

MEDIA RELEASE

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GROUNDBREAKING HEALTH PROMOTION PROJECTS HONOURED AT VICHEALTH'S ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY

VicHealth has acknowledged some of the most outstanding projects and campaigns involved in improving the health and wellbeing of Victorians at its annual health promotion awards.

Winners of the 2014 *Victorian Health Promotion Foundation Awards* were announced at a ceremony in Melbourne this evening by VicHealth Chair Professor John Catford and VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter.

Successful initiatives range from a local gymnastics program making a huge difference to the confidence and mobility of people with disabilities to a state-wide smoking harm-prevention initiative, and even a world-first gender equality program aimed at preventing violence against women by reaching people where they live, work and play.

Ms Rechter said the Awards celebrate the wide range of innovative and effective health promotion programs in Victoria.

“The scope of different approaches and the level of creativity and innovation demonstrated by this year’s finalists highlight why Victoria is considered a world leader in health promotion.

“It’s inspiring to see so many organisations working in our homes, workplaces, online and in our communities to tackle our most pressing health issues and ensure people are not only free from disease, but live in a state of physical, mental and social wellbeing.

“Congratulations to all the winners and finalists for their hard work and dedication to health promotion. I look forward to seeing the positive impact these initiatives have on Victorians,” Ms Rechter added.

2014 Victorian Health Promotion Foundation Award winners:

Promoting healthy eating

Creating a Culture of Healthy Eating – Alfred Health

Alfred Health developed guidelines for catering and partnering with food retail outlets and suppliers to deliver nutritious food choices to over 1.8 million employees and visitors each year. The organisation promoted cultural change and made healthy eating the norm rather than an innovative concept.

Encouraging physical activity

Principal Pedestrian Network Demonstration Project – Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure

Principal Pedestrian Networks encourage walking for transport and provide a platform within transport planning. This project achieved increased numbers of people walking, strategic prioritisation of pedestrian projects and increased capital works funding for pedestrian infrastructure.

Preventing tobacco use

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Victorian University Tobacco-Free working group – *Deakin University, Australian Catholic University, Federation University, LaTrobe University, Melbourne University, Monash University, RMIT University, Victoria University and Swinburne University*

Nine Victorian universities joined forces to implement a tobacco-free initiative across all campuses, to reduce the burden from tobacco-related disease in Victoria, to protect staff, students and visitors from second-hand smoke, to reduce the initiation of smoking, and to promote smoking cessation.

Preventing harm from alcohol

Drink Safe Mate – *Incolink*

Drink Safe Mate aimed to reduce binge drinking amongst apprentices in the Victorian building and construction industry – predominantly young men. The project affected positive change in knowledge, attitudes and behaviours relating to alcohol use, and strengthened support networks.

Improving mental wellbeing

Generating Equality and Respect Program – *City of Monash and MonashLink Community Health Service with VicHealth*

Generating Equality and Respect is a world-first program trialling a site-based approach to the primary prevention of violence against women, striving to reach people where they live, work, study and play in Clayton. Activities included promoting equal and respectful relationships between first-time parents, supporting youth practitioners to deliver respectful relationships education through their programs, and organisational culture change by the project partners to promote gender equality in the workplace and wider Monash community.

Communications in health promotion

Mobile Application Rating Scale – *Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) with Queensland University of Technology*

The Young and Well CRC developed the Mobile App Rating Scale to rate the quality of health-related mobile applications in response to Australia's rapidly-growing smartphone use. It objectively categorises applications and serves as a safeguard for end users and a valuable tool for industry professionals.

Building health through sport

Gymnastics for All – *Maffra Gymnastics Club with GippSport*

Gymnastics for All offers people with disabilities in Maffra a fun way to participate in gymnastics and increase their strength, balance and mobility while further developing their confidence.

Building health through arts

Mountain to Mouth (M~M2014) Geelong 24HR Extreme Arts Walk – *City of Greater Geelong*

This arts innovation involved an 80 kilometre walk incorporating elements of arts, sport, environment and community. A canoe sculpture was carried and artworks were created along the route, representing First People's traditions.

Research into action

Greening the West – *City West Water with 21 local and state partners*

Greening the West aimed to increase green spaces in the western suburbs of Melbourne to improve liveability. To achieve this, 21 organisations joined forces and adopted a regional approach, fostering projects and activities to increase vegetation and encourage greater public interaction with green space.