Completed research grants
June 2011 to June 2012

VicHealth has a strong tradition of investing in public health research and evaluation to drive evidence-based interventions promoting the health and wellbeing of Victorians. Our research funding is directed at balancing innovation, capacity-building and public health priorities.

Each year, VicHealth invests approximately $6 million in research. Funding is delivered through fellowships, research grants, centres, information infrastructure and strategic research.

VicHealth is committed to synthesising and translating research findings into practical health promotion practice, and disseminating these through our strategic communication channels.

This resource holds a collection of project summaries, each with a link to its final report or a published journal article from the study. The research projects were completed between June 2011 and June 2012.
Physical activity

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Project
Social Glue? The contribution of sport and active recreation to community wellbeing

This project explored the relationship between individuals’ involvement in sport and active recreation and perceptions of social inclusion and connectedness as well as how such involvement leads to community wellbeing; and what role these organisations perform in facilitating social inclusion and connectedness of individuals.

Institution
La Trobe University

Type of funding
VicHealth-supported Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grant

Duration
3 years

Outcomes
Several journal articles were published as a result of this research and include:
Sport’s social provisions, published in the Sports Management Review (May 2013),
Generating Trust? Sport and Community Participation in the Journal of Sociology (November 2012),
and Involvement in Sport and Social Connectedness in the International Review for the Sociology of Sport (November 2012).
Discrimination

**Chief Investigator**
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**Project**

**Understanding the impact of racism on Indigenous child health**

While the relationship between racism and poor health is increasingly being recognised, there is currently little Australian research on this topic. While there is some data available on the health effects of racism for Indigenous children and young people in Australia, this data is yet to be analysed by researchers. This project undertook the task of analysing this existing data in order to build knowledge in this important area in order to influence future research, policy and practice that seeks to understand and address the impacts of racism on health.

**Institution**
The University of Melbourne

**Type of funding**
2009 Research Project Grants

**Duration**
2 years

**Outcomes**

Dr Priest’s results were published in several journals, including:

- **Exploring relationships between racism, housing and child illness in remote Indigenous communities** in the Journal of Epidemiology (November 2010),
- **Racism as a determinant of social and emotional wellbeing for Aboriginal youth** in the Medical Journal of Australia (May 2011),
- **Racism and health among urban Aboriginal Young People** in the British Medical Journal (July 2011),
- **Discrimination and psychological adjustment amongst Australian children from Middle-Eastern and Asian backgrounds** in the Australian Community Psychologist (April 2011).
Workplace health

Chief Investigator
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Project

Health Freedom and Independent Contracting
This project investigated the ethical implications of insecure employment, independent contracting, flexible and temporary employment characterised by high job insecurity, in terms of its affect on the health and wellbeing of individuals in rural Victoria. The project was the first major study of the lived experience of workers in insecure employment in rural Victoria and offers insights to industry and policy makers about employment practices. Through its focus on ethical and health issues, the project aimed to make a major contribution to employment and health policy in Australia.

Institution
The Nossal Institute, The University of Melbourne

Type of funding
VicHealth-supported Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grant

Duration
3 years

Outcomes
Dr Moss’ final report Health, Freedom and Work in Rural Victoria was released in October 2011. Dr Moss and his team also published several journal articles, including Health, Freedom and Work in Rural Victoria: The Impact of Labour Market Casualisation on Health and Wellbeing in Health Sociology Review (March 2012) and Recognition and Work in the Flexible Economy (2012) in the Journal of Australian Political Economy.
Social inclusion

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The University of Melbourne

Dr Rhonda Brown, Deakin University

Dr Jennifer Power, The University of Melbourne

Professor Margot Schofield, La Trobe University

Project
Work, Love, Play – Understanding resilience in same-sex parent families

The Work, Love, Play project is a longitudinal study of families parented by same-sex attracted couples and single parents.

This study used online surveys alongside a study of separated couples with children. The research investigated the ways in which cultural attitudes toward, and the legal status of, same-sex couples who are parents influence the experiences of separation as well as the ways same-sex couples engage with mainstream organisations to access support during separation.

A further aspect of the project involved working with service providers to develop a set of Good Practice Guidelines for working with same-sex parented families. These Guidelines are targeted toward family and child services and may also be relevant to GPs and other health and community services.

Institution
La Trobe University

Type of funding
VicHealth-supported Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grant

Duration
3 years

Outcomes
The Brief Report and the Guidelines for Healthcare Providers Working with Same-Sex Parented Families were released in 2012. The Work, Love, Play research study will continue beyond this ARC research project; visit the study website for more information and resources.
Food and nutrition

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Project
Understanding the impact of income and poverty on the purchase of healthy and unhealthy foods

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between cost and other attributes of choice that effect food choices. Characteristics of participants including markers of obesity, income, poverty, values around food and health were analysed to determine the association with food purchasing behaviour. Hypothetical policies relating to food costs and economics were analysed to develop recommendations for social, educational, health and economic policy recommendations to encourage those in lower socio-economic groups to adopt healthier eating patterns.

Institution
WHO Collaborating Centre Obesity Prevention, Deakin University

Type of funding
VicHealth-supported Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grant

Duration
3 years

Outcomes
Gary Sacks from Deakin University, a Research Fellow and co-investigator on this project, was interviewed on the topic of taxes on unhealthy foods on multiple occasions during 2011. Newspaper articles appeared in The Australian and The Age.

Sacks also published several articles on The Conversation website, including Is a ‘fat tax’ the answer to Australia’s obesity crisis, and presented findings at the VicHealth Nutrition Forum in November 2012.
Preventing violence against women

Chief Investigator
Dr Angela Taft
Associate Professor
Mother and Child Health Research Centre
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Project
MOVE: Improving Maternal and Child Health Care for Vulnerable Mothers

The MOVE study tested whether an improved model of maternal and child health (MCH) nurse screening and care for new mothers experiencing family violence improved disclosure and referral rates, satisfaction with care and improved outcomes for mothers and their children. The MOVE intervention included greater involvement of family violence services with MCH nurse teams, innovative team strategies including nurse mentors, and new consensus guidelines, strategies and resources.

MOVE also measured the prevalence of reported partner abuse to provide an accurate estimate of the proportion of MCH clients who had ever or were currently experiencing intimate partner violence.

Type of funding
VicHealth-supported Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grant

Duration
3 years

Outcomes
Clinical resources developed for MOVE (MCH specific clinical practice guidelines, a clinical referral pathway and a maternal wellbeing checklist) are available from the Mother and Child Health Research centre website for all MCH nurses to use: www.latrobe.edu.au/mchr/research/health-services-research/move

Dr Taft and her team published findings from this research in journals, including Enhanced maternal and child health nurse care for women experiencing intimate partner/family violence: protocol for MOVE, a cluster randomised trial of screening and referral in primary health care in the British Medical Journal (September 2012). Screening women for intimate partner violence in healthcare was published online by the Cochrane Collaboration (April 2013).