

Media Release

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CHAMPIONS OF HEALTH PROMOTION ANNOUNCED AT VICHEALTH AWARDS

The state's greatest health promotion projects have been recognised for their efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of Victorians at the annual VicHealth Awards.

The 14 winning projects were announced at last night's ceremony at Melbourne Museum by Health Minister Jill Hennessy, Shadow Health Minister Mary Wooldridge, Leader of the Victorian Greens Samantha Ratnam and VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter.

This year's awards marked VicHealth's 30th anniversary, celebrating VicHealth's establishment in 1987 as the world's first health promotion foundation, and the unprecedented cross-political support it took to make it happen.

Minister for Health Jill Hennessy said the VicHealth Awards is a wonderful celebration of health promotion organisations who are working hard to improve the health of Victorians.

"Congratulations to all of the 2017 finalists and to the well deserving winners who are working in innovative ways to help Victorians embrace a healthier lifestyle," Minister Hennessy said.

"Congratulations also to VicHealth as it celebrates 30 years of championing the health and wellbeing of Victorians," Minister Hennessy said.

Winning projects include a sports participation program for children and young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds and a program supporting disadvantaged families to grow their own fruits and vegetables.

Ms Rechter said the VicHealth Awards display the huge range, value and influence of health promotion programs and projects in Victoria.

"I congratulate all the finalists, highly commended and winning projects for continuing the world-leading health promotion work Victoria is renowned for," Ms Rechter said.

"These community organisations, arts or research bodies, health services, local councils and major sporting codes are tackling some of Victoria's biggest health issues and have made a huge difference to the lives of many Victorians.

"From statewide campaigns tackling the scourge of ice-addiction to grassroots projects encouraging disadvantaged families to connect with their community, this year's winners have all gone above and beyond in supporting Victorians to live happier and healthier lives.

"We are incredibly proud to celebrate health promotion in Victoria and congratulations to all of the inspiring winners for their achievements."

In celebration of VicHealth's 30th anniversary milestone *The Nigel Gray Award for Excellence in Health Promotion* was presented to the Parliament of Victoria, presented by Professor Emeritus Sir Gustav Nossal, inaugural VicHealth Chair and accepted by parliamentary representatives Jill Hennessy, Mary Woolridge and Samantha Ratnam.

VicHealth Chair Fiona McCormack said the Nigel Gray Award honoured the Victorian Parliament's legacy in putting health before politics.

"Thirty years ago it took an act of vision, leadership and unprecedented cross party political support to put VicHealth's mandate to champion the health of all Victorians above the politics of the day," Ms McCormack said.

"Thanks to this ground-breaking moment, health promotion efforts have been able to make significant inroads in tackling the key health and wellbeing issues impacting Victorians."

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2017 VicHealth Award winners:

Promoting healthy eating

WATER – THE DRINK OF CHOICE - *Ballarat Health Services: Primary Care and Population Health Advisory Committee with City of Ballarat, Ballarat Community Health, Central Highlands Primary Care Partnership, St John of God Ballarat Hospital, Western Victoria Primary Health Network, YMCA Ballarat.*

The project encouraged the local community to choose water over sugary drinks.

Encouraging physical activity

MIND.BODY.PEDAL - *Bicycle Network with The Body Shop and HeadSpace*

This program empowered high school girls to get active through bike riding.

Preventing tobacco use

IMPLEMENTING A SHARED-CARE MODEL BETWEEN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED ORGANISATIONS AND THE ABORIGINAL QUITLINE - *Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association with Quit Victoria*

This program helped local Aboriginal people access extra support to quit smoking.

Preventing harm from alcohol

ALCOHOL HARM SNAPSHOT SURVEY - *Australasian College for Emergency Medicine*

This research project measured the number of emergency department visits caused by alcohol harm.

Improving mental wellbeing

KIDS AS CATALYST – CHILDREN LEADING COMMUNITY CHANGE - *Kids Thrive*

This program aimed to improve mental health, resilience and social connectivity in children aged 8-12 years.

Communications in health promotion – joint winners

ACTION ON ICE - *Victorian AIDS Council*

This campaign supported gay ice users to manage their drug use, and be supported to quit.

DON'T TRUST YOUR TASTEBUDS - *National Heart Foundation Victoria with The George Institute, The Stroke Foundation, Kidney Health Australia, and VicHealth*

This campaign encouraged Victorians to reduce their high salt intake.

Building health through sports

COUNT ME IN - *Merri Health with The University of Melbourne*

This program supported children and young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds to get more involved in sport.

Building health through arts

FUN RUN – PROJECT FOUR OF THE BETTY AMSDEN PARTICIPATION PROGRAM - *Arts Centre Melbourne with All the Queen's Men, Circus Oz, and VicHealth*

This project was an immersive 'marathon' run on a treadmill, featuring a range of performances including flash mobs and interactive connections with the audience.

Research into action

SPORT AND RECREATION SPATIAL - *Federation University and Victoria University with the Institute of Sport, and VicHealth.*

This project measured sport participation in Victoria to support decision making and investments by sports organisations.

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Promoting health equity – joint winners

BENALLA GROW YOUR OWN – ENGAGING DISADVANTAGED FAMILIES WITH WICKING GARDEN BEDS -

Benalla Health with St Vincent de Paul Society of Benalla, Beechworth Correction Centre, and Benalla Health

This project supported disadvantaged families to grow their own fruit and vegetables.

WORKING TOGETHER: A HEALTH JUSTICE PARTNERSHIP TO ADDRESS ELDER ABUSE - *Justice Connect with Cohealth*

The program allows older people who are being abused by their spouse or family members to see a lawyer in the safety and privacy of their health practitioner's office.

Healthy Happy Heroes Award (kids' choice)

Farms to Families Program – Pop-up Markets for Communities in Need - *Foodbank Victoria*

This project aimed to deliver fresh, nutritional produce directly to disadvantaged communities through pop-up style farmers markets.

The Nigel Gray Award for Excellence in Health Promotion

The Parliament of Victoria

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