was underscored by research into the impact of **alcohol advertising** during live sports broadcasts, finding half of all alcohol ads (49.5%) and fast-food ads (46%) were aired during sports programs. VicHealth also released new research on how commonly Victorians **'load up' with alcohol** before going out, between venues and after they get home.

Professor Anne Kavanagh surveyed 2334 people from 21 local government areas within 20km of the Melbourne CBD and found that it is not how close you live to a bottle shop that determines heavy drinking patterns, but the sheer number of alcohol stores in the area. In partnership with the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation (VCGLR) and the Emergency

Services Telecommunications Agency (ESTA), our launch of an online interactive map showing where the 19,000 **Victorian liquor licences** are will help local government make more informed decisions based on density concerns and potentially improve ambulance response times to alcohol-related accidents and injuries.

Improving mental wellbeing: building stronger approaches to resilience, focusing on young people

With young people from minority groups often the targets of racism, a VicHealth and University of Melbourne study entitled **'Talking Culture'**, by Dr Naomi Priest, looked at how primary school children in Melbourne aged 8 to 12 learn about racial, ethnic and cultural diversity and racism. It found that parents generally only broach the topic if their child raises it first, while teachers sometimes feel unqualified to discuss it. The study and the learnings from previous diversity projects will assist educators and parents in talking about cultural diversity.

Through our partnership with Football Federation Victoria, we empowered the football (soccer) community to respond and intervene safely when racism is seen or heard. The **Don't Stand By, Stand Up!** campaign, supported by various ambassadors and representatives from Melbourne Victory FC and Melbourne City FC (formerly Melbourne Heart), hopes to boot out subtle and overt forms of racism on and off the sports field.

VicHealth's **Arts About Us** program is also helping improve understanding of the impacts of race-based discrimination through celebrating cultural diversity, while we continue to support Indigenous arts through the **Victorian Indigenous Performing Arts Awards**.

Our entire portfolio of arts investments also grew with various collaborations, large and small, that continue to prove that the arts is a key way to increase physical health and mental wellbeing. Our funding of large-scale events got thousands moving, such as the **For You dance floor** at the National Gallery of Victoria's *Melbourne Now* exhibition which saw an attendance of 750,000 people.

VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter, Victorian Minister for Health The Hon. Mary Wooldridge MP, Our Watch Chair Natasha Stott Despoja AM and Our Watch CEO Paul Linossier.



A continued focus this year has been on eliminating the cause of violence against women by promoting equal and respectful relationships between men and women, with a critical partnership with **Our Watch** (formerly the National Foundation to Prevent Violence Against Women and their Children).

TeamUp at the Australian Open: former French pro tennis player Henri Leconte and TeamUp ambassadors hockey star Claire Messent and pro surfer Nikki van Dijk (right).



More guidance on where to focus government and community efforts will come from our joint work with The University of Melbourne and Social Research Centre on the 2013 **National Community Attitudes Towards Violence Against Women Survey**.

LOOKING AHEAD

From the obesity epidemic to binge drinking and parental fear, we have opened up important conversations about our most pressing health challenges. As we continue to build on VicHealth's 27 years of pioneering history, the next year of the *Action Agenda* goes beyond asking Victorians to eat well and do more exercise, to understanding why we're not.

Removing the barriers to better health and reducing chronic illness is a massive task, and I thank our many collaborators who are eager, like us, to take this on. As we head deeper into the *Action Agenda*, we will ensure VicHealth's legacy as a risk-taker is backed up by strong evidence that informs all our work.

I thank our outgoing Chair, Mark Birrell, for his leadership as Chair of VicHealth over the past 2 years. Mark leaves us to take up a new role as Chairman of Infrastructure Australia. He ably steered us through our first year of the *Action Agenda* and his contribution will have a lasting impact on the health of the Victorian community. Mark has ensured that VicHealth is focused and agile, strengthening its research base and modernising its governance. Professor John Catford is Chair of the VicHealth Board, transitioning from his position as Deputy Chair. Board Member Nicole Livingstone is now Deputy Chair.

I also thank the VicHealth Board and Committees for their support, encouragement and guidance.

Instrumental in supporting new approaches has been the support we have had from the Minister for Health, The Hon. David Davis MLC, and from across the Victorian Government, members of the Victorian Parliament, other government agencies and key partners.

We work in a challenging environment where change is the only constant, and the staff at VicHealth have embraced this with great enthusiasm. I thank each and every one of them for their unwavering commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of Victorians.

With the complexities of chronic disease growing and the pressure for sustainable health solutions a national priority, VicHealth's unique role in health promotion and illness prevention has never been more important. We look forward to redoubling our efforts to meet the challenge.

Jerril Rechter
Chief Executive Officer

View our *Action Agenda for Health Promotion*
www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/actionagenda



“VicHealth continues to be a voice of change and advocacy in combating violence against women. I consider them to be a vital partner in changing culture and attitudes on this most insidious issue.”

KEN LAY
Victoria Police Chief Commissioner



01 Promoting healthy eating

OUR 3-YEAR PRIORITY

More people choosing water and healthy food options.

WHY?

We all want a healthy diet for ourselves and our families. Most people know what makes up a healthy diet, but there is a gap in aspiring to eat in this way and the daily reality.

Eating a healthy balanced diet is not just down to individual choice and willpower. The environment in which we live influences our diet, from the availability of fresh fruit and vegetables to time pressures and cultural norms. All too often the healthy food choice is not the easiest choice.

WATER

VicHealth is committed to the promotion of water as the healthy drink choice.

The largest source of sugars in the Australian diet is sugar-sweetened drinks.¹ Research indicates that sugar-sweetened beverages play a significant role in overconsumption of energy, which is a key aspect driving obesity trends. In 2011, 12.4% of Victorians indicated they drink soft drink every day, a figure that is higher for males aged 25 to 34, with almost one in four drinking soft drink every day.²

VicHealth's water initiative

With nearly two-thirds of Victorians currently overweight or obese, reducing intake of excess kilojoules through drinks is one way to promote a healthier diet and improve health. VicHealth's water initiative aims to encourage a greater consumption of water by all Victorians in preference to drinks with added sugar. This initiative also aims to improve access to fresh drinking water in a range of settings across the state by undertaking research into best practice approaches to water provision for health promotion, and by testing if water fountains are accessed more when there is the inclusion of a water bottle refill tap. Research insights will inform the development of evidence-based approaches and best practice guidelines.

FUTURE FOCUS

Our social marketing campaign to influence a switch to water from sugary drinks was launched in September 2014. Victorians are being encouraged to take the H30 Challenge: swapping sugary drinks for water for 30 days. In addition, about 60 new water refill stations are being rolled out within the City of Melbourne, located in and around tram stops, at sites where there is participation in physical activity and in high traffic public spaces.

<http://h30challenge.com.au>

¹ NHMRC 2013. *Australian Dietary Guidelines: Providing the scientific evidence for healthier Australian diets.* National Health and Medical Research Council, Canberra. See www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines

² VicHealth 2012, *VicHealth Indicators Survey 2011*, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne.

VicHealth advocates the creation of environments and conditions that provide increased access to healthy food for all Victorians.

FOOD SUPPLY, ACCESS + CULTURE

VicHealth advocates the creation of environments and conditions that provide increased access to healthy food for all Victorians.

Healthy food needs to be available, accessible and affordable for all. VicHealth is committed to initiatives that increase the supply of and access to fruit and vegetables in Victoria. We envisage a Victoria that embraces healthy eating, where people value, understand and enjoy a healthy diet.

The Seed Challenge

A new approach to improving local fresh fruit and vegetable supply, access and culture

VicHealth's Seed Challenge took a radical approach to a big issue: most Victorians eat less than the recommended amount of fresh fruit and vegetables. Knowing that access to good food makes more difference than health education alone to what people eat, we aimed to foster innovation and encourage Victorians to find new ways of working together, to develop new bright ideas and use digital technology to bring them to reality. By mounting a challenge, we were able to get social entrepreneurs, designers, urban architects and people with digital expertise to really think about this problem.

This year, the two winners of the Seed Challenge won \$100,000 to roll out their initiatives. The **Open Food Network** (<http://openfoodnetwork.org/>) is creating an online marketplace for small producers, allowing farmers and suppliers to connect directly with consumers with pilots in local food hubs across Victoria. **3000acres** (www.3000acres.org) is finding ways to unlock underutilised land in Melbourne – from vacant land to unused car parks – for people to cultivate their own food. They launched their website and first community garden in February.

Modelling policy interventions to protect

Australia's food security

Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Project

There are gaps in what we know about the impacts of population growth and emerging climate and environmental challenges on regional and national level food systems. With this in mind, a joint ARC research project between VicHealth and Professor Mark Lawrence from Deakin University with additional research collaborators is using an innovative scenario modelling approach to quantify the potential impacts of environmental challenges on Australian food availability, accessibility and affordability. The project, which runs until 2015, will make a new and significant contribution to addressing sustainability challenges to Australia's future food security.

Mapping Melbourne for land capability

Building knowledge about the uses of land in Victoria

In discussions about the long-term security of food systems in Australia, researchers, environmentalists, planners and other stakeholders frequently raise concerns about the loss of some of Victoria's most productive land due to urban expansion. The loss of highly productive areas suitable for horticulture (fruit and vegetable growing) has been of particular concern.

VicHealth funded a study by the Victorian Eco-Innovation Lab (VEIL) at the University of Melbourne to improve understanding of land capability for agriculture, and initiate a system for consistent and public access to, and use of, this information. In November 2013 we released a preliminary evaluation of the project. The report will help planners and policy-makers to assess the agricultural capability of Victorian lands in proximity to Melbourne.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/land-capability

Food hubs are connecting local farmers with buyers, including cafes and restaurants.



Local food hubs

Connecting families, farms and food grown close to home

Through our Innovation Grants, VicHealth supported a 2-year demonstration project assessing the feasibility of the development of a food hub in the City of Casey. The project focused on the types of interventions required to change the scale of activity and viability of local and regional food distribution systems by considering infrastructure and systemic needs. It aimed to increase healthy eating, ensure fair prices for producers to increase the viability of local farming, and create opportunities for skill development, community interaction and new jobs. The South East Food Hub has demonstrated successful trials connecting local farmers with buyers including residential services, local restaurants and cafes, through a local distribution company and use of the Open Food Network software.

Closing the nutrition gap in Victoria

Supporting healthy eating policies for Aboriginal organisations

This year, VicHealth completed its work with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) to investigate and influence healthy eating policy and practices in Victorian Aboriginal organisations.

The project engaged a mix of metropolitan, regional and rural Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) and Aboriginal Early Childhood Services. Using a community development approach, with tailored localised health promotion resources, healthier foods and drinks were provided to staff, children, clients, community members and other visitors to these organisations.

The success and learnings from this pilot project have enabled VACCHO to continue its work to support healthy eating policy and menu development with Victorian Aboriginal organisations.

VicHealth is leading a comprehensive approach to salt reduction in Victoria.



SALT

VicHealth is forming collaborative partnerships to implement salt reduction strategies.

Salt reduction is one of the most cost-effective strategies for reducing the burden of non-communicable diseases. Victorians on average are eating high-salt diets, well above the recommended levels. VicHealth is committed to implementing salt reduction strategies that result in a 30% relative reduction in average salt intake across the Victorian population.

Strengthening the case for state action on salt reduction

Public awareness of high salt diets as a health issue is limited and the chronic nature of the exposure is normalised in Australian diets. Studies show that the Australian population intake of salt is consistently and significantly higher than recommended levels, with the latest Australian data showing mean adult daily intake around 9 grams. About three-quarters of salt intake is from processed foods that are often commonly not viewed as high in salt, including bread, cereals and spreads such as butter or margarine.

VicHealth is working in partnership with The George Institute for Global Health, the Heart Foundation (Victoria), Deakin University and the Victorian Department of Health to lead a comprehensive approach to salt reduction in Victoria including a public awareness campaign to support individual and community behaviour and attitude change.

VicHealth is committed to looking for the solutions to the challenge of obesity by working with a range of partners across diverse settings.

Multifaceted interventions are required to halt and reverse the rise in overweight and obesity in Australia.



OBESITY

VicHealth supports action to halt the rise in obesity by focusing on creating the conditions that help people to make the healthy choice, to encourage them to eat more healthy food options and less energy-dense, nutrient-poor food, and to move more every day. VicHealth is committed to looking for the solutions to the challenge of obesity by working with a range of partners across diverse settings.

Past trends and future projections of overweight and obesity

This year we released highlights from 9 years of research by world-leading obesity expert Associate Professor Anna Peeters, while she was a VicHealth research fellow (2004–13). Obesity is without a doubt one of the most significant and complicated public health emergencies we now face as a society. There is no easy fix but Assoc. Prof. Peeters and other researchers have contributed to understanding obesity in Australia, giving us more insight into how to create better strategies to combat it.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/obesity-trends

Reducing inequalities in overweight and obesity

In Australia there has been no analysis of the health implications of the unequal distribution of obesity, nor of the extent to which social inequalities in obesity may widen, nor of the potential effect of obesity prevention and management strategies on this health divide. Assoc. Prof. Peeters' continuing work with VicHealth (undertaken as part of a joint Australian Research Council Linkage Project) has focused on each of these critical questions. The research has shed light on the alarming obesity trends and modelled the extent to which obesity prevention initiatives will widen or narrow these inequalities.

FUTURE FOCUS

In addition to a number of publications, a research forum in November 2014 transferred this knowledge to policy-makers, researchers, health professionals and others interested in combating the problem.

PARTNERSHIPS

Working with the Department of Health

VicHealth continued to complement and build upon the Victorian Government's *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2011–2015* and initiatives to fight chronic disease and improve health and wellbeing.

Healthy Together Victoria, for example, involves all levels of government, peak organisations, schools, workplaces and communities to create opportunities for eating healthier and being more active. (There are a number of areas where VicHealth is aligning its work with this initiative, for example Be Active p. 28 and Victoria Walks p. 31.)

The Victorian Healthy Eating Enterprise encompasses a range of initiatives being undertaken by the Victorian Government in partnership with local government, business, industry, health professionals and communities. A new Healthy Food Charter will provide the foundation for the Enterprise and will ensure consistency of healthy eating messages across initiatives.

Working with coalitions

The Food Alliance, funded by VicHealth and hosted by Deakin University's Food Policy Unit, engages in advocacy and research into food systems and related policy recommendations. This year it established the Victorian Food System Network, which draws together individuals and organisations working in food system initiatives to ensure coordination and to amplify their impact. The Know Your Food Bowl infographic received strong media attention, and was an innovative project financed through crowd funding.

The Parents' Jury, financially supported by four key health groups, including VicHealth, is an online network of parents taking action to improve food and physical activity environments for children. Its annual Fame and Shame Awards continue to showcase the worst and best of food advertising directed at children, and its Healthy Checkouts campaign aims to increase the number of checkouts free of junk food in Australian supermarkets.

The Obesity Policy Coalition (OPC), bringing together a group of leading public health agencies, and with funding from VicHealth, continued to raise important issues about the need for policy solutions to respond to the escalating levels of obesity, particularly in children. This year the OPC was actively involved in the Project Committee for front-of-pack nutrition labelling on foods, with the June announcement that the Health Star Rating system would be implemented signifying a great outcome for consumers in being able to make healthier food choices at a glance.

This year, VicHealth supported coalitions in business planning to help them achieve viability and sustainability, in recognition of the important role they play in making healthy food choices the easy choices in Victoria.

COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION

During the year, VicHealth was represented on numerous committees, advisory bodies and working groups that shape healthy eating policy and practice in Victoria, including:

- Victorian Healthy Eating Enterprise
- Victorian Oral Health Promotion Advisory Group



“The benefits of affluence bring the bane of modern avoidable disease in their wake. As the mortality from tobacco declines we see the morbidity from obesity rising and turning into mortality. How much should we interfere? Solutions depend on data and VicHealth has a unique charter to provide this.”

DR NIGEL GRAY AO

Former Cancer Council Victoria Director

Integrated theme: New ways to promote health



Senior Advisor Alex Gyani (left) and Director Dr David Halpern of the UK's Behavioural Insights Team.

VicHealth's role has always been to push the boundaries and trial new ways to promote health – now we are pushing our own limits to how we do business.

Our job as innovators is to think about the *how*. How can we use the wealth of academic knowledge built up over 27 years in ways that are promising but unproven to make the right gains in our *Action Agenda*?

Our Innovation Office is helping us read the shifting social trends, tap in to changed business models and use rapid advances in technology to progress health promotion at the population level.

After 1 year, there are positive signs that innovative approaches are helping us transform health promotion into a social movement.

INNOVATION CHALLENGES

Connecting knowledge, networks and resources with big thinkers and bold doers

Through our Innovation Challenges we are collaborating in fresh ways – finding new opportunities to work with social innovators, digital disruptors, entrepreneurs and change-makers.

Working with The Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI), we launched our healthy eating Seed Challenge (see p. 20) in April 2013. It took a radical approach to a big issue: most Victorians eat less than the recommended amount of fresh fruit and vegetables.

The Seed Challenge has led to a crowd-funding campaign for a national local food marketplace connecting buyers to local fruit and vegetable suppliers, and projects to unlock vacant land across Melbourne to grow food.

<http://challenge.vichealth.vic.gov.au/challenges/>

Hackathons are helping young people get engaged in the design of new digital technologies to build resilience, and social campaigns are starting conversations around the same theme to improve mental and physical wellbeing.

We've been extremely encouraged by the response to our social media campaigns that have opened up debate on the place alcohol has in our lives through the NameThatPoint and No Excuse Needed campaigns (see p. 42).

LEADING THINKERS INITIATIVE

Through our international Leading Thinkers initiative we are challenging ourselves to look differently at tackling obesity.

Dr David Halpern, Director of the United Kingdom's Behavioural Insights Team, is our inaugural Leading Thinker who is working with us and other agencies tackling rising obesity levels by bringing a behavioural insights approach to Victoria.

In the year ahead, we will be going directly to the public with a deliberative forum to see how far we can push community consensus for action on obesity. We're also working closely with the sports sector to build new ways to fit physical activity into people's lives that works for individuals and communities.

Extending on our pioneering work, our goal is to test more promising ideas, scale up what works, and take innovation to the market place.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/About-VicHealth/Leading-Thinkers-initiative



“From preventing violence to enhancing sports clubs and tackling broader socioeconomic inequalities, the strength of VicHealth is its focus on understanding the problem and finding solutions, using innovative approaches.”

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR ANNA PEETERS

Head of Obesity & Population Health, Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute



“New and emerging technologies have fundamentally changed the way in which we think about the science of wellbeing. Together with VicHealth and Australia's young people and thought leaders, we are driving mental health reform and leading the world in rethinking the way in which we use technologies to build resilient communities both on and offline.”

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR JANE BURNS

CEO, Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre



Dance Republic, run by Big West Festival and supported by VicHealth's MOTION program, brought diverse communities together to participate in a fusion of intercultural and urban dance.

02 Encouraging regular physical activity

OUR 3-YEAR PRIORITY

More people physically active, participating in sport and walking.

WHY?

Less than a third of Australians are getting enough physical activity to benefit their health.¹ We can significantly improve our health by moving more and sitting less, so it's vital that we keep creating opportunities for people to build physical activity into their daily lives.

This is why VicHealth promotes participation in sport and active recreation, active travel and the arts through diverse partnerships with the sports sector, government, active travel and recreation agencies, arts organisations, workplaces and more.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Teaming up with the Australian Football League

In April this year, through a partnership with the AFL Players' Association, Collingwood captain Scott Pendlebury and Melbourne captain Nathan Jones joined fellow AFL players to promote VicHealth's **TeamUp 20 Day Challenge** – an initiative to encourage Victorians to get moving for 20 consecutive days to develop healthy habits. TeamUp users posted images of their experiences on social media and were given the chance to team up with AFL players to run The Tan or play a social basketball game.

The Challenge was part of the broader **TeamUp campaign** that was launched by VicHealth in 2013 to support Victorian adults to get active when, where and how they want. The free TeamUp app helps people join a range of sport and physical activities with others, whether they want to give it a go one afternoon a month, or turn up to play every week. The app, which is available on iPhone, Android and Facebook, has been downloaded more than 24,000 times.

A new partnership between VicHealth and the AFL's Western Bulldogs Football Club saw TeamUp promoted through their **Sons of the West men's health program**, which is designed to promote the health of men aged 18 and above, living or working in the club local government areas of Melton, Brimbank, Maribyrnong, Hobsons Bay and Wyndham. These areas experience significant social and economic disadvantage and consequent health disparities.

The free TeamUp app can be downloaded from iTunes and Google Play.

www.teamup.com.au

www.facebook.com/teamup

<https://twitter.com/teamupvic>

<http://instagram.com/teamupvic>

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012, *Australian Health Survey: first results, 2011–12*, cat. no. 4364.0.55.001, ABS, Canberra.

VicHealth promotes physical activity through sport, active travel and active recreation programs that increase opportunities for participation.

Active for Life: Increasing children's physical activity

Being active every day is important in childhood and can lay the foundations for a healthy and active life. While the benefits of an active lifestyle are compelling, getting children to move more and sit less is complex.

Released this year, VicHealth's *Active for Life* is an evidence-based resource to help better understand the challenges around children's physical activity, and inspire better practice to integrate more movement in children's daily lives.

Active for Life brings together Australian and international research to challenge current thinking and inform ways to increase children's physical activity at school, through sport, within communities and in the home, to benefit children aged 4 to 12 years. School principals and teachers, community groups, sporting associations and clubs, and state and local government officers in the areas of planning, health, education, parks, sport and recreation are encouraged to use this resource to inform action to get children more active.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/activeforlife

Be Active: Increasing physical activity in partnership with local government

Victorian residents in five local government areas are benefiting from a VicHealth and Sport and Recreation Victoria program designed to inspire people to get more physical activity into their day. The City of Greater Bendigo, City of Greater Geelong, Knox City Council, Latrobe City Council and Wodonga City Council are implementing the \$2.7 million Be Active program over 3 years. It has a particular focus on increasing physical activity participation for children, older people and families, as well as improving civic engagement through volunteering.

This year the program focused on strengthening physical activity and volunteering within key council policies, strategies and plans; building supportive partnerships; initiatives to increase physical activity, including walking, active transport and incidental activity through school, workplace and community settings; and initiatives that engage local volunteers.

Be Active is being run in tandem with the State Government's Healthy Together Victoria program. VicHealth has engaged the Centre of Excellence in Intervention and Prevention Science (CEIPS) to undertake an evaluation of Be Active.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/beactive

Selandra Rise (City of Casey)

In a unique collaboration between developer Stockland, the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA), the City of Casey, the Metropolitan Planning Authority (formerly the Growth Areas Authority) and VicHealth, healthy urban design is being embedded in Selandra Rise, a residential property development in Melbourne's south-eastern Local Government Area of Casey. Now in its third year of construction, the master plan for Selandra Rise has a particular focus on creating a healthy and engaged community by promoting physical activity and active transport, and encouraging social interaction. It's a first for Australia in terms of embedding health promotion planning and solutions from conception to construction. The development includes diverse and affordable housing, interconnected walking tracks, bike paths and a neighbourhood centre.

Dr Cecily Maller, a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Design (RMIT University) and the recipient of a VicHealth Research Practice Fellowship in Community Development and Residential Planning (2010–15), is studying the progress of Selandra Rise over 5 years to find out whether incorporating health into urban planning makes a difference for its residents, and also what this means for urban design and planning policy.

VicHealth has supported government planners to make health the first consideration in new housing developments and we hope Selandra Rise will set the benchmark.

Active Cities initiative: 100 Ways to Move It Melbourne

In May and June this year, VicHealth worked in partnership with the City of Melbourne and the Victorian Department of Health to host a range of exciting activities designed to get Melbourne CBD workers moving more before, during and after work, as part of the 100 Ways to Move It Melbourne campaign. Program highlights included yoga, Zumba, retro sports (hula hooping, elastics), an outdoor gymnasium and silent disco, and free lunchtime dance parties with healthy lunches. People were also encouraged to take the stairs instead of the lift, get off the tram a few stops early, bike into work – anything to move more.

www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/100ways

VicHealth's *Active for Life* resource is inspiring better practice to integrate more movement in children's daily lives.



With the right support, VicHealth believes that all community sports clubs have the potential to become healthier and more welcoming.



MOTION: Making art that moves people

This year, five arts and cultural organisations have been funded through our MOTION program. They are creating an exciting range of arts participation opportunities to get people more physically active in a fun and unique way. VicHealth created MOTION to promote the health benefits of arts activities that increase physical activity, build social connection and enhance mental wellbeing. The program places a strong emphasis on strategic partnerships and creating models of arts participation that can be replicated and sustained into the future.

An evaluation of MOTION estimates that events and activities (May 2013 to June 2014) resulted in 27,676 participants.

See also page 52 for other arts projects that have contributed to the physical activity and mental wellbeing of Victorians by getting more people up and moving.

Projects/organisations funded this year:

- **The Art of Play, Women's Circus** (delivered in the City of Maribyrnong, City of Brimbank and City of Melbourne)
- **Art Pumping Action, The Village Festival** (delivered in Horsham Rural City, City of Yarra, Mount Alexander Shire and Surf Coast Shire)
- **Dance Republic, Big West Festival** (delivered in the City of Maribyrnong, City of Brimbank and Wyndham City)
- **The Alice Project, Ausdance Victoria** (delivered in Glenelg Shire, Latrobe City and East Gippsland Shire)
- **The Ripple Effect, Arts Access Victoria** (delivered in the City of Port Phillip, City of Maribyrnong, City of Melbourne, City of Wodonga, City of Greater Bendigo, Benalla Rural City, Frankston City and City of Yarra)

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/motion

SPORT

Healthy Sporting Environments program

VicHealth's Healthy Sporting Environments program supports the development of sustainable policies in rural and regional sporting clubs. This pioneering program is giving us a better understanding of how health promotion can be weaved through grassroots sports clubs.

The program was initially implemented as a pilot program in 73 clubs by Leisure Networks in the local government areas of the wider Barwon region. Published this year, the evaluation of the pilot project includes lots of ideas for local action: www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/hsedp-evaluation

This year, we continued to work with nine Regional Sports Assemblies to ensure that 250 clubs in regional and rural areas throughout Victoria receive tailored support to improve their club environments in the areas of: responsible use of alcohol; healthy eating; reduced tobacco use; inclusion, safety and support; injury prevention and management; and UV protection.

With the right support, we believe that all community sports clubs have the potential to become healthier, more welcoming places through good governance, leadership, and a culture that supports health and wellbeing.

State Sporting Association Participation Program

Through this VicHealth program, almost \$13.7 million is being invested in 31 State Sporting Associations over 4 years (2011–15) to enable organisational and cultural change at a state level to make sport more welcoming and inclusive for all Victorians.

These organisations are actively working to create safe, accessible, inclusive and equitable sporting environments to increase participation of particular target groups, including women and girls, Aboriginal Victorians, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and people with a disability.

With the program now in its fourth and final year, progress has been encouraging with organisations embedding sustainable change and actively encouraging participation in community sport. Implementation has been guided by VicHealth's *Everyone Wins* framework, which underpins the program.

More than 32,000 students from over 300 primary schools took part in VicHealth's annual Walk to School campaign.

Active Club Grants

For over 27 years, VicHealth has provided small grants to thousands of community sport and active recreation clubs and organisations across Victoria. This year, VicHealth's Active Club Grants assisted 742 clubs, with a combined total of 212,000 members, to tackle two major barriers that prevent people from taking part in sport and active recreation – cost and injury. These grants, of up to \$3000 each, aim to make it a little easier for community sporting clubs to encourage people to join their club, fund equipment and help them improve the safety of those taking part. This ultimately supports more people to be active through participating in club sport.

Sport and recreation spatial project

As part of a VicHealth research practice fellowship in physical activity, we have been working collaboratively with a range of State Sporting Associations, government, Vicsport and university organisations to support the future planning for seven Victorian sports.

Dr Rochelle Eime, joint VicHealth Research Practice Fellow (Physical Activity, 2011–15) at Federation University and Victoria University is playing a lead role.

Data from over 2.6 million Victorian sport participant records has been captured in an online GIS mapping tool developed to better understand participation levels and trends, influences on participation, the health benefits of sport participation, and the link between facilities and participation.

www.sportandrecreationsspatial.com.au

Indigenous Surfing Program

VicHealth continued to support Surfing Victoria's Indigenous Surfing Program, which has developed over time to become a vehicle for community engagement activities that increase the social and economic participation of Indigenous Victorians. Over the past 3 years, the program has focused on providing young Aboriginal men and women with access to education, training and employment opportunities related to the surfing industry. The establishment of regional surf competitions and Surf Development Squads have created a clear pathway for progression in the sport.

VicHealth also supported the Australian Indigenous Surfing Titles in 2014.

An evaluation of the program (between 2012 and June 2014) by Storyscape illustrates Surfing Victoria's successful approach of using sport as a vehicle for engagement. It identifies five pillars that have enabled the success of the program, which have been shared with other sports aiming to engage with Indigenous communities in Victoria.

In 2014–15, Surfing Victoria will further develop the Indigenous Surfing Program and, with VicHealth's support, continue to play a lead role in providing advice and support to a range of State Sporting Associations.

WALKING

Walk to School 2013

VicHealth's annual Walk to School campaign encourages Victorian primary school students to walk to and from school more often, building healthy habits for life. In 2013, Walk to School took place in November and more than 32,000 students from more than 300 primary schools took part in the event – almost three times as many students as the year before.

In 2013, for the first time, we worked in partnership with and funded 51 local councils across the state. Participating councils promoted Walk to School in their local communities, worked with local primary schools, and ran activities tailored to their environment.

The campaign, now in its eighth year, highlights the benefits of walking to and from school for primary school aged children, such as improving fitness, developing social skills, building confidence and learning about road safety.

The free interactive Walk to School app can be downloaded from iTunes and Google Play.

www.walktoschool.vic.gov.au

A comparison study of children's independent mobility in England and Australia

To coincide with Walk to School in 2013, VicHealth released research from Deakin University showing that Australian parents of 10 to 12-year-olds are more hesitant to allow their children to walk home from school alone than their British counterparts. The research, led by Dr Alison Carver, compared 784 primary school children and 455 secondary school children in rural and metro areas of Britain and Victoria. The paper was published in international journal *Children's Geographies*.

We are investigating the role that parental fear plays in shaping children's independence and physical activity.



Otis Carey takes out the 2014 Australian Indigenous Surfing Titles at Bells Beach, an event hosted by Surfing Victoria and supported by VicHealth.



Stepping Out: Encouraging children to walk to school

VicHealth also published a study by the University of Melbourne and VicHealth that aimed to increase our understanding of how children negotiate independent travel. The 2-year *Stepping Out* study by Dr Lisa Gibbs from the School of Population and Global Health revealed that the final years of primary school are critical for developing children's confidence and independence to travel without their parents in their communities. The research supports finding ways to encourage children to walk independently and foster health and wellbeing.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/stepping-out

Parental fear research

VicHealth is currently working with La Trobe University and the Parenting Research Centre on a 3-year study (2012–15) into parental fear – the first of its kind in Australia. This research will investigate the role that parental fear plays in shaping children's independence and physical activity. To date, it has involved discussion groups with children and parents and a large statewide survey of more than 2000 parents of children aged 9 to 15 years. The final year of the project will involve engaging with experts and identifying initiatives to help parents overcome fears about children walking and riding to and from school and within their neighbourhood.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/parentalfear

Victoria Walks

VicHealth continued its support of Victoria Walks, the peak walking promotion body in Victoria. Victoria Walks focuses on encouraging walking for transport, leisure, recreation and fitness to increase children and young people's activity, older people's participation and family engagement.

This year, Victoria Walks released new online resources that promote walking and walkability, including Smart Steps resources for councils, schools and families. Recently, Victoria Walks released a *Guide to Measuring Walking* and a comprehensive study, in partnership with the Council on the Ageing (COTA), on the barriers and enablers for seniors' (aged 60+) walking for transport and recreation.

A partnership between VicHealth, Victoria Walks and the Department of Health is supporting walking as part of the Victorian Government's Healthy Together Victoria program.

www.victoriawalks.org.au

Reducing prolonged sitting in the workplace

Professor David Dunstan from Baker IDI Heart & Diabetes Institute is leading the research team working with the Australian Government Department of Human Services to design, implement and evaluate organisational and system level strategies for reducing prolonged sitting in office workers in 16 Smart Centres in metropolitan Melbourne and Geelong.

This work is part of VicHealth's \$3 million Creating Healthy Workplaces program, which is funding five large-scale pilot projects in Victorian workplaces to develop and test solutions for promoting good health and preventing chronic disease.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/workplace

COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION

During the year, VicHealth was represented on numerous committees, advisory bodies and working groups that shape physical activity policy and practice in Victoria and nationally, including:

- Centre of Research Excellence in Healthy Liveable Communities Advisory Group
- La Trobe Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation RFA Advisory Board
- NoGAPS National Sports Injury Strategy
- Ride2School Advisory Committee
- Victorian Pedestrian Advisory Council
- Victorian School Sport Council

Integrated theme: Knowledge for health



Knowledge makes us sharper and focuses our research efforts on where we can make the most difference in our *Action Agenda*.

VicHealth strives to be an international leader in the production and dissemination of cutting-edge health promotion research.

Research complements all of our health promotion investments. We support a mix of strategic research, investigator-led research and evaluation research to build evidence for health promotion interventions. We explore opportunities for collaborative research investments to support major Victorian preventative and health promotion initiatives, and we act as an industry partner to support applicants for Australian Research Council Linkage Grants and National Health & Medical Research Council Partnership Grants.

This year, we have strengthened our ways of working across the health sector to research, evaluate and build internal and external capacity to meet our most pressing health challenges.

We have partnered with policy experts and researchers to ask clearly framed questions and enhanced the rigour of the answers.

We now have a much sharper focus on where to target investments to get the best results, and a shared understanding among our internal and external stakeholders on how best to work with us to drive better health outcomes.

Across our five strategic imperatives we have conducted evidence reviews to shape the work and put the academic evidence into real policy and practice. And we have sharpened our focus on evaluation. We are now much clearer about what we expect to change in 3 years and 10 years so that we can better track our progress and the benefits of our investments.

We are also preparing for the 2015 VicHealth Indicators Survey – a Victorian community wellbeing survey that focuses on a range of key health and wellbeing issues. It is a critical piece of work that informs public health planning and complements other population health surveys such as the State Government's *Victorian Population Health Survey*.



“VicHealth’s research investments and thought-provoking projects continue to raise awareness of discrimination and its associated health costs, as well as provide some of the intelligence required to reduce it.”

KATE JENKINS

Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commissioner

This year’s research highlights include:

- **Australian’s attitudes to violence against women (p. 51)**
Findings from the 2013 National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey developed by VicHealth in partnership with The University of Melbourne, the Social Research Centre and experts across Australia.
- **Past trends and future projections of overweight and obesity (p. 22)**
Research by world-leading obesity expert Associate Professor Anna Peeters.
- **Modelling policy interventions to protect Australia’s food security (p. 20)**
A joint Australian Research Council project between VicHealth and Professor Mark Lawrence from Deakin University.
- **Evaluating the impact of incorporating health into urban planning (p. 28)**
Dr Cecily Maller’s 5-year research fellowship examining the progress of Selandra Rise and how urban planning and the design of the built environment are linked with residential community health.

- **Parental fear research (p. 31)**
3-year study by La Trobe University and the Parenting Research Centre to investigate the role that parental fear plays in shaping children’s independence and physical activity.
- **Snapshot of Victoria’s alcohol culture (p. 42)**
Pioneering research examining Victoria’s alcohol culture, including the acceptability of drunkenness across a range of social situations and contexts.
- **Drinking-related lifestyles (p. 43)**
RMIT University’s Associate Professor Mike Reid’s exploration of the role alcohol plays in Victorians’ lives.
- **Understanding and reducing alcohol-related harm among urban youth (p. 45)**
Research by Turning Point’s Dr Sarah MacLean identifying how young adults’ drinking patterns and attitudes vary across Melbourne.
- **Children’s exposure to alcohol advertisements (p. 45)**
The nature of alcohol and junk food advertising and promotion through sport on broadcast television in Victoria by La Trobe University’s Associate Professor Matthew Nicholson.



“VicHealth has been at the forefront of raising awareness about the health hazards of sitting by supporting researchers like myself and through health promotion initiatives in the workplace that encourage workers to sit less and move more.”

PROFESSOR DAVID DUNSTAN

Head, Physical Activity, Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute

VicHealth supports smoke-free initiatives as part of a raft of measures to reduce tobacco uptake and consumption.

03 Preventing tobacco use



OUR 3-YEAR PRIORITY

More people living smoke-free and less harm among resistant smokers.

WHY?

Tobacco smoking is still the leading single preventable cause of disease and death in Victoria.

Victoria has been a leader in tobacco control for many years and much of this achievement has been borne out of the longstanding partnership between VicHealth and the Victorian Government to support the activities of the Quit program in tobacco control.

Since the *Tobacco Act* was introduced to Victoria in 1987, smoking rates have dropped to 13.3%; however, every year, smoking causes 4000 preventable deaths in Victoria and costs \$5 billion.

SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENTS

Smoke-free initiatives

VicHealth supports smoke-free initiatives as part of a raft of measures to reduce tobacco uptake and consumption across the board, including price, public education and controls on the marketing and visibility of cigarettes and smoking.

Smoke-free areas have multiple benefits for the community. They ensure clean air can be enjoyed by everyone; they reduce young people's exposure to modelling of smoking behaviour; they support community norms against smoking around others; and they also help people who have quit smoking to stay on track.

This year, the Victorian Government banned smoking on train and tram platforms as well as within 10 metres of outdoor public children's playground equipment, skate parks and sporting venues during organised underage sporting events, and outdoor areas at public swimming pools.

By 2015, smoking will be phased out among staff and inmates in Victoria's prisons.

Parents support smoke-free dining

Community support for smoking bans continued to grow.

VicHealth has been involved in discussions with the Victorian Government and various other groups about smoke-free outdoor dining areas.

Results of a VicHealth poll of 1000 Victorian parents with children aged under-17 showed the majority (92%) of smoking and non-smoking parents agree that smokers should not be allowed to light up wherever they want. The VicHealth community attitudes survey was conducted in 2012 and released in August 2014 in light of a State Government announcement to extend smoking bans around Victoria and investigate smoke-free outdoor dining as an option. It shows community support for smoke-free outdoor areas, particularly to protect children from exposure to cigarettes.

Our collective efforts have played a huge part in the dramatic reduction in the Victorian smoking rate.

Timeline of recent smoke-free legislation changes in Victoria

- Covered areas of train platforms, tram shelters and bus shelters (2006)
- Underage music/dance events (2006)
- Enclosed workplaces (2006) and licensed premises (2007)
- Enclosed outdoor dining or drinking areas [with a roof] (2007)
- Motor vehicles if a person aged under 18 years is present (2010)
- Patrolled beaches (2012)
- Outdoor public playgrounds (2014)
- Public swimming pools, sea baths, skate parks and children's sporting events (2014)
- All areas of railway stations and raised platform tram stops (2014)
- Childcare centres, kindergartens (or preschools) and primary and secondary schools (as of 30 June 2015)
- Within 4m of an entrance to children's indoor play centres, and public hospitals and registered community health centres and certain Victorian Government buildings (as of 30 June 2015)
- State prisons (as of 1 July 2015)

Victorian Universities Tobacco-Free Initiative

This year, many Victorian universities went smoke-free in an extraordinary show of voluntary health promotion activity across the state. And Deakin University has taken on the task of getting every university in the state 100% smoke-free over the next 12 months. This marks the first time an entire state's university institutions have come together to voluntarily ban smoking.

All Victorians should be proud of the leadership our universities have taken to start removing tobacco from their campuses.

This year, the Victorian Government banned smoking on train and tram platforms.



There is growing community support for a smoking ban in outdoor dining areas.



PUBLIC EDUCATION + SMOKING CESSATION

Preventing uptake and supporting people to quit smoking remains VicHealth's primary strategy. Our collective efforts, in partnership with organisations such as Quit Victoria, Cancer Council Victoria, the Heart Foundation (Victoria) and local, state and Commonwealth governments, have played a huge part in the dramatic reduction in the Victorian smoking rate.

Our commitment to whole-of-population, established tobacco control initiatives is paramount. We continue to be a key partner of the Victorian Government and a major funder of the Quit program.

Smoking rates in Victoria at record low

The impact of Australia's comprehensive approach to tobacco control including plain packaging (introduced to law in 2012), continued tobacco tax increases and social marketing is clear. Data from the Australian National Drug Strategy Household Survey indicates a record decline in the prevalence of smoking between 2010 and 2013. Figures released by the Federal Treasury this year show 3.4% fewer cigarettes were sold last year in Australia than in 2012.

The most recent data from the Victorian Smoking and Health population landline phone survey shows that in 2012, 13.3% of Victorian adults regularly smoked. While regular smoking rates (daily or weekly) dropped to 13.3% in 2012, daily smoking rates fell to 11.7%. The prevalence of regular smoking declined most rapidly amongst the most disadvantaged Victorians between 2005 and 2012, reversing a trend in previous years for smoking rates to decline fastest amongst Victoria's most advantaged. More Victorian smokers want to quit and more are quitting successfully. Fewer young people are taking up the habit than ever before. These increases reflect a longstanding commitment to comprehensive tobacco control programs.

FUTURE FOCUS

Exploring harm reduction options

While proven approaches must remain at the forefront of tobacco control in Victoria, we also need to explore new and innovative approaches. Tobacco harm reduction is one of the areas where further research and discussion is needed.

In July 2014, VicHealth brought together leading Australian and international experts at a Tobacco Harm Reduction Forum in Melbourne to share research and policy experiences from overseas and reflect on current and potential future harm reduction policy responses, including electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) in Australia. While ENDS are relatively new, there are well established markets in the USA and Europe.

VicHealth will continue the discussion about tobacco harm reduction within Australia, but VicHealth's primary focus in the area of tobacco will continue to be investing in those existing proven and evidenced-based approaches that have been so successful in reducing smoking prevalence in Victoria.

COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION

During the year, VicHealth was represented on numerous committees, advisory bodies and working groups that shape tobacco policy and practice in Victoria and nationally, including:

- Quit Victoria Steering Committee
- Justice Health Ministerial Advisory Committee
- Smoking and Disadvantage Network
- Smoke Free Prisons Project Health Reference Group

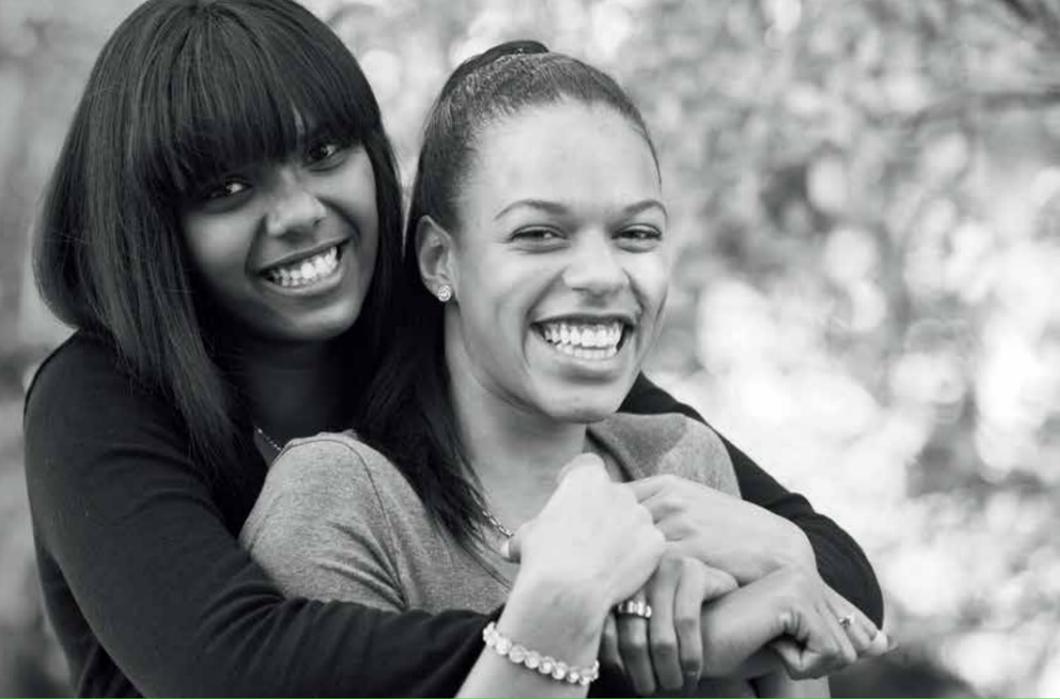


“VicHealth has a fine tradition in thought leadership and innovation. It is always among the first to identify challenging emerging issues; to form the necessary strategic partnerships; and to invest wisely in approaches to developing and sustaining the field.”

PROFESSOR DAVID HILL AO
Cancer Council Victoria Honorary Associate

Integrated theme: Promoting equity

Everyone should have a fair opportunity to attain their full health potential.



Health equity is the notion that everyone should have a fair opportunity to attain their full health potential and that no one should be disadvantaged from achieving this potential if it can be avoided.

VicHealth funds research and community-based programs to tackle health inequities. To meet the needs of population groups experiencing health inequities our investments have included work in helping to reduce race-based discrimination, supporting Indigenous arts organisations and through major programs such as the State Sporting Association Participation Program.

Other work to address health inequities has aimed to influence the socioeconomic and political context by challenging dominant societal norms and values in relation to gender in order to prevent violence against women.

What do we know?

People who live in the most disadvantaged suburbs of major cities or in rural areas of Australia are likely to die earlier and have poorer health than the rest of the population.¹ Indigenous people of Australia die at twice the rate of all Australians and have a life expectancy that is between 10 and 12 years less than non-Indigenous people.² Victorians with a disability are more likely to report poor health than those without a disability. Those from low-income households are more likely to suffer lower health levels than people from higher-income households.³

Significantly, these health inequities reflect persistent social inequities. By reframing the problem of the growing burden of chronic disease as a social problem, we are building a deeper understanding of this crucial fact. Where are we making things better and for whom, and how do we close the health gaps?

¹ AIHW 2010, *Australia's Health 2010: in brief*, Cat. no. AUS 126, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra.

² As above.

³ Turrell G, Stanley L, de Looper M & Oldenburg B 2006, *Health inequalities in Australia: morbidity, health behaviours, risk factors and health service use*, Cat. no. PHE 72, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra.



“VicHealth continues to push the envelope. It is a world-class leader in demonstrating how innovative investments in the social determinants of health can move the needle on health promotion and health equity.”

ICHIRO KAWACHI

Professor of Social Epidemiology, and Chair of the Social & Behavioral Sciences Department, Harvard University

FAIR FOUNDATIONS

VicHealth's *Action Agenda* outlines our ongoing commitment to health equity. To ensure that we achieve a balance in meeting the needs of groups experiencing health inequities and addressing the most upstream determinants of health inequity, we have adapted and applied the work of the WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health and produced an action-oriented framework to guide health promotion. *Fair Foundations: The VicHealth framework for health equity* was released in October 2013. It outlines and describes the social determinants of health inequities, and provides practical entry points for action.

The Framework is giving us clarity about what we can do in relation to our five strategic imperatives to improve health equity and close the gap in health outcomes.

An evaluation is examining the external uptake and use of the Framework alongside an internal evaluation of the integration of health equity across VicHealth's program, policy, research, evaluation and communications activities.

A range of other resources will be published in 2015, including a suite of evidence reviews, using *Fair Foundations* as a guide.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/fairfoundations

ENABLING HEALTH

While we know that the overall health of people with a disability is much worse than that of the general population, people with a disability have not been prioritised in the same way as other population groups experiencing inequity.

To help address this, this year we released *Enabling Health*, an evidence-based resource that provides people who work across the disability sector with relevant information and guidance on action to improve the health of Australians with a disability.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/enabling-health

LEVELLING THE PLAYING FIELD

The August 2013 edition of the *VicHealth Letter* (Issue No. 37) explores VicHealth's work in health equity in more detail, and features interviews with leading thought leaders on this topic, Professor Ichiro Kawachi (see opposite) and Professor Sir Michael Marmot, Chair of the WHO's Commission on Social Determinants of Health.

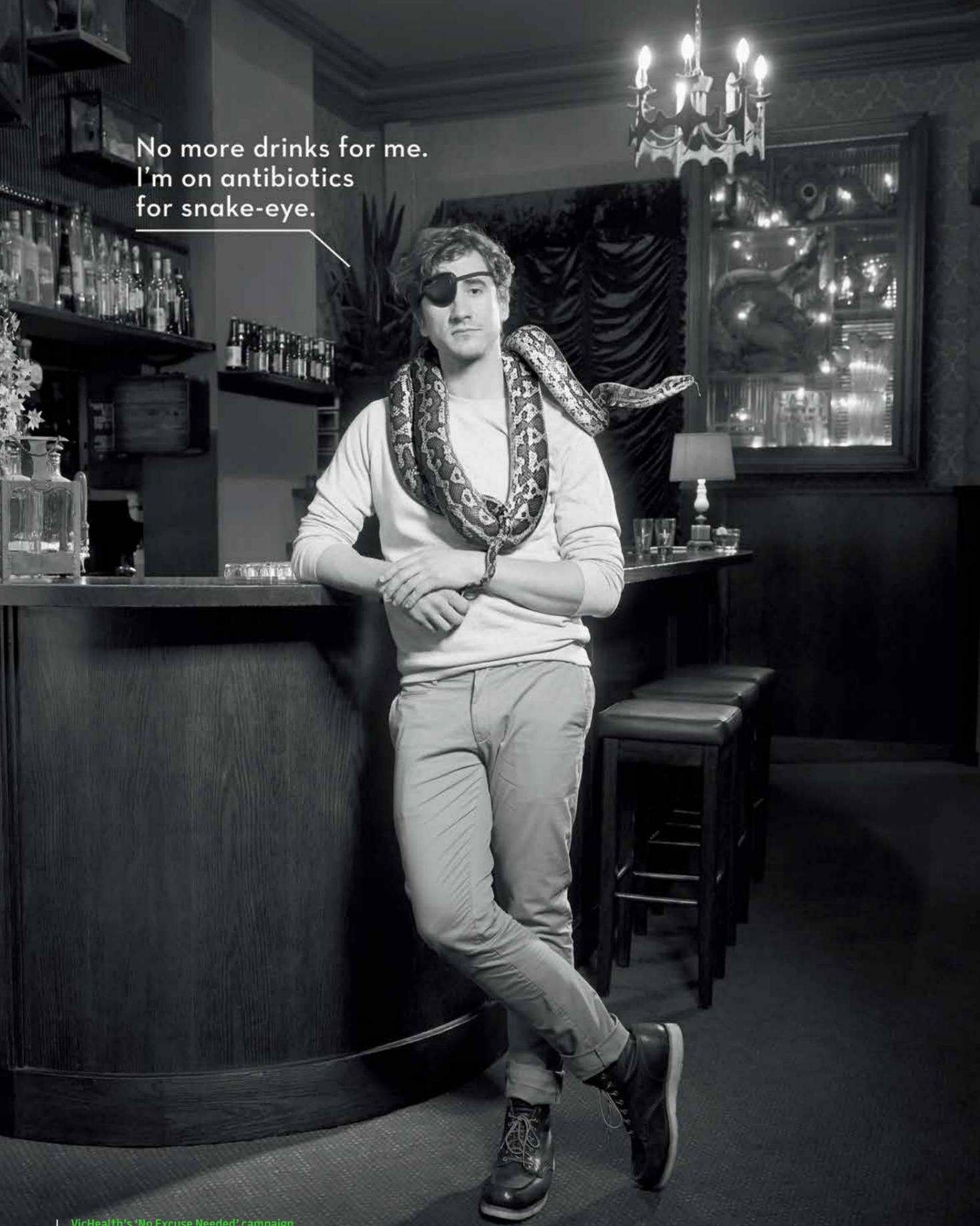
www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/vichealthletter



“The Rumbalara Football Netball Club's partnership with VicHealth harnesses the power of empowerment and sport, linked to culture and spirituality. It makes a credible and valued contribution to the collective wellbeing of Aboriginal people and our broader society.”

PAUL BRIGGS OAM

President of the Rumbalara Football Netball Club



No more drinks for me.
I'm on antibiotics
for snake-eye.

VicHealth's 'No Excuse Needed' campaign highlights the exaggerated excuses used for not having a drink.

You don't need an excuse.

Join the 61% of young Victorians who don't drink to get drunk.

04 Preventing harm from alcohol

OUR 3-YEAR PRIORITY

More people actively seeking the best ways to reduce alcohol-related harm.

WHY?

Alcohol is one of the top 10 avoidable causes of disease and death in Victoria.¹ The negative impacts of alcohol on individual Victorians, their families and the broader community is estimated to cost \$4.3 billion every year.²

Alcohol-related harm is a significant preventable health issue in Victoria. Each day, alcohol causes 15 deaths and hospitalises 430 Australians. This equates to 5,554 deaths and 157,132 hospitalisations caused by alcohol each year.³ Alcohol also causes a range of social problems that affect the drinker and those around them.

Alcohol-fuelled violence has been a hot topic for years, but lately the public debate has shifted to the underlying Australian drinking culture at the heart of this issue.

ENABLING A CULTURE THAT ENCOURAGES MODERATE DRINKING

Over the years, VicHealth has made a substantial contribution to alcohol culture change through long-term funding of programs such as Good Sports, and by investing in our own innovative programs such as Healthy Sporting Environments and Creating Healthy Workplaces.

Due to these successes, the Victorian Government tasked VicHealth with delivering a \$2.6 million Alcohol Cultural Change Project that aims to shift attitudes toward drunkenness among young people aged 16 to 29, as part of the Victorian Government's *Reducing the Alcohol and Drug toll: Victoria's plan 2013-2017*.

Our approach has been informed by four key insights:

- alcohol causes harm across our community, especially among young people
- most social situations involve alcohol consumption – and alcohol consumption is broadly accepted
- Australia is a society in which many people are tolerant of intoxication and drunkenness
- while people consider alcohol misuse to be a problem, most are personally comfortable with their own drinking.

Building upon this, VicHealth has developed two phases of campaign activity to drive the attitudinal change we need to see if Victoria is to have a more moderate drinking culture.

¹ Department of Human Services 2005, *Victorian Burden of Disease Study: mortality and morbidity 2001*, Public Health Group, Department of Human Services, State Government of Victoria, Melbourne.

² Victorian Auditor-General's Office 2012, *Effectiveness of justice strategies in preventing and reducing alcohol-related harm*, Victorian Auditor-General's Office, Melbourne.

³ Gao C, Ogeil RP & Lloyd B 2014, *Alcohol's burden of disease in Australia*, Foundation for Alcohol Research & Education (FARE) and VicHealth in collaboration with Turning Point, Canberra.

The Alcohol Culture Change Project is helping young people shape a shared vision of a Victoria where excess alcohol isn't integral to our celebrations.

'NameThatPoint' campaign

In the past, efforts to reduce excessive alcohol consumption in Australia have primarily focused on negative messaging about behaviour and resulting harms. This year VicHealth adopted a new approach, creating NameThatPoint, an online campaign to encourage young people to engage in a conversation about Victoria's alcohol culture.

Young Victorians perceive intoxication as acceptable behaviour because they believe most of their peers drink the same or more than they do. However, this isn't the case and this misperception creates a drinking culture where moderation gives way to excess.

The Alcohol Culture Change Project offers a valuable opportunity to take a positive approach to acknowledge the unease about how alcohol is used in Victoria, and to harness that concern to help young people shape a shared vision of a Victoria where excess alcohol isn't integral to our celebrations.

Supported by statewide advertising, NameThatPoint ran from December 2013 to April 2014. The campaign asked people to name that point when clear thinking turns into more drinking. It was hugely successful, with nearly 46,000 unique visitors to the website (20,735 return visitors), over 140,000 YouTube views and over 1800 competition entries.

An evaluation of the campaign showed that it had a positive influence on the majority of people who took part. It successfully prompted many people to think about Victoria's drinking culture, their own drinking behaviour, and the drinking behaviour of those around them.

A snapshot of Victoria's alcohol culture

Supporting the NameThatPoint and No Excuse Needed campaigns is VicHealth's pioneering research examining Victoria's alcohol culture, including the acceptability of drunkenness across a range of social situations and contexts.

In a research first, this study used a behavioural definition of drunkenness, 'losing your balance', and asked Victorians how often it would be acceptable to get to this level of drunkenness at a pub, bar or club, sporting event or party at a friend's house.

Generally, young Victorians aged 16 to 29 were more likely to agree that it was acceptable to get drunk in these places compared to those aged 30 or older. When asked whether they agreed with the statement, 'on occasions when I am drinking, I know I'll probably get drunk', 37% of young Victorian drinkers agreed, compared to just 9% of those aged 30 or older. However, this also indicates that a majority of those aged 16 to 29 (61%) do not intend to get drunk when drinking.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/alcoholculturalchange

FUTURE FOCUS

'No Excuse Needed' campaign

Insights from NameThatPoint informed the development of a statewide social marketing campaign, No Excuse Needed. Launched in September 2014, it uses a positively framed approach to empower young Victorians aged 16–29 to moderate their drinking by challenging the perception that their peers are drinking heavily. By highlighting the exaggerated excuses used for not having a drink, we can begin to shape a new norm where drinking is not expected in all situations and it's 'ok to say no'.

The campaign features in cinemas, at tram and bus stops, through posters in bars and clubs, and online advertising.

Official campaign supporters include the Australian Drug Foundation, Turning Point, Ambulance Victoria, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, Hello Sunday Morning and FebFast.

www.noexcuseneeded.com.au

The NameThatPoint campaign encouraged young Victorians to engage in a conversation about Victoria's alcohol culture.



Thousands of Australians are re-thinking their relationship with alcohol.



Drinking-related lifestyles: exploring the role of alcohol in Victorians' lives

This VicHealth-funded research informed our alcohol cultural change project with the State Government (see pp. 41–42). Led by RMIT University's Associate Professor Mike Reid, the research found that drinking is so culturally entrenched that we regularly use it as a way of expressing our values and beliefs. Four key 'drinking identities' emerged from the research, defined according to their acceptance of the prevalence of alcohol across society and influences on their drinking behaviour.

The research includes recommendations on how best to target responsible drinking messages to each type, and how to address Australia's heavy drinking culture, such as challenging the social acceptability of getting drunk and promoting the social acceptability of not drinking or drinking in moderation.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/drinking-lifestyles

Attitudes of Australian cider drinkers

In response to the rapid growth in popularity of cider, VicHealth conducted an online survey of 6,000 Australians to understand why cider is becoming the drink of choice for many Australians. Cider is one of the fastest growing alcohol categories in Australia, with the volume of cider available on the market increasing by 30% in 2011 alone. The resulting research, published in January 2014, uncovered valuable data on why cider drinkers prefer the beverage over others, who is drinking it, whether there is a perception that it is healthier than other types of alcohol, and if it is being consumed in excess.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/cider

Hello Sunday Morning

This year VicHealth joined forces with Hello Sunday Morning (HSM) to boost Victorian participation in this initiative that encourages Victorians to press pause on their drinking. HSM has helped thousands of Australians re-think their relationship with alcohol – without judgement. This partnership offers more Victorians a great way to challenge the notion that you need to get drunk to have a good night out and is part of a range of measures to reduce alcohol harm in the community.

- With VicHealth's support, HSM increased the number of Victorians participating in their program from 825 to almost 4,979 in under 18 months.
- During the same period, web traffic to HSM increased from 6,281 to 10,659 visitors on average per month.
- From this investment, HSM also launched a premium service, giving HSMers greater control of their profiles for a small fee. This revenue will help HSM to continue to drive reductions in the amount of alcohol Victorians drink over the long term in a sustainable way.

Concerning research into 'preloading'

This year, VicHealth research from a survey of 2,000 Victorians showed that drinking alcohol before, during and after going to licensed premises (pre, side and backloading) was associated with risky drinking and reporting alcohol-related harm. One in 10 people who completed the survey reported doing all three. Australian research shows that preloading is associated with aggressive behaviour, alcohol-related accidents and injuries and driving under the influence. The data used for this analysis was funded by the Victorian Law Enforcement Drug Fund (VLEDF) and commissioned by the Victorian Department of Justice.

VicHealth focuses its efforts to prevent harm from alcohol within settings that ‘capture’ a large proportion of the population in health promotion activities, such as workplaces and sports clubs.

INFLUENCING SETTINGS TO ADOPT POLICIES + PRACTICES THAT PREVENT + RESPOND TO ALCOHOL PROBLEMS

VicHealth focuses its efforts to prevent harm from alcohol within settings that ‘capture’ a large proportion of the population in health promotion activities, such as workplaces and sports clubs.

We work in partnership to promote effective interventions that enable all Victorians to take responsibility for alcohol harm reduction.

AFL and alcohol in community football

We are concluding our work with AFL Victoria on a cultural-change program to address risky drinking and related harms in community football. This program has raised the profile of responsible alcohol management in community football, and tested alcohol harm reduction interventions, such as the sale of only mid-strength alcohol on Grand Final days in four regional football leagues. This mid-strength alcohol policy led to approximately one-third of the drinking crowd reporting that they would drink less alcohol while the trial was in operation.

Good Sports program

Good Sports, an initiative of the Australian Drug Foundation, supports sporting clubs to manage alcohol responsibly and reduce alcohol-related problems. The program receives the majority of its Victorian funding from VicHealth. We are proud to have been supporting this program for more than a decade.

www.goodsports.com.au

Reducing alcohol-related harm in the workplace

LeeJenn Health Consultants, the National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction and South East Business Networks are working with the Victorian manufacturing industry to develop new and innovative approaches to reducing alcohol-related harm in the workplace. This work is part of VicHealth’s \$3 million Creating Healthy Workplaces program, which is funding five large-scale pilot projects in Victorian workplaces to develop and test solutions for promoting good health and preventing chronic disease.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/workplace

ENABLING HEALTHY PUBLIC POLICY TO FOSTER SAFER DRINKING BEHAVIOURS

For many years, VicHealth has helped shape alcohol policy and practice in Victoria and nationally. This year, we continued to be a voice in debates around alcohol and support programs that promote responsible drinking.

Putting Victoria’s liquor licences on the map

Councils throughout Victoria are now better placed to improve their planning around liquor licensing. A powerful online tool provides decision-makers and the community with information at a glance about licence density, and has the potential to improve ambulance response times to alcohol-related accidents and injuries. Launched in December 2013 by VicHealth, the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation (VCGLR) and the Emergency Services Telecommunications Agency (ESTA), the map presents information on the state’s 19,000 individual liquor licences in an interactive online tool that geo-codes the data and presents it in an easy-to-use format.

www.geomaps.vcglr.vic.gov.au

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/liquor-licence-map

Alcohol Policy Coalition

The Alcohol Policy Coalition is a group of health and allied agencies who share a concern about the level of alcohol misuse and the associated health and social consequences for the community. This year the coalition continued to provide expert advocacy and policy advice at a state level. VicHealth has been collaborating with the Alcohol Policy Coalition, including providing funding for legal capacity and the coalition’s new website.

www.alcoholpolicycoalition.org.au

Information on Victoria’s 19,000 individual liquor licences is now available in an interactive online tool.



VicHealth is helping to shape alcohol policy and practice in Victoria and nationally.



Understanding and reducing alcohol-related harm among urban youth

Research released this year by Turning Point Alcohol & Drug Centre, funded by VicHealth and the Australian Research Council, found young people in inner Melbourne were more likely to have liberal attitudes than those in growth areas when it comes to alcohol.

The ‘Drinking patterns and attitudes for young people’ research by Turning Point researcher Dr Sarah MacLean used data from the most recent Victorian Youth Alcohol and Drug Survey, and was published in *Urban Policy and Research*.

It identified how young adults’ drinking patterns and attitudes vary across Melbourne, comparing the responses of those living in growth areas such as Casey, Cardinia, Melton, Whittlesea, Wyndham and Mitchell with those in inner Melbourne, including Port Phillip, Stonnington, Yarra and the City of Melbourne.

The study suggests that different policy responses to alcohol are required across large cities such as Melbourne.

Children’s exposure to alcohol advertisements

The impact on young people of advertisements promoting junk food and alcohol that screen on television during sports broadcasts has been the subject of hot debate but little research. This year, a VicHealth-funded study by lead researcher Associate Professor Matthew Nicholson from the La Trobe University Centre for Sport and Social Impact identified the amount, and classified the nature of, alcohol and junk food advertising and promotion through sport on broadcast television in Victoria. Findings about the levels of exposure and results in terms of brand recognition and consumption were published in March 2014 and resulted in widespread discussion in the media about closing a loophole allowing alcohol ads on TV during live sport, especially in children’s viewing hours.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/kids-and-ads

COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION

VicHealth was represented on numerous committees, advisory bodies and working groups that guide alcohol policy and practice in Victoria and nationally, including:

- Alcohol and Drug Strategy Executive Committee
- Alcohol Harm in the Workplace – national committee
- Community Alcohol Action Network (CAAN) Steering Committee
- National Alliance for Action on Alcohol
- Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation Stakeholder Forum
- Victorian Liquor Control Advisory Council

Integrated theme: Influencing policy



Our new Policy Development Office is taking a coordinated approach to influencing health promotion policy that supports our strategic imperatives.

Drawing on the expertise that sits within VicHealth and scanning the external policy environment, the Policy Development Office puts the widest policy lens over our priority areas and hones in with policy-makers to build the next frontier in health promotion.

It is helping to drive bold new ways to address our health priorities by broadening our impact with others and embedding cutting-edge interventions into the Victorian Prevention System.

In its first year, the Policy Development Office has helped find the policy hooks to link up the many efforts across governments to build a stronger health prevention system. Smoking is a good example, where Victoria is now leading the way internationally with a smoking rate of 13% of the population compared with up to 19% in the UK.

AN INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS STORY

A highlight of the year was VicHealth being named a new World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Leadership in Health Promotion.

Reflecting Victoria's world-leading status as a source of expert advice and best practice in health promotion, our new role will strengthen our ability to support leadership in the Western Pacific Region in reducing preventable disease.

In the year ahead we look forward to working with our colleagues from Tonga and Vietnam as they develop health information and activities to tackle their most pressing health issues.

POLICY CONSULTATIONS + SUBMISSIONS

The Policy Development Office also translates the work of VicHealth both ways, so we understand what is going on around us, and how this best fits with enhancing Victoria's Prevention System.

A key part of our work is responding to proposed government programs, policy and legislation that have the potential to impact on health. This year the Policy Development Office coordinated a number of submissions, including the Senate Select Committee on Health; Senate Inquiry into domestic violence; Inquiry into the extent of income inequality in Australia; and a submission to the City of Melbourne draft walking plan.



“MAV has valued the partnership work with councils and VicHealth over many years, with the main focus in 2014 being on developing strategies to address the negative health impacts of discrimination on communities. We look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with VicHealth in priority areas for local government.”

ROB SPENCE
CEO, Municipal Association of Victoria



'Postcards from Nanna', funded through VicHealth's Arts About Us program.

05 Improving mental wellbeing

OUR 3-YEAR PRIORITY

Build stronger approaches to resilience, focusing on young people.

WHY?

We need to build the right foundations for mental wellbeing – long before illnesses – in our homes, communities and workplaces.

Some of our most powerful influences on mental wellbeing exist in the environments where we live, work, learn, play and build relationships with one another. These influences can affect the likelihood of people being free from mental illness and having a greater sense of wellbeing, and can particularly impact those whose circumstances have made them more vulnerable.



“The Don't Stand By. Stand Up! campaign has had a very positive effect in empowering the Victorian football community...we can all bring about a culture of football that is safe, welcoming, positive and respectful.”

GULCAN KOCA
Melbourne Victory FC W-League player



“Ganbina and VicHealth have been working in partnership to address a combination of factors of Indigenous young people living in the Goulburn Valley with positive results.”

ANTHONY CAVANAGH
CEO, Ganbina

RESILIENCE + YOUNG PEOPLE

One in four young people will develop a mental illness, many are exposed to cyberbullying and young people from minority groups are often targets of racism. That's why VicHealth is building stronger approaches to resilience, focusing on young people.

This year we conducted numerous international literature reviews (which will be published later in 2015) and scoped new work in mental wellbeing and resilience of young people.

This has led to VicHealth prioritising three areas for future investment: young people and the digital world; young people, families and education; young people and work.

Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre (CRC)

VicHealth continued its support for this Australian-based international research centre, which was established to explore the role of technology in young people's lives, and how it can be used to improve the mental health and wellbeing of people aged 12 to 25. The centre unites young people with researchers, practitioners, innovators and policy-makers from over 70 agencies across the non-profit, academic, government and corporate sectors.

www.yawcrc.org.au

Ganbina Indigenous school-to-work project

Now in its final year, this VicHealth-funded project managed by the Ganbina Koorie Economic Employment Training Agency continued to exceed expectations. Young Indigenous Australians confront a range of barriers which can prevent them from participating successfully in education and employment systems. This project is reshaping the thinking behind Indigenous employment participation and creating a cultural shift. The partnership between the Indigenous community, industry leaders and eight regional schools in the Mooroopna/Shepparton district has had significant results in creating opportunities for young people to either remain in school or access work experience to assist them to gain meaningful employment in their community.

We have overseen substantial program and partnership activity to make the vision of equal and respectful relationships between men and women a reality.

IMPROVING HEALTH IN WORKPLACES

Workplaces directly influence the physical, mental, economic and social wellbeing of employees and, in turn, the health of their families. Workplaces play a critical role in the health of society, and are an important place for health action and improvement. That's why we focus our health promotion efforts on workplaces.

This year, to continue to build workplace mental wellbeing, VicHealth established a partnership with the **Victorian WorkCover Authority** and **SuperFriend**, a nationwide health promotion foundation that helps 'all profit to member' superannuation funds to promote and support improved mental health and wellbeing for their members, through the workplace.

Building on our shared focus and interest in workplace mental wellbeing, the collaboration will extend each organisation's existing work, and harness their collective expertise and networks to deliver a range of activities between 2014 and 2016.

The collaboration's unique expertise in mental wellbeing, health promotion, and occupational health and safety will enable us to take a holistic approach to contributing to the development and sharing of evidence-based approaches to promoting positive mental wellbeing in Victorian workplaces.

In addition, VicHealth continued its Communities of Practice in the five focus areas of our \$3-million **Creating Healthy Workplaces program**. The program specifically focuses on identifying best practice approaches for addressing stress, gender inequality, alcohol-related harm, race-based discrimination and prolonged sitting at work. Some of Australia's foremost researchers in workplace health are leading five large-scale pilot projects in Victorian workplaces, developing and testing solutions for promoting good health and preventing chronic disease.

Much of this work has informed our future investment focus on young people and workplaces.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/workplace

PROMOTING RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

For over a decade VicHealth has played a pioneering role in building evidence and developing programs and policies to prevent violence against women in Victoria. We have overseen substantial program and partnership activity to make the vision of equal and respectful relationships between men and women a reality, and move towards a society that is not only aware of the extent of violence against women, but is actively working to stop it.

New partnerships

As part of our *Action Agenda*, we have built new partnerships to sustain this work.

Our new partnership with **Our Watch** (formerly the National Foundation to Prevent Violence Against Women and their Children) is critical to our efforts to integrate the knowledge and learning we have nurtured over the past decade, escalating the work and this critical issue to a national level. The first priority for the 3-year partnership is the development of a national framework to provide a shared understanding of what it will take to prevent this violence. The national framework on the primary prevention of violence against women is a first in Australia. It builds on an approach developed by VicHealth, which has been a catalyst for action in Victoria.

We have continued to lead the way in the primary prevention of violence against women thanks in part to our partnership with the **Office for Women's Affairs**. This partnership has seen the continued capacity building of the field through the design of tools and resources to support the primary prevention of violence against women and the delivery of forums and conferences to strengthen and expand knowledge and networks. This project has supported the training of survivors of sexual assault to become media advocates, the development of bystander approaches to prevent violence against women, and the design of the new Respect and Equality Workplace Project.

Workplaces play a critical role in the health of society and are an important place for health action and improvement.



VicHealth supports a range of local government and community projects that build capacity for safe and respectful communities for women.



Surveying community attitudes to violence against women

Understanding community attitudes can help us learn from and understand what people think about violence against women, so that we are better placed to know how to prevent it.

The 2013 National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey was developed by VicHealth in partnership with The University of Melbourne, the Social Research Centre and experts across Australia, and supported by the Australian Government Department of Social Services as part of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022*.

This is the third survey of its kind, with the first undertaken in 1995 and the second in 2009.

The rigour of the Survey makes it an invaluable road map to guide efforts to tackle violence against women and monitor future progress.

FUTURE FOCUS

Survey results were released in September 2014 and are gaining significant public and media support. The results show us the extent of the work that lies ahead, where to best focus efforts, and the types of approaches and messages that are likely to be effective.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/ncas

Generating Equality and Respect Program

This year we continued piloting an Australia-first project in partnership with Monash City Council and MonashLink Community Health Services. Generating Equality and Respect is delivering tried and tested primary prevention programs in Melbourne's south-east over 3½ years. This approach effectively 'saturates' this community with interventions and activities that address the root causes of violence against women. Part of this investment includes the development of a model for intervention that could be used in other Victorian communities.

One of the interventions, Partners in Prevention, delivers an innovative local network to support professionals in the youth sector build their capacity to promote gender equality and respect and in turn prevent violence against women. Network members include local teachers, police, school nurses, youth services and community organisations. Activities supported include the Monash Youth Film Festival with a special category for Gender Equality and Respectful Relationships.

Communities of Practice

As part of VicHealth's commitment to transferring knowledge and building partnerships we developed training courses for practitioners and leaders working in the field of primary prevention of violence against women, and convened a series of forums for practitioners and project workers. The focus of the forums was on exploring common themes in prevention work across a variety of settings, sharing VicHealth research and providing skill exchange to support and improve everyday practice.



“Our Watch is fortunate to collaborate with VicHealth in the primary prevention of violence against women and their children. The important role of primary prevention has been reinforced with VicHealth's latest (2013) National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey.”

NATASHA STOTT DESPOJA
Chair, Our Watch

VicHealth has always invested in the arts to inspire and connect people. Now we better understand its importance in being physically active and reducing anxiety and stress, too.

SOCIAL CONNECTION + THE ARTS

The health benefits of the arts in connecting people, engaging communities and contributing to the culture and vitality of our environments are well known. VicHealth has always invested in the arts to inspire and connect people. Now we better understand its importance in being physically active and reducing anxiety and stress, too.

VicHealth's *Action Agenda* supports a range of arts projects, both large and small, that contribute to the physical activity and mental wellbeing of Victorians by getting more people up and moving.

This year's hugely popular **White Night Melbourne's *I Could Have Danced All Night*** performances and the *For You* dance floor at the National Gallery of Victoria's **Melbourne Now** exhibition were supported by VicHealth and are examples of the evolution of arts intersecting with health.

Through our **MOTION** funding (see p. 29) we are supporting tens of thousands of people to get physical through local arts initiatives, such as free community dance workshops and other participatory arts experiences.

Indigenous Arts Program

Indigenous people in Victoria have a long history of using arts methods to bring their communities together and build a strong collective sense of cultural identity. These activities are an intrinsic part of their lives and their health and wellbeing. The Indigenous Arts Program supported the Black Arm Band, Koorie Heritage Trust and ILBIJERRI Theatre Company to increase opportunities for Indigenous Victorians to engage with contemporary arts and media making. Among this year's highlights were the Victorian Indigenous Performing Arts (VIPA) Awards presented by ILBIJERRI, Songlines and the Melbourne Indigenous Arts Festival. The VIPA Awards celebrate the outstanding achievements in the Indigenous performing arts across Victoria.

<http://artsforhealth.com.au/article/victorian-indigenous-artists-honoured-at-awards>

REDUCING RACE-BASED DISCRIMINATION + SUPPORTING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

As a society, we've become more aware of racism and how to combat it. We're better bystanders and more likely to act when someone is being vilified. But racial discrimination still frequently occurs on the playground and the footy field, at school, at the shops and on the streets – and from VicHealth's perspective it is a serious health concern. There is compelling evidence that exposure to racism, particularly if it is repeated, is strongly linked with serious mental illnesses.

Football Federation Victoria Bystander Project

Through our partnership with Football Federation Victoria we empowered the football (soccer) community to respond and intervene safely when racism is seen or heard. The **Don't Stand By, Stand Up!** campaign is active in nearly 50 clubs and supported by A-League and W-League ambassadors, Melbourne Victory's Gulcan Koca and Andrew Nabbout, and Melbourne City's (formerly Melbourne Heart) Jason Hoffman. This initiative seeks commitment from clubs to undertake measures to educate their officials, players and spectators about racism. It aims to boot out subtle to overt forms of racism on and off the sports field.

Localities Embracing and Accepting Diversity (LEAD) program

VicHealth's LEAD program, which concluded in 2013, demonstrated how local governments can have a positive impact on reducing race-based discrimination and support cultural diversity within their local communities. LEAD was delivered in partnership with the Cities of Greater Shepparton and Whittlesea, the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission and The University of Melbourne and co-funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Lowitja Institute and *beyondblue*.

The councils trialled a series of interventions within the councils themselves, local workplaces, retail operators and schools to strengthen policies and cultures to minimise unfair treatment and ensure that cultural diversity is valued.

Evaluation findings will be made available on VicHealth's website, including the Australian Human Rights Commission's Workplace Cultural Diversity Tool, which can also be accessed at:

<http://culturaldiversity.humanrights.gov.au>

Learning about the benefits of a multicultural society at an early age can prevent racist attitudes from developing.



VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter joins in a dance at Darren Sylvester's *For You* dance floor at the NGV.



Arts About Us program

VicHealth recognises that the arts are a powerful conduit for social change, and have widely documented health and wellbeing benefits. VicHealth is funding seven Arts About Us projects for 3 years to develop arts and media-based programs that celebrate cultural diversity and help people understand the impacts of race-based discrimination. This thought-provoking suite of activities is engaging Victorian communities in conversation and will be running until June 2015. Projects include:

- **Postcards from Nanna**, a musical, theatrical 'story-concert' for kids and their grown-ups about discovering people who are 'not like us' and learning to love the ways that we're all different. The multiple award-winning show is being staged at over 50 regional and metropolitan libraries across Victoria, as well as art centres and festivals.
- **Meet+Eat**, a beautifully crafted and intimate online documentary series produced by CuriousWorks, which celebrated the extraordinary and culturally rich lives of the residents of Hume, an interface local government area in Melbourne's north-west.

The reach of a number of the projects participating in Arts About Us has been further extended by our partnership with producers Artistic Merit. One example is **Stand Up! Sisters and Brothers** in Geelong which brought members of **MASSIVE**, Australia's first hip hop choir, with local school students and community members to perform as part of Geelong After Dark and M-M2014 (Mountain to Mouth) Extreme Arts Walk.

Arts About Us complements VicHealth's larger program of anti-discrimination research and pilot projects. www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/artsaboutus

McCaughey VicHealth Centre for Community Wellbeing

We continued to support a program of research at The University of Melbourne's McCaughey Centre that is dedicated to supporting program development and increasing our understanding of workplace stress and race-based discrimination and cultural diversity. This program has attracted extensive further funding from the Australian Research Council and NHMRC grants programs.

Talking Culture: Learning about the benefits of a multicultural society at an early age

This year, a VicHealth and University of Melbourne study 'Talking Culture', by Doctor Naomi Priest, looked at how eight to 12-year-old primary school children in Melbourne learn about racial, ethnic and cultural diversity and racism. Learning at an early age the benefits of a multicultural society and how to embrace the differences that make us special is crucial for preventing racist attitudes from developing. The findings will be used to develop intervention strategies to support teachers and parents to promote positive attitudes to cultural diversity and anti-racism among children.

A fact sheet summarising key findings from various studies examining racism and health and wellbeing in children and young people, in particular the research led by Dr Priest, is available at: www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/racism-and-young-people

COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION

VicHealth was represented on numerous committees, advisory bodies and working groups that guide policy and practice related to mental wellbeing in Victoria and nationally, including:

- Asialink Asia Australia Mental Health Advisory Committee
- *beyondblue* Impact of Discrimination Advisory Group
- Castanet
- Ethnic Communities Council Victoria Health Policy Sub-Committee
- Preventing Violence against Women's Strategic Coordination Group
- Victorian WorkCover Authority Leading Thinkers Network
- Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre

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