

Media Release

Thursday 6 December 2018

Health promotion efforts lauded at VicHealth Awards

The achievements of Victoria's health promotion sector were celebrated last night at the 2018 VicHealth Awards, with winners ranging from community groups through to statewide organisations.

The [VicHealth Awards](#) are the state's highest accolade for health promotion, recognising the impact of initiatives across Victoria in improving the health and wellbeing of Victorians.

Twelve winners across 11 award categories were announced last night at Melbourne and Olympic Park by new Health Minister Jenny Mikakos, VicHealth Chair Fiona McCormack and VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter.

Winning projects included education and housing support for highly vulnerable young students and an innovative trial in large recreation centres and 31 local volunteer managed sports clubs, resulting in a 17% reduction in 'Red' drink sales and a 22% increase in 'Green'.

Journalists Angela Pippas and Sam Lane were also recognised as joint winners for their outstanding reporting of women's sport.

Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos said the VicHealth Awards showcased the innovation and creativity of Victorian health promoters.

"Congratulations to all the finalists and incredible winners at tonight's awards. It's fantastic to see so much innovation and creativity from our world-class health promotion sector, which is making such a difference to the health and wellbeing of Victorians," Minister Mikakos said.

"Success stories like these are encouraging more Victorians to get fit and healthy, embrace sport and enjoy the benefits of an active lifestyle – and that means lives are being changed for the better."

VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter recognised the collaborative nature of the sector, noting the extraordinary calibre of nominees and finalists.

"Our judges had an extremely difficult task in selecting a winner in each of our 11 categories, with more than 50 impressive finalists named," she said.

"These finalists demonstrate why Victoria is the home of health promotion, with initiatives tackling some of the most difficult and entrenched health challenges, such as gender inequality, obesity and harm from alcohol.

"It's fantastic to see many of our finalists have partnered with other organisations to deliver these projects. This is the strength of the Victorian health promotion sector, and we need to continue to work together to achieve our collective goal of improving the health and wellbeing of Victorians."

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Ms Rechter congratulated the winners and finalists on their continued passion for improving health outcomes across the state.

“This year’s winners have demonstrated a phenomenal passion and commitment to addressing health issues across Victoria, from grassroots efforts in rural communities to statewide campaigns,” she said.

“The VicHealth Awards is an opportunity to reflect on their achievements and I congratulate all our winners and finalists on their incredible efforts.”

Read about all about the winners and finalists in the VicHealth Awards in an [online Finalist Gallery](#).

2018 VicHealth Award winners:

Promoting healthy eating

Sport and Recreation Healthy Eating in the West - Wyndham City Council

The program trialled the introduction of healthier food and drink options in large recreation centres and 31 local volunteer-managed sports clubs.

[Learn more](#)

Encouraging physical activity

Rock Up Netball – Netball Victoria

An alternative netball program for women to get involved in physical activity and sport, through fun, flexible and social programs, in supportive environments across Victoria.

[Learn More](#)

Preventing tobacco use

Deadly Dan at the League - Victorian Aboriginal Health Service

A smokefree superhero with the motto ‘you smoke you choke,’ including a suite of culturally relevant teaching and learning resources.

[Learn more](#)

Preventing harm from alcohol

Just Think – Geelong Football Club

An education program for students and parents delivering messages to change underage drinking culture in a variety of ways, linking in with other community initiatives such as Respectful Relationships and Communities that Care.

[Learn more](#)

Improving mental wellbeing

Live4Life Communities - Youth Live4Life Inc.

An initiative aiming to ensure young people, teachers, parents and the wider community are better informed and are proactive in identifying the signs and symptoms of an emerging mental health issue before a crisis occurs. [Learn more](#)

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Communications in health promotion

Do the test – save your life! – Cancer Council Victoria

A mass media campaign aimed to encourage more Victorians to do the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program's free home screening test.

[Learn more](#)

Improving health through arts

The Coming Back Out Ball – All The Queens Men

The event brings research and social services together, as a public celebration and declaration to LGBTI elders of their worth and value, acknowledging their rich lives.

[Learn more](#)

Improving health equity

Launch Housing's Education Pathways Program – Launch Housing

A program aiming to support the regular school attendance, participation and wellbeing of children experiencing homelessness and/or family violence.

[Learn more](#)

Research into action

Inside our Food Companies: driving accountability for nutrition policy change - Global Obesity Centre, Deakin University

A research project driving improvements in the healthiness of Australian food environments, by working directly with food companies to benchmark their nutrition-related policies against international best practice, providing tailored recommendations for each company.

[Learn more](#)

Promoting gender equality

The Line – Our Watch

A social marketing initiative supporting young people to develop respectful and equal peer and intimate relationships and to reject all forms of violence.

[Learn more](#)

Outstanding reporting of women's sport – joint winners

Angela Pippas

With twenty years-experience as a sports journalist, presenter, author and documentary-maker, her work has had great influence in promoting gender equality in sport.

[Learn more](#)

Sam Lane

A pioneering and award-winning journalist covering multiple sports, her passion for AFL and its ability to influence on and off the sporting ground, saw her quit her day job to write a book documenting the inaugural AFLW season and the obstacles faced by women in AFL.

[Learn more](#)