

Completed research grants June 2012-2013

Final Reports

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June 2012 to June 2013

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 2012 and June 2013.

Mental wellbeing: Discrimination

Chief investigator

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Project

Overcoming social isolation and disadvantage among refugee women through mobile phone peer support

Newly arrived refugee women face cultural displacement, social isolation and a sense of ambivalence about their future. Compounded by their inability to communicate in English, they face obstacles everywhere in daily life. This project evaluated the benefits of providing refugee women with peer support training sessions and mobile phones to increase their access to service providers and to generate bonding and social connection opportunities. The intervention was designed to help them achieve better resettlement outcomes and psychosocial wellbeing.

The study examined the effect of the intervention on increased social capital, acculturation and its impact on the resettlement issues faced by the participants. The knowledge gained from this study will inform policies that are appropriate to the female refugee communities, as well as the implementation of the mobile phone peer support program for other vulnerable groups.

Institution

La Trobe University

Type of funding

2010 Innovation Research Grants

Duration

2 years

Outcomes

Dr Wollersheim and the research team were published in the Australian Journal of Primary Health, '[Constant Connections: Piloting a mobile phone based peer support program for Nuer \(Southern Sudanese\) women](#)' (January 2012). Dr Wollersheim also presented at a La Trobe University talk series in 2011; the presentation titled [Mobile phones to connect refugee women](#) is available online.

Alcohol

Chief investigator

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Project

Drinking-related lifestyles: Development and implementation of lifestyle segmentation model for binge drinking intervention through improved media and message targeting

Alcohol is a major part of the cultural fabric of many western countries. However, there are a broad range of social and health problems associated with excessive alcohol consumption. This research adopted a multi-disciplinary approach to research, develop and implement a Drinking-Related Lifestyles model to determine how best to target specific consumer groups in the population through improved and targeted media interventions. This research produced practical insights and applications for developing drinking reduction messages.

Institution

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT)

Type of funding

2010 Innovation Research Grant

Duration

2 years

Outcomes

A research summary and the qualitative and quantitative reports are available on the VicHealth [website](#). The research lead to the development of a website to promote the responsible drinking messages, visit www.yourdrinkingprofile.com.au

Physical activity

Chief investigators

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Project

Stepping Out: Children negotiating independent travel

This study aimed to increase our understanding of how children negotiate active and independent travel and to find ways to support children's mobility as an important contributor to health and wellbeing. The study explored children's perspectives by walking and talking with them as they negotiated daily travel journeys, in addition to speaking with class groups, parents and teachers. The study worked with children from schools in the local government area of Moreland in Victoria. The children in the study were aged 10 to 12 – a transitional age in social and educational terms, representing the shift from primary to secondary school.

Institution

The University of Melbourne

Type of funding

2010 Innovation Research Grant

Duration

2 years

Outcomes

The final report [Stepping Out: Children Negotiating Independent Travel](#) and the [Statement of Key Findings](#) were released in 2012 and are available on the VicHealth website. Dr Gibbs and Dr Nansen also wrote '[Ditch the cotton wool and let kids travel independently](#)' for The Conversation (August 2013). Dr Gibbs was invited to talk about the research on the [ABC Weekend Breakfast](#) program (November 2013) and was also interviewed about the research by Kids Matter; the interview and discussion is available at www.kidsmatter.edu.au

Nutrition

Chief investigator

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Project

Diet and Nutrition: Knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of young men from the Victorian building and construction industry

This project examined the diets of construction industry apprentices. The research aimed to gain an insight into young working men's knowledge of nutrition and diet, as well as their access to healthy foods. The findings were used to develop a preventative education and awareness raising campaign to promote optimal nutrition and healthy eating behaviours among apprentices and young working men. The aim of the program was to support young men to make informed decisions about nutrition, thereby improving their health and well-being through preventative health action.

Institution

Incolink

Type of funding

2010 Innovation Research Grant

Duration

2 years

Outcomes

In 2011, the article '[Tradies need to eat better](#)' appeared in several newspapers. Incolink also produced a resource called the [Healthy Meal Tips Booklet](#) and published several articles in the Incolink newsletter, which are available on the Incolink [website](#).

Dr Plessis' article '[Factors influencing Australian construction industry apprentices' dietary behaviours](#)' was published in the American Journal of Men's Health (January 2012). Her literature review of the factors influencing blue-collar apprentices is available [online](#).



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