

**VicHealth
Highlights
2016-17**



VicHealth Highlights 2016–17 showcases our key achievements from the last financial year and presents the outcomes of some of our major investments. It documents progress on our goals as part of the VicHealth Action Agenda for Health Promotion – our 10-year plan until 2023.

VicHealth’s financial statements can be found in the Annual Report 2016–17 at vichealth.vic.gov.au/about/annualreports

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CHAIR'S REPORT

In 1987, the Victorian Parliament established VicHealth, the world's first health promotion foundation, as part of the Tobacco Act. Thirty years on, as we reflect on a host of achievements we acknowledge there is still much to do.



Fiona McCormack
Chair of the Board,
VicHealth

VicHealth's creation represented a significant policy change for the Victorian Government and this new entity had to be established quickly in a challenging landscape. The pragmatism and drive of the founders and first staff team set the tone for VicHealth as a dynamic and innovative organisation, and those values hold true today.

Persistent and emerging health issues continue to challenge us, while the rapid pace of global change we are seeing in technology, society and sustainability require corresponding shifts in our thinking. VicHealth has already shown the necessary adaptability, which is evidenced in our updated Action Agenda for Health Promotion (Action Agenda).

In July 2016, we released Destination Wellbeing: VicHealth's updated Action Agenda, setting out how we will achieve our goals. Destination Wellbeing builds on the inaugural Action Agenda, released in 2013, which for the first time set out a 10-year action plan for VicHealth that reflects the changing environment in which we operate.

With the completion of the fourth year of our Action Agenda – and the first year working towards its 2016–19 priorities – we can see the progress and are well-placed to respond to the challenges and opportunities we face.

VicHealth's ground-breaking contribution to global health promotion and the people of Melbourne over the last 30 years was recognised with the prestigious Melbourne Achiever Award. At the awards event in May, the Committee for Melbourne acknowledged VicHealth as a significant and sustained contributor to evidence-based health promotion that will leave a lasting legacy, a fitting tribute in our anniversary year. This is recognition of the efforts of past Boards and staff members of VicHealth over the past 30 years.

We have seen much change since our inception, as well as enduring health issues. Obesity is steadily increasing, particularly in marginalised groups. Smoking rates have halved and alcohol consumption is reducing overall, but smoking and risky drinking continue to cause significant harm, particularly among populations or groups experiencing disadvantage. Our lifestyles have become increasingly

sedentary over the past 50 years. Fewer than one in three Australians gets enough physical activity to benefit their health. Two in three Victorian adults, and one in four of our children, are overweight or obese. Violence continues to be the most significant contributing risk factor to Victorian women's health and lives before the age of 45.

Most people drink alcohol responsibly but almost 500,000 Victorians drink 11 or more drinks on a single occasion on a monthly basis. Overall, young people are drinking less and starting to drink later in life than previous generations, but some are still drinking large amounts and are unaware that binge drinking can cause permanent brain damage. While we are working to address the societal pressure to get drunk, we are hampered by alcohol being so cheap, readily available and widely promoted.

Successful public health strategies over several decades have seen smoking rates in Australia decline steadily, to be among the lowest in the world. But rates remain high in groups experiencing disadvantage. In Victoria, smoking leads to the loss of around 4000 lives every year, and costs the state over \$10 billion.

Almost half of all Victorians will experience a mental illness in their lifetime, with the first onset of symptoms most common in teenagers and young adults. One in eight young Victorians say they are intensely lonely. Global employment trends including moves towards automation and digitisation are changing the job market for young people and creating new challenges that will mean they need greater resilience and social connection.

We are pleased that the UN's Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 include a new gender equality goal that presents a much stronger view than the earlier, corresponding Millennium Development Goal. Rather than focusing on access to education, it takes a broader view. As well as focusing on reforms to ensure equal access to economic resources, the goal requires women to have full and effective participation in political, economic and public leadership. Underpinning this is the vital call for the elimination of all forms of violence against women.

I congratulate the Victorian Government on the release of its Free from violence strategy in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Family Violence. The implementation of this strategy, including the establishment of the first family violence prevention agency, is set to have a huge impact over the coming years. The strategy builds on the evidence in *Change the story*, Australia's national prevention framework launched by ANROWS, Our Watch and VicHealth in 2015.

By ensuring that all our strategies and programs are backed by rigorous evidence, VicHealth continues to be a trusted friend to our many partners and the communities we serve. VicHealth has looked to collaborate with new and different partners, as well as developing our existing partnerships, to tackle our new challenges. These partnerships in sectors including health, arts, sports workplace education and digital, as well as across all levels of government, help us expand the reach of our work and to co-design innovative solutions that can be integrated across the community.

We continue our focus on behavioural insights through our Leading Thinker initiative as a means to drive change. We are heartened to see this approach featuring in the work of our partners and numerous government agencies. The creation of a behavioural insights unit within the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet and the inclusion of behavioural insights related drivers in the Victorian Government's Gender Equality Strategy, *Safe and Strong*, are very positive developments.

On behalf of the VicHealth Board, I would like to thank the Victorian Minister for Health, The Hon. Jill Hennessy MP, for her support and leadership. I also thank the Minister for Mental Health, The Hon. Martin Foley MP, the Minister for Sport, The Hon. John Eren MP, other Ministers and their Advisers, Members of the Victorian Parliament, and the government departments and agencies, who have supported VicHealth this year. Our work for the people of Victoria unites us and allows us to achieve much together.

I would like to pay tribute to the late Hon. Fiona Richardson, Minister for Women and Prevention of Family Violence, who passed away in August 2017. Fiona was a fearless advocate for women and children who had experienced the terrible toll of family violence. She also had the courage to share her own personal story, shining a light on the devastating impact of violence against women. We must all continue to build on Fiona's incredible legacy.

I am very grateful to the members of the VicHealth Board and Committees, who have been trusted advisers and have made an invaluable contribution to our work during 2016–17. I thank Deputy Chair Nicole

Livingstone OAM; Board members Susan Crow, Nick Green, Margaret Hamilton AO, Collen Hartland MLC, The Hon. Wendy Lovell MLC, Veronica Pardo, Sarah Ralph, Simon Ruth, Natalie Suleyman MP, Stephen Walter; and new Board members in 2016–17: Dr Sally Fawkes and Ben Hartung.

I would like to thank our past Chair, Emeritus Professor John Catford, for his immeasurable contribution during his two years as Chair and two years as Deputy Chair. John helped to shape VicHealth's priority directions in the Action Agenda. I also wish to acknowledge the valuable contribution of Sally Freeman, whose term as Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee ended in October.

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By ensuring that all our strategies and programs are backed by rigorous evidence, VicHealth continues to be a trusted friend to our many partners and the communities we serve.

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As Chair of the Board, I am pleased that VicHealth continues to practice strong corporate governance with balanced budgets, contemporary policies, progressive planning and effective resource management. This is a tribute to our Board, Finance Audit and Risk Committee, staff and CEO. Jerril Rechter continues to be an inspiring and influential leader for VicHealth and has been a tremendous support to me in my first year as Chair. Thank you Jerril. I would also like to congratulate her on being named in *The Australian Financial Review & Westpac 100 Women of Influence 2016*.

Success in health promotion does not happen in isolation – it takes a coordinated approach from across the community. I am grateful to VicHealth's many and varied partners for your support and inspiration over the year. The commitment from our partners and the skills and experience of the VicHealth Board and staff will propel us towards our vision of: *One million more Victorians with better health and wellbeing by 2023*.

With this said, it is my great pleasure to present these highlights of our achievements for 2016–17.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Year four of our 10-year Action Agenda for Health Promotion has brought a range of new opportunities to advance the VicHealth vision of: *One million more Victorians with better health and wellbeing by 2023.*



Jerril Rechter
Chief Executive Officer

For 30 years, VicHealth has been a pioneer in health promotion with a unique role within Victoria to keep people healthy, happy and well – preventing chronic disease and keeping people out of the medical system. Our work provides individuals, groups and organisations with the latest evidence-based information and advice to make decisions which support the health of all Victorians. We understand how changes in the environment can promote health, and draw on practices that ensure we achieve the best outcomes for those who need it most. Our aim is that every Victorian, no matter their situation or resources, has the best chance for good health and wellbeing.

VicHealth is committed to five strategic imperatives that have the greatest potential to reduce disease burden and bring about the greatest measurable health gains. These are: promoting healthy eating, encouraging regular physical activity, preventing tobacco use, preventing harm from alcohol and improving mental wellbeing.

We continue to apply the VicHealth framework for health equity, Fair Foundations, to our work, recognising that good health is not distributed evenly in the community. People with low incomes, limited education or unskilled occupations, those from culturally diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal people, women, people with a disability and LGBTI communities often experience poorer health than the rest of the population. To reduce health inequities experienced by these groups, we work to address the underlying drivers of health and wellbeing and the social processes that distribute them unequally across society.

Innovation has always been part of our DNA. To us, innovation means discovering how to accelerate better health and wellbeing outcomes for Victorians, pinpointing the strategies, approaches, insights and collaborations that can fast-track our aim to create healthier lives. Innovation is embedded in our operating model, organisation structure, processes and reporting, funding criteria and systems. We value it as an essential business practice that keeps us delivering better outcomes.

Despite ongoing and emerging health challenges, positive new developments in VicHealth's operating environment will help us deliver better health and wellbeing impacts for Victorians.

This year, we were pleased to partner with the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) Office for Prevention and Women's Equality to hold three 'Prevention is Possible' forums. The forums aimed to inform and build capacity for policy makers at all levels of government and the community to implement the Victorian Government's new strategy and help create a future free from family violence.

Over the last decade, VicHealth has used a public health approach to invest in the primary prevention of violence against women. We have worked with partners from a range of sectors to build policy, undertake research and implement programs that promote equal and respectful relationships between men and women. We are now working to ensure that our collective body of knowledge is used to inform the work of a growing number of organisations committed to preventing violence against women.

As the sector has grown and flourished, VicHealth has broadened its focus to consider the relationship between gender equality and health and wellbeing. VicHealth's Changing our Game program seeks to advance gender equality in sport for women and girls. Through the program, we continue to support the recommendations from the Victorian Government's Women in Sport and Active Recreation taskforce, and align with the Government's Gender Equality Strategy and women and girls in sport initiative.

Over the year, we worked with both new and longstanding partners to find innovative solutions to collectively tackle complex health and wellbeing challenges. VicHealth plays a critical role in bringing together diverse groups and organisations. This includes all levels of government, as well as groups and individuals working in health, sports, research, education, the arts, health promotion, the media and local communities.



To us, innovation means discovering how to accelerate better health and wellbeing outcomes for Victorians.



We hosted the 16th Annual International Network of Health Promotion Foundations (INHPF) General Meeting, attended by health promotion leaders from across the Asia-Pacific region to share expertise and the latest research developments. As part of our role as a WHO Collaborating Centre for Leadership in Health Promotion, we were proud to present VicHealth as a model of a successful health promotion foundation for other countries in the Western Pacific region to follow.

Together with the World Health Organization, the International Network of Health Promotion Foundations, CSIRO and the Melbourne School of Global and Population Health, we convened the Destination Wellbeing forum. The forum's objective was to refine global and local priorities and to prompt a new wave of health promotion research.

We were honoured to be invited to participate in the 9th Global Conference on Health Promotion in Shanghai. The Conference, which culminated in the Shanghai Declaration, focused on the Sustainable Development Goals and the key role health promotion can play in achieving them.

Similar themes emerged at the 15th World Congress on Public Health in Melbourne, where we were delighted to present a range of research findings, as well as taking part in celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the World Federation of Public Health Associations and hosting a Salt Reduction Breakfast Forum.

The Congress also gave us a great opportunity to celebrate VicHealth's 30th anniversary with a number of our key local and international stakeholders, including WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific Dr Shin Young-soo.

We organised the first Kids Camp Out at Government House. Children from Sunshine North Primary School camped out in tents as part of a program to encourage them to lead active lives and have the confidence to try new experiences. The overnight camp was hosted by VicHealth's Patron-in-Chief the Hon. Linda Dessau AC and her husband, Mr Anthony Howard QC. The grade 5 and 6 children took part in activities with a focus on fitness, fun and healthy eating as we look to a future where all Victorians are more active and better equipped to make healthy food choices.

Our Leading Thinkers initiative continues to open up exciting new ways to address the entrenched beliefs and behaviours that shape our culture. Professor Iris Bohnet and Dr Jeni Klugman from the Harvard Kennedy School have taken up our second Leading Thinkers residency and will be working with us over the next three years. Building on the behavioural insights approach used by our inaugural Leading Thinker Dr David Halpern, who worked on obesity, Professor Bohnet and Dr Klugman will focus on gender equality. They are starting with two trials: the first, on gender bias in recruitment, has been incorporated into the Victorian Government's RecruitSmarter project. The second trial will use data analysis to look at women's profile in media, particularly in sport.

We continued to invest in women's sport and active recreation through the #ChangeOurGame campaign launched by Minister Hennessy, and Active Club Grants funding that prioritised clubs wanting to offer more opportunities for women and girls.

We also partnered with the Melbourne Stars and Melbourne Renegades cricket teams for the second Women's Big Bash League, and with Carlton, Western Bulldogs and Melbourne football clubs for the inaugural AFL Women's season.



As we celebrate our 30th anniversary and reflect on all that VicHealth has achieved, I am excited about our future.



Funding to Cancer Council Victoria for the Quit Program continues to be our largest and longest-standing investment. Through this effective program and its impactful anti-smoking campaigns, we support delivery of a comprehensive and integrated approach to reducing harms from tobacco across Victoria.

We continued our work to address the health inequities experienced by the people living in the Latrobe Valley in our role delivering on the recommendations of the Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry Report. Through our involvement with the Latrobe Health Assembly, we are supporting community actions and working with service providers to tackle the social determinants of health in the area.

We launched our updated Action Agenda, which will give us greater confidence to tackle health challenges and to further build our distinctive capabilities as a leader in health promotion. As we progress towards our goals, VicHealth will focus our efforts on three critical areas, where the underlying drivers of health often intersect: gender, youth and community.

These highlights are but a small sample of the many initiatives and projects on which VicHealth has worked in 2016–17. We have collaborated with organisations across the State and the knowledge we have generated has been extended through our many partners and their networks.

I would like to thank each and every member of the VicHealth team for their ongoing enthusiasm and dedication to achieving our goals. Their willingness to adapt and approach problems in new ways allows us to tread an innovative path that accelerates health outcomes for Victorians.

Thank you, too, to all VicHealth's partners and supporters including our colleagues across the Victorian Government and the local government, community and corporate partners with whom we have worked to achieve our common goals.

Our Board has continued to provide me with expert leadership and support. I acknowledge and thank our past Chair, Emeritus Prof. John Catford, for his expertise and guidance during his last two years as Chair and two years as Deputy Chair. VicHealth warmly welcomed Fiona McCormack as the new VicHealth Chair in October 2016. We have already benefited from the direction and insight Fiona brings through her extensive expertise in health and illness prevention, and her many years leading community change.

I particularly wish to thank the Victorian Minister for Health, The Hon. Jill Hennessy MP, for her support and leadership. I also thank the Minister for Mental Health, The Hon. Martin Foley MP, the Minister for Sport, The Hon. John Eren MP and other ministers and their advisers for their guidance and support.

I also wish to pay my respect and gratitude and express my deep sadness at the recent passing of The Hon. Fiona Richardson MP, Minister for Women and Prevention of Family Violence. The first Victorian Minister for Family Violence, Fiona achieved so much to advance this important cause, including overseeing the Royal Commission into Family Violence and developing the state's first prevention and gender equality strategies. Fiona touched the lives of so many in our community and she will be deeply missed.

As we celebrate our 30th anniversary and reflect on all that VicHealth has achieved, I am excited about our future. VicHealth has already truly established itself as a health promotion foundation with an international reputation for innovative, evidence-based programs that positively impact the people of Victoria. And with the immense skills of the VicHealth team and our partners, we can go even further.

By 2023, one million more Victorians will experience better health and wellbeing.*

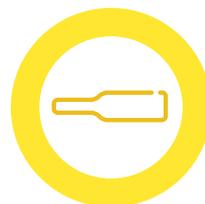
OUR 10-YEAR GOALS

200,000 more Victorians adopt a healthier diet	300,000 more Victorians engage in physical activity	BY 2023: 400,000 more Victorians tobacco-free	200,000 more Victorians drink less alcohol	200,000 more Victorians resilient and connected
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OUR THREE-YEAR PRIORITIES (2016–19)

BY 2019, THERE WILL BE:				
80,000 more people choosing water and healthy food options	180,000 more people physically active, playing sport and walking, with a focus on women and girls	280,000 more people smoke-free and quitting	80,000 more people and environments that support effective reduction in harmful alcohol use	80,000 more opportunities to build community resilience and positive social connections, with a focus on young people and women

RESULTS: We track our progress through the VicHealth Action Agenda for Health Promotion Scorecard



* A technical paper describes the calculations underpinning the 10-year goals and three-year priorities. As some individuals may achieve goals across more than one imperative, the total number in each 10-year target exceeds one million to account for this.

FAST FACTS



OUR REACH

VicHealth works in partnership with communities, organisations and individuals across Victoria to promote good health and prevent ill health.

See pages 36–39 for the organisations we worked with in 2016–17.

OUR OBJECTIVES



To fund activity related to the promotion of good health, safety or the prevention and early detection of disease.



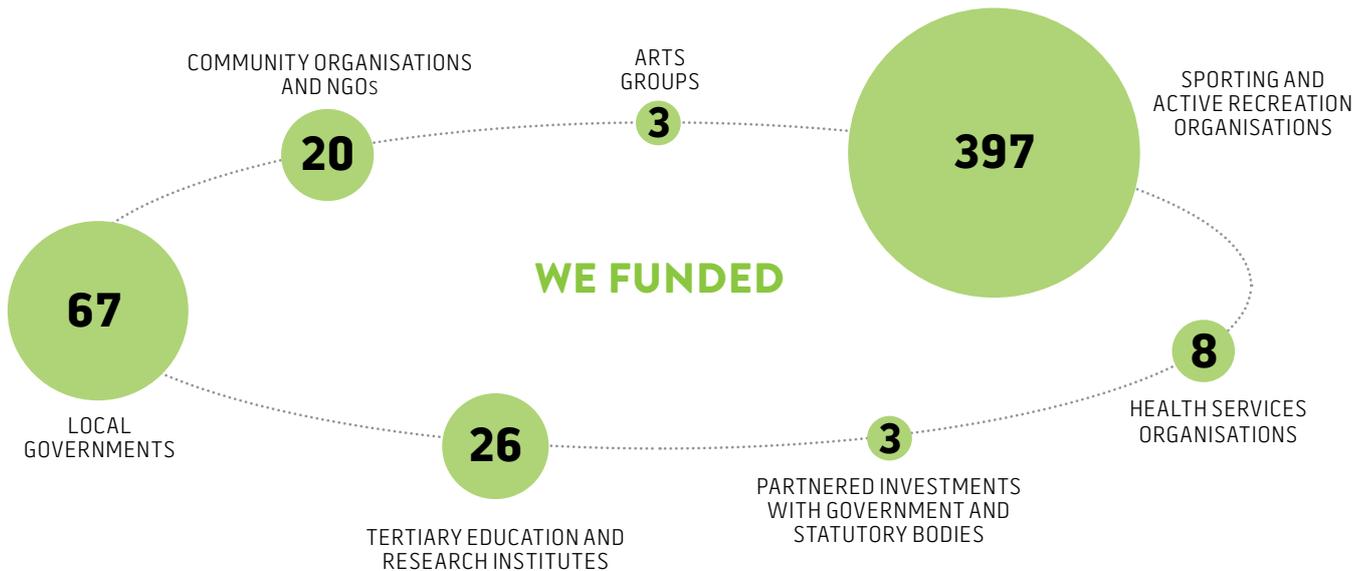
To increase awareness of programs for promoting good health in the community through the sponsorship of sports, the arts and popular culture.



To encourage healthy lifestyles in the community and support activities involving participation in healthy pursuits.



To fund research and development activities in support of these activities.



Notes:
Some organisations are counted twice or more if they received funds in more than one grant round.

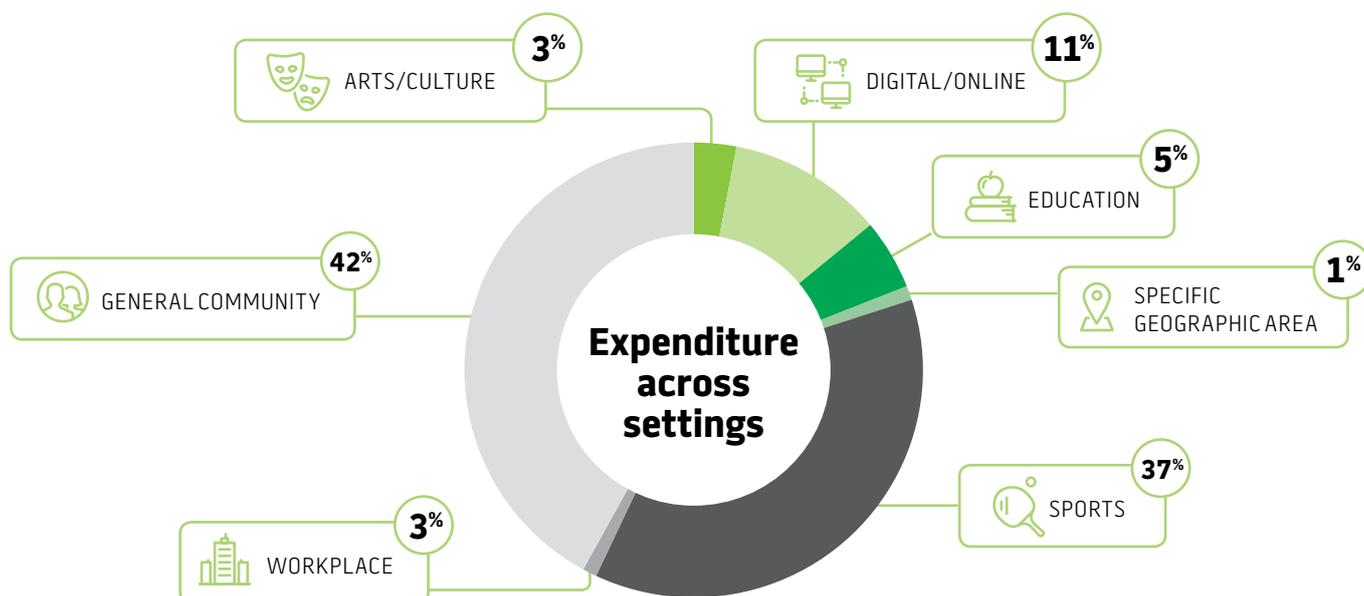
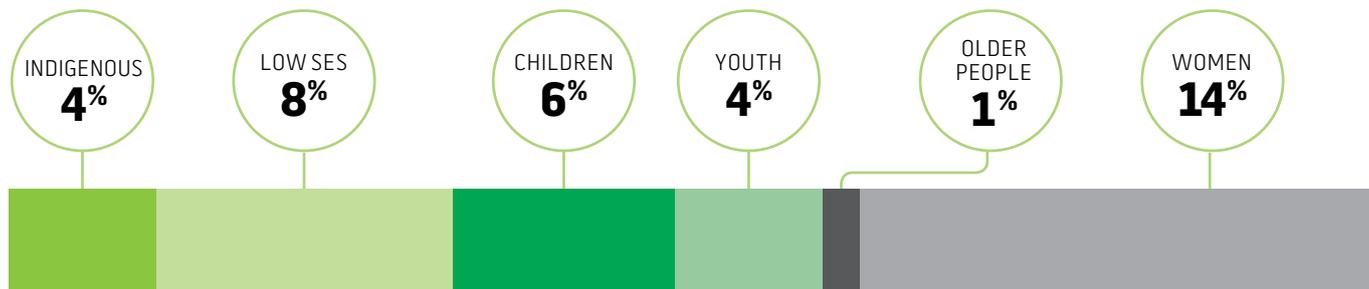
SUMMARY OF GRANT PAYMENTS

Expenditure across our strategic imperatives



Expenditure across target population groups

(WHOLE OF POPULATION EXPENDITURE: 63%)



THEMES AND APPROACHES

Our goals do not exist in isolation from each other. Over the three years 2016–19, VicHealth will focus efforts on three critical areas where the social determinants of health meet: **gender, youth** and **community**. In addition, to achieve our strategic imperatives, our actions need to focus on the underlying forces driving health and equity in Victoria, including **health equity, innovation** and **knowledge and research**.

Gender

The Victorian Government released its gender equality strategy, *Safe and Strong*, in 2016, outlining its commitment to a Gender Equality Act and creating a new prevention agency. VicHealth continues to share its experience and knowledge to support the development of these initiatives with the adoption of gender as one of our three priorities, providing a broader commitment to address the drivers of family violence.

With research uncovering the importance of gender equality in fostering healthier and more cohesive communities, VicHealth's approach and actions to improve gender equality are outlined in its strategy, *Gender equality, health and wellbeing strategy 2017–19*, launched in 2017.

Prevention of violence against women

Over the last decade, VicHealth has used a public health approach to invest in the primary prevention of violence against women. We have worked with partners from a range of sectors to build policy, undertake research and implement programs that promote equal and respectful relationships between men and women. We are now working to ensure that our collective body of knowledge is used to inform the work of a growing number of organisations committed to preventing violence against women.

Youth

In a rapidly changing world characterised by decreasing job security, globalisation, technology, cultural diversity and over-exposure to the internet, young people are increasingly required to be skilled, digitally connected, resilient and adaptable.

In 2015, VicHealth commissioned a CSIRO report, *Bright Futures: Megatrends impacting the mental wellbeing of young Victorians over the coming 20 years*, which raised questions about how Victoria can prepare and educate young people to be resilient. Out of this (and the launch of the VicHealth Mental Wellbeing Strategy 2015–2019) came the inaugural Bright Futures for Young Victorians Challenge 2016, which provided funding to projects aiming to find solutions to building resilience and social connection in young people.

Learning Impact Fund grant rounds

In July 2016, VicHealth partnered with Evidence for Learning (E4L) to co-invest in the Learning Impact Fund grant. The grant is an initiative addressing the lack of rigorous evidence on the cost and effectiveness of educational practice in Australian schools. It is designed to improve the academic achievement of schoolchildren and build their resilience skills.

Community

The Community Activation Program was a VicHealth initiative that aimed to assist less active people to become more active. We partnered with five Victorian councils to create and ‘activate’ under-used public spaces within local communities, increasing access to opportunities for physical activity and social connection. Our evaluation found positive shifts in activity levels for many participants.

VicHealth is continuing to fund two of the councils’ activations for extended delivery. Golden Plains Shire Council created an adventure park from a car park and grassed area to engage women and families, and Latrobe City Council transformed a plaza and road, using tables, seating, temporary landscaping and an area for physical activity to make a pedestrian-friendly space for the community to use.

Health equity

VicHealth Community Challenge

As part of VicHealth’s Elevate program – seeking to transform the drivers of health inequity by working with community – the VicHealth Community Challenge: Latrobe Valley called on the community to share their ideas on how to generate more jobs in the region. ‘Transitioning the Valley’ was named the winner of the inaugural Challenge in August 2016, receiving a \$20,000 boost from VicHealth. With significant community support, this project aims to transition a community that has lived through privatisation and job loss into a future of new energy technologies. Initiated by the community, it will work with government, business and educational facilities to provide a pathway to transition local workers to future industries.

VicHealth is also supporting the Latrobe Health Assembly’s planning by mapping current and recent health improvement activity in the Latrobe Health Zone. This information will help identify potential projects that could be scaled up across Latrobe City, and identify gaps where projects aren’t currently being delivered.

Innovation

Innovation is a core part of VicHealth, embedded in our operating model, organisational structure, processes and reporting, funding criteria, and systems. Our criteria for innovation focus on four areas: uniqueness, priority practice, theory of change and level of impact. As part of our innovation work, we are committed to sharing our knowledge and learnings with our partners and extended network.

Leading Thinker initiative

VicHealth is lucky enough to have two Harvard University members and global experts on behavioural insights and gender equality to join together in our second VicHealth Leading Thinker residency.

VicHealth’s Leading Thinker initiative connects international thought leaders with senior policymakers and key local experts to develop innovative solutions to complex health promotion issues, in this case, gender equality. Dr Jeni Klugman and Professor Iris Bohnet are sharing the VicHealth Leading Thinkers on Behavioural Insights and Gender Equality three-year residency.

Dr Klugman visited VicHealth in May and presented at various events and forums. There was a lot of interest in the Leading Thinkers initiative and we look forward to sharing results and learnings with our partners as the trials into de-biasing recruitment and women’s profile in media progress.

As part of our inaugural Leading Thinker residency, with Dr Halpern, we ran Victoria’s first Citizen’s Jury on Obesity in 2015, where 100 jurors spent six weeks deliberating on the question: ‘how can we make it easier to eat better?’ In October 2016, VicHealth and collaborator Mosaic Lab won the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Core Values Award for Health for this project. We were proud to win this award, which recognises outstanding projects and organisations who contribute to excellence in areas of Indigenous engagement, community development, health, infrastructure, environment, disaster and emergency services as well as for creativity, innovation and inclusion.

Knowledge and research

VicHealth Indicators Survey

We asked almost 23,000 Victorians about their health as part of the VicHealth Indicators Survey – a Victorian community wellbeing survey that focuses on the social determinants of health. The survey is based on core questions related to individual and community health and wellbeing, critical to inform decisions about public health priorities.

The survey complements the Victorian Government's Population Health Survey and when combined these datasets give local government planners a comprehensive picture of health and wellbeing in Victoria. The initial findings were released in November 2016 and we have now started on the next step – drilling further down into the data to gain insights on specific population sub-groups.

Healthy Living apps

For the second year in a row, VicHealth commissioned independent researchers at Deakin University to review over 300 health and wellbeing apps to see which ones are most likely to help Victorians achieve their health goals. The user-friendly guide rates apps that claim to promote healthy eating and physical activity, reduce harm from smoking and alcohol and smoking, and improve wellbeing. The page has been viewed tens of thousands of times since its launch in September 2015, with nearly 30,000 views in the past year alone.

Sustainable Development Partnership Grants

VicHealth's Sustainable Development Partnership Grants aim to foster collaboration between Victorian and international partners to explore how social and environmental issues such as climate change, ageing populations and the exponential growth of technology will affect our health over the next two decades. The funding, announced during the World Congress on Public Health, provides an opportunity to facilitate partnerships between leading global experts to tackle critical public health issues such as obesity, gender equality and mental wellbeing.

Innovation Research Grants

The VicHealth Innovation Research Grants call for researchers to undertake a two-year innovative research project with the potential to generate large health gains. Five projects were funded in 2016 and each will receive \$200,000 over two years.

We also opened National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Partnership Project Grant and Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Project Grant rounds in 2016. Eleven applicants were successful in gaining in-principle support, from VicHealth. Each project will receive \$150,000 over three years from VicHealth, pending final funding decisions from the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Australian Research Council.

World Congress on Health Promotion

The immense and urgent public health challenges facing local communities, nations and the world were profiled at the 15th World Congress on Public Health in Melbourne from 3–7 April 2017. The theme was *Voices, Vision, Action* and more than 2500 people from around 83 countries participated. Held every two to four years by the World Federation of Public Health Associations, it has been described as 'the world's most important public health gathering' and features the sharing of knowledge and expertise from politicians, policymakers, researchers, advocates, practitioners and community members.

Key events for VicHealth during the Congress included the launch of VicHealth Sustainable Development Goals Partnership Grant Round, providing grants to build collaborative research partnerships, the launch of a partnership between the Global Health Alliance Melbourne and the Victorian Government to map the global health investment and trade opportunities and related expertise located in Melbourne, and an opportunity to celebrate VicHealth's 30th anniversary with a number of our key local and international stakeholders.

OUR STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES





3-YEAR PRIORITY:
More people choosing water
and healthy food options





PROMOTING HEALTHY EATING

Most Victorians understand the importance of a good diet for their health. But this doesn't mean we always choose to eat the right foods.

Rates of obesity are increasing, fuelled by excessive consumption of energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods. One in two Victorian adults and one in four Victorian children aged 2–17 years are now overweight or obese.

But eating a healthy, balanced diet is not just down to individual choice and willpower. It is also impacted by factors in our environment such as the increased availability and ease of access to unhealthy foods, the cost of foods like fruit and vegetables, time pressures that make 'convenience foods' appealing, and advertising and social norms.

VicHealth aims to make it easier for Victorians to make healthier food choices.

Salt reduction in Victoria

A quarter of Victorians don't know that too much salt in childhood can lead to a lifetime of health risks. Many parents also don't realise that a lot of the salt we consume is hidden in processed foods like pizzas, breakfast cereals, bread, and packet soups and sauces. The Victorian Salt Reduction Partnership has continued its innovative approach in achieving commitment for action on salt reduction from governments, industry and the public.

As part of the partnership, VicHealth and the Heart Foundation (Victoria) led a salt awareness campaign based on the idea that you can't trust your tastebuds when it comes to knowing how much salt is in the food you buy.

An industry roundtable held in July 2016 with small-to-medium food businesses focused on reformulation in bread and smallgoods and provided key insights to inform subsequent work.

A Salt Reduction Breakfast was held as part of the World Congress on Public Health in April 2017. Events such as this have helped the Partnership to make key connections as well as showcasing key evidence for what action is needed to reduce salt at a population level, examples of international salt reduction initiatives and food companies that are leading on salt reduction within the food industry.

Water initiative

VicHealth's water initiative is an integrated program of work with the goal of more Victorians choosing water instead of sugary drinks. Reducing intake of sugar-sweetened beverages and increasing intake of water can lead to improved health and a healthier diet overall, as well as reducing tooth decay and saving money.



PROMOTING HEALTHY EATING

The H30 Challenge

The H30 social marketing campaign encouraged Victorians to make a simple 30-day pledge to replace every sugary drink they would normally drink with water. In 2017 VicHealth partnered with 18 local councils and provided them with grants of up to \$10,000 to promote the challenge in their area and deliver activities that would encourage residents to make the switch to water. When the campaign was evaluated, almost half of residents in the targeted areas recognised H30 Challenge, and almost all of these (97%) could describe at least one of the campaign’s messages.

Partnerships to promote drinking water at sporting events

Since 2015, VicHealth has been in partnership with Etihad Stadium to promote water as the drink of choice through 10 water fountains around the ground so that footy fans and other visitors could get free water refills. The project provides a free and healthy way for fans to rehydrate on game days. Nearly 4800 litres of water were dispensed through the water fountains in 2016.

During the 2017 footy season, AFL clubs Western Bulldogs, Essendon, North Melbourne, Carlton and St Kilda joined us to support the initiative and fans received free refillable water bottles, and messages on stadium screens promoting access to water. Over 1 million AFL fans were potentially exposed to positive health promotion messages encouraging them to drink water across the season, and water fountain usage was strong, with over 6000 users observed across nine of the games as part of the project evaluation.

Evaluation of trials to reduce consumption of unhealthy food and drinks

VicHealth is calling on food retailers to reduce fatty, sugary and salty foods and drinks for sale and increase the amount of fresh, healthy and nutritious food and drinks available for consumers in a bid to tackle Australia’s obesity epidemic.

VicHealth partnered with Deakin University to evaluate three healthy choices trials undertaken in the key public settings of healthcare and sport and recreation facilities. The evaluation aimed to build the business case for the economic and health costs and benefits of implementing healthy food and drink policies in these settings.

The trials, conducted in 2015–16, made small, easy-to-implement changes in retail outlets, vending machines and catering to provide a greater range of healthy food and drink options using the red, green and amber system of classification outlined in the Victorian Government *Healthy Choices* guidelines.

The evaluation revealed that reducing the availability of unhealthy food and drinks and increasing the availability of healthy items has a positive effect on people’s choices, with little to no effect on revenue.

Healthy choices in sport

As part of VicHealth’s State Sport Program and in partnership with La Trobe University and Vicsport, sporting organisations trialed different initiatives to lead players and club communities towards healthy food and drink choices. Learnings from the projects have been shared through case studies and further evaluation will be released next year.

In a bid to encourage consumers to make water the drink of choice, the VicHealth Regional Sport Program implemented a range of changes in partnership with Regional Sports Assemblies and the VicHealth water initiative grants. They did this by increasing the promotion and supply of water and reducing the availability and supply of sugar-sweetened beverages. In 2016–17 sports clubs and local government-owned sports and recreation facilities took part in the program and tested different approaches to apply in their canteens, such as taking ‘red’ drinks off display. Sales and other data were collected and success stories are now being shared through case studies to support other clubs and facilities wanting to promote healthy choices.



FEATURE

HEALTHY CHOICES: 'EAT WELL @ IGA'

A partnership focusing on exposing supermarket shoppers to a range of in-store healthy eating messages is a pioneering approach to tackling Australia's obesity problem.

VicHealth has joined with the Champions IGA supermarket chain, the City of Greater Bendigo and Deakin University to spread the 'eat well' message. The low-cost, scalable, randomised controlled and multi-component trial is a world first in using marketing into the supermarket setting to help change food purchasing behaviour. Supermarkets account for about two-thirds of Australian food purchases, so they are central to the obesity problem.

The first stage of the research consisted of a series of individual eight-week pilot trials in Bendigo in 2016. About 700 grocery items were given shelf tags that identified them as products achieving a 4.5 or 5 star rating in the Australian Health Star Rating nutrition labelling scheme. Overall, the tags led to a 12 per cent increase in the purchase of 4.5 and 5 star-rated products. A second successful trial featured healthy eating messages in all supermarket trolleys and baskets while a third trial aimed to include more healthy products in end of aisle and island bin displays.

The second phase of the project – funded until 2020 through a National Health and Medical Research Council Partnership project grant – incorporates the successful components of the pilot trials and adds in additional promotion elements including a local

letterbox drop, social media, extensive in-store promotion (floor stickers, posters, banners and shelf tag messaging) and staff training. This phase involves 14 supermarkets – seven sites that will see the healthy eating messages implemented in-store and seven control sites that will only implement the interventions after an initial nine month trial period.

The indications from last year's preliminary work show that shoppers are responsive to the messages. Deakin University's research on the customer perceptions of the 'eat well' message showed that of those who saw the material, 63 per cent said it influenced their purchase and 88 per cent wanted the healthy eating signs left in place.

One in two Victorian adults are overweight or obese, so there is a hope that the bigger supermarkets will follow IGA's lead in helping to deal with the obesity problem.

"Any supermarket can use this healthy eating information," says Dr Adrian Cameron (pictured, above right), lead researcher at the Global Obesity Centre at Deakin University's School of Health and Social Development. "Hopefully it will inspire other supermarkets. It's a competitive sector." And the trial has shown that the move had a positive impact on the IGA bottom line.

"This is about changing social norms," Dr Cameron says. "There is definitely a push across Australia towards healthy eating, but people don't want governments telling them what to do. This approach gives consumers an informed view."

↑ **12%** INCREASE in the purchase of 4.5 and 5 star-rated products

14  supermarkets involved in phase one

88% of shoppers wanted the healthy eating signs left in place

A black and white photograph of two women jogging on a dirt path. The woman on the left is wearing a dark t-shirt and dark pants, with her hair blowing in the wind. The woman on the right is wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and dark leggings. They are both smiling and appear to be in motion. The background is a dense forest of trees, and the path is a mix of dirt and grass.

3-YEAR PRIORITY:

More people physically active, playing sport and walking, with a focus on women and girls



ENCOURAGING REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Fewer than one in three Australians is getting enough physical activity to benefit their health.

This can lead to increased risks of chronic disease and mental ill health, and has been estimated to cost the Australian economy a total of \$13.8 billion each year. Increasing physical activity doesn't just benefit our physical fitness and reduce the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and cancer; it also protects and improves our mental wellbeing.

Female participation in sport is still lower than male involvement, and many women and girls are failing to fit the recommended 2.5 hours of moderate physical activity into their week.

VicHealth's focus is on helping more Victorians, particularly women, make physical activity part of everyday life. We also continue to invest in one of the most effective strategies to increase physical activity across the population: making it easier and safer to walk for short trips and active recreation.

Gender equality in sport

Sport is sport, regardless of who's playing it. Sport should be inclusive, equal, respected and encouraged at all levels for a healthier lifestyle. By creating an even playing field for all sportspersons whether female or male, we can contribute to a fairer community.

VicHealth's *Changing The Game: Increasing female participation in sport* program provided a \$1.8 million investment to create six flexible and social sport programs: AFL Active (AFL Victoria together with AFL), Social Spin (Cycling Victoria), Move My Way (Gymnastics Victoria), Rock Up Netball (Netball Victoria), Coasting (Surfing Victoria) and Get Into Cardio Tennis (Tennis Victoria together with Tennis Australia). The outcomes of these sport programs contribute to VicHealth's continued commitment to increase participation, profile and leadership of women in sport.

This commitment includes announcing further funding over the next three years under our *Active Women and Girls for Health and Wellbeing* program. The investment aims to create new opportunities for women's participation in sport, increase the profile of women's sport and improve attitudes towards gender equality in sport, and improve sport policy and practice to create welcoming and inclusive environments for women and girls.

The program will build on VicHealth's work on gender equality in sport, particularly over the past five years, and leverage our initial \$1.8 million investment under the *Changing The Game* program to get more women and girls physically active through sport.



ENCOURAGING REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

While there is further work to be done to continue to change attitudes, during 2016–17 VicHealth partnered with teams from the AFLW, Women’s Big Bash League and Women’s National Basketball League to raise the profile of women’s sport. Many athletes supported the #ChangeOurGame campaign including Melbourne Demons marquee player Daisy Pearce, Australian cricket star Meg Lanning, Carlton captain Lauren Arnell, cricketers Gemma Triscari and Molly Strano, basketballers Lauren Jackson and Maddie Garrick and former Australian Diamonds Captain and Melbourne Stars board member Sharelle McMahon.

Walk to School

VicHealth’s annual Walk to School month encourages primary school children to walk, ride or scoot to or from school to kickstart healthy habits for life.

Victorian primary students who took part in Walk to School in October 2016 have smashed previous records by walking 1.6 million kilometres – the equivalent to two return trips to the moon! A record 758 schools took part with a total of 144,928 students participating, a significant increase from 2015.

Active Club Grants

VicHealth’s grants program for community sporting clubs has been supporting local sport clubs in remote, rural, regional and metropolitan areas across Victoria to get more Victorians living healthier and happier lives for nearly three decades.

In 2016–17, the Active Club Grants provided funding to increase opportunities Victorians have to participate in sport through community clubs, prioritising female participation and social and modified forms of sports. We awarded \$930,000 to 318 sport clubs across Victoria.

Active Arts

VicHealth’s \$250,000 Active Arts Grants initiative has funded three new projects connecting councils and the community to build physical activity, resilience and social connection and cohesion through active arts programs.

The successful councils, Latrobe City Council, Melton City Council and Greater Shepparton City Council, are now developing their projects. They include a music and performance program for young people and an arts program that will provide a range of activities for Sudanese young people, Indian women and people with a disability to build the capacity of participants to become community leaders.

For the fourth year in a row we supported White Night Melbourne, as well as participating in the first White Night Ballarat, giving Victorians a great chance to get moving and have fun through art. VicHealth’s contribution at both events was Swing City, a 12-hour dance marathon featuring almost every form of social dance, set to the big band music of the 30s, 40s and 50s.

Victoria Walks

With 63 per cent of Australian adults and 25 per cent of children overweight or obese, and physical inactivity costing the Australian economy an estimated \$13.8 billion every year, encouraging regular movement into our daily lives is crucial. Walking is one of the most accessible forms of physical activity and delivers significant physical and mental health benefits.

We have committed to continue our support of Victoria Walks with funding of \$1.05 million over three years, to encourage more Victorians to walk for recreation and transport. The funding will enable Victoria Walks to deliver innovative walking participation projects, support Walk to School and work collaboratively with all levels of government to increase walking in Victoria.

The Change to Walking program was delivered in partnership with VicHealth and five Victorian councils as part of our behavioural insights trials to help people live healthier lifestyles. The program used behavioural insights to determine if ‘nudge’ approaches could prompt people to change to walking for short trips. As a result of this trial, the program found that up to 94 per cent of participants were influenced to walk more; two thirds of people intended to continue walking after participating and overall, participants increased their total physical activity by up to 42 per cent.



FEATURE

INNOVATION CHALLENGE: SPORT – ESCAPING YOUR COMFORT ZONE

Spending five months cycling between Canada and Mexico gave Richelle Olsen plenty of time to think about how to turn her idea for a hiking program for plus-size women into a reality.

When she returned to Melbourne, Richelle resigned from her job as a business analyst and started Escaping Your Comfort Zone, a hiking and walking program designed to change women's lives.

Richelle is a keen cyclist, hiker and walker with a passion for adventure. But Richelle's idea was to share the walking and hiking experience with less active women who might feel intimidated by the usual types of exercise on offer.

She trialled her initiative with 14 walkers around Lysterfield Lake Park and it didn't take long for Richelle to see the positive impact the activity had on plus-size women. Since then there have been hundreds of hikes across Melbourne and Geelong and there is a fast-growing community of hikers, now supported by funding from VicHealth's Innovation Challenge: Sport.

The VicHealth Innovation Challenge provides funding to get more Victorians moving and playing sport more often. It started in 2014 with the intention of getting sports organisations to think differently about what they offered their communities to address trends in sport participation, particularly for more fun, social and flexible options. A key focus is to engage new groups of participants to be active through sport, especially those with low physical activity levels.

"The world in general often tells us what's wrong with us, and that's particularly true for plus-size women who are told 'We can fix you'," Richelle says. "We say, 'You're great the way you are.' It's about fun with friends, not weight loss." The Escaping Your Comfort Zone walks are not intended to be exhausting – 90 per cent are aimed at beginners – but there are some longer walks for those who want more challenging activity.

Central to VicHealth's Innovation Challenge approach is to test innovations and ideas that tackle the impediments to people becoming more active and playing sport. VicHealth has long-established partnerships with Victoria's major sports organisations but the Innovation Challenge has encouraged sport organisations to create new partnerships in order to engage with less active audiences. For example, Escaping Your Comfort Zone is affiliated with Bushwalking Victoria, while Cricket Victoria has partnered with Proud2Play – an organisation representing the LGBTI community – in an Innovation Challenge education program to foster a welcoming environment for LGBTI young people to take part in cricket.

Richelle's next challenge is pushing into Melbourne's western suburbs and the Mornington Peninsula where she knows there's a need for her program. "My aim for the next 12 months is to increase the number of volunteer leaders, and build that database, and to get more hiking," she says.



90%
of walks are aimed
at beginners



Since 2014, the VicHealth Innovation Challenge has funded sporting and active recreation groups across 36 projects.



3-YEAR PRIORITY:
More people smoke-free
and quitting



PREVENTING TOBACCO USE

In recent years, significant steps forward have been made in tobacco control, with smoking prevalence in the general population reduced to 13 per cent of adults smoking regularly (down from over 32 per cent 30 years ago), and youth smoking rates declining to the lowest ever recorded.

Despite this success in decreasing population smoking rates, the progress in reducing smoking prevalence among disadvantaged populations (including those with low incomes, low levels of education, and people experiencing severe and persistent mental illness) has been much slower.

Smoking is a leading preventable health risk factor in Australia. It costs the Victorian community \$554 million annually in health care costs alone, and evidence suggests that two out of three long-term smokers will die from a smoking-related disease.

Quit Victoria

VicHealth has been committed to reducing harms from tobacco since it was established in 1987, primarily through funding Quit Victoria (led by Cancer Council Victoria (CCV)). This investment in tobacco control has enabled Quit Victoria to deliver a comprehensive and integrated approach aimed at reducing the harms from tobacco. Since 2002, VicHealth has invested over \$50 million in Quit Victoria.

Despite substantial decline in smoking rates, smoking remains all too common in some settings and groups. Quit Victoria launched a new campaign in April targeted at young men, which urges smokers to ditch cigarettes now rather than put off quitting until they are older and starting to feel the damage to their health. The campaign came as Cancer Council Victoria released data showing that more men in Victoria were daily smokers (13.9%) than women (10.1%).



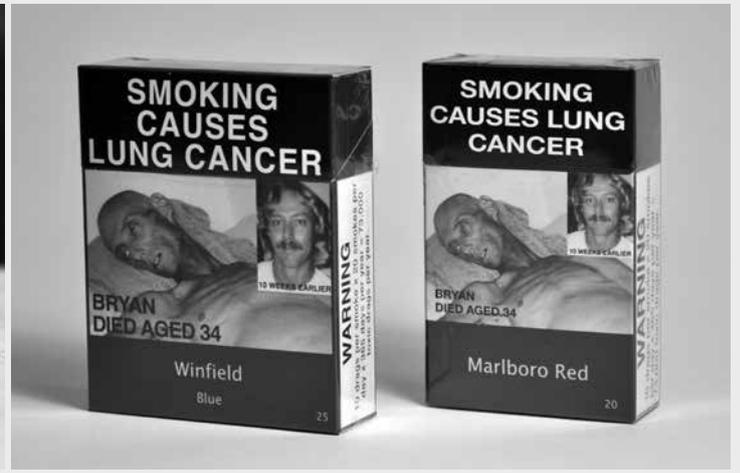
PREVENTING TOBACCO USE

Reviewing evidence on effective NRT use

VicHealth has put its support behind Alfred Health's mission to gather the best evidence available on how to stay smoke-free successfully. VicHealth funded Alfred Health for a scoping project to review existing evidence, policy, guidelines and clinical practices around the effective use of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT).

Researchers reviewed the literature, consulted with national and international experts and took input from consumers. They discovered that a key barrier for people trying to quit smoking is a lack of consistent and up-to-date information on the most effective ways to use NRTs.

Alfred Health is now holding forums around the state to share their research with local health services and provide coaching and mentoring support on best practice to help smokers to quit.



FEATURE

TOBACCO PACKAGING AND LABELLING – INDUSTRY INTIMIDATION TACTICS THROUGH LITIGATION

Tobacco packaging and labelling has been the centre of international legal battles between governments, health authorities and tobacco giants for a decade.

In 2010, Uruguay was the first country to be taken to an international court by the tobacco industry. Philip Morris, with gross revenues of US\$64 billion in 2010, sued Uruguay, a country of just 3.4 million people and a GDP of US\$32 billion in 2010. Six years later Uruguay won its case against Philip Morris to introduce its own tough labelling measures that require graphic health warnings to cover 80 per cent of cigarette packets.

Since 2012, Australia has been having its own lengthy legal battles with the tobacco industry over plain packaging, including two high court challenges, an investor-State dispute and five World Trade Organization challenges. Four of the WTO challenges remain but it is expected that a decision will be handed down shortly.

Throughout the years of legal battles Australia has maintained its resolve to defend its landmark plain-packaging legislation that has become a template for other nations intent on reducing tobacco consumption. Australia's leadership has triggered a domino effect with France, UK, Ireland, Norway, New Zealand and Hungary committing to introduce plain packaging, and there are many more countries considering it.

Australia's world-renowned tobacco control researchers and the strong advocacy by Quit Victoria – which is funded by VicHealth – played a vital role in securing the introduction of plain packaging in Australia, which later became legislation.

Congratulating Uruguay on their win, VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter said, "This ruling should serve as inspiration to other countries across the world, in particular the Western Pacific region, to consider large or full-size graphic health warnings as well as plain packaging."

1985
32% smokers

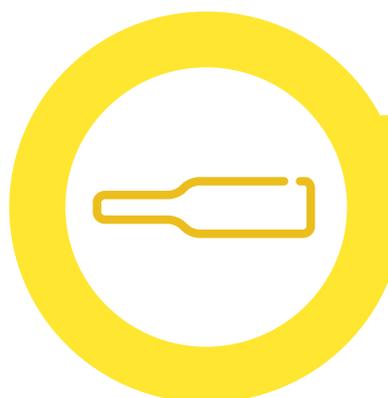


2016
11.9% regular smokers



3-YEAR PRIORITY:

More people and environments that support effective reduction in harmful alcohol use



PREVENTING HARM FROM ALCOHOL

While overall levels of alcohol consumption in Victoria are relatively stable, alcohol-related harms have increased significantly in recent years. Most Victorians drink responsibly, however a significant proportion of the population still drink in a manner that puts them at risk of injury from a single occasion of drinking, or at risk of chronic disease over the longer term.

Alcohol-related harm is a significant preventable health issue. Every year in Victoria, alcohol causes over 1200 deaths and nearly 40,000 hospitalisations. Alcohol also causes a range of social problems that affect drinkers and those around them.

On the flipside, consuming alcohol within low-risk drinking guidelines or abstaining can improve physical and mental wellbeing and social connection, and reduce the risk of injury and chronic diseases.

Discussion of Australia's problematic 'alcohol culture' has increased in recent years, as has the importance of a public health response to change it. VicHealth defines alcohol culture as the way people drink, including the formal rules, social norms, attitudes and beliefs around what is and what is not socially acceptable for a group of people before, during and after drinking.

The most recent VicHealth Indicators Survey, published in November 2016, found that almost 500,000 Victorians drink 11 or more drinks on a single occasion – the equivalent of a bottle and a half of wine, or half a bottle of hard liquor – and they're doing this on a monthly basis.

Alcohol Culture Change grants initiative

Across two funding stages, VicHealth's Alcohol Culture Change Grants Initiative for local councils provides a pool of \$1.3 million to local councils to change risky drinking cultures across a number of sub-populations including young people disengaged from education, trade workforces and middle-aged men. The council grants came as VicHealth released results from a 2016 Community Attitudes Survey showing young Victorians often feel pressured by their friends to drink, and that the majority of Victorians don't want to live in a society where it's seen as acceptable to set out to get drunk.



PREVENTING HARM FROM ALCOHOL

Eight local councils were given funding for stage one to scope and plan interventions. Of these, the four projects demonstrating the most potential were offered further funding to deliver their ideas over the next two years.

The councils are now working with research partners, community groups and workplaces on a range of projects to target groups of risky drinkers in their local area.

The new projects will be delivered in City of Port Phillip, City of Stonnington, City of Melbourne, City of Wodonga, Horsham Rural City Council and City of Whittlesea. We look forward to seeing the impact these grants will have on the communities they target.

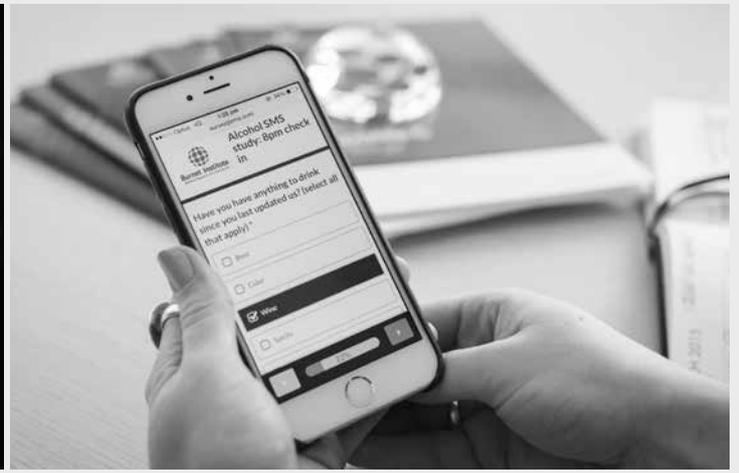
VicHealth partnered with La Trobe's Centre for Alcohol Policy Research (CAPR) to explore alcohol cultures in middle- and older-age groups. This is because, unlike their younger peers, Victorians in middle and older age are not reducing their risky drinking behaviours. This research informed the second stage of the Alcohol Culture Change Initiative which has awarded almost \$1 million to five creative new projects that will look to change alcohol drinking cultures in a range of groups, including residential college university students, construction workers, and baby-boomer and generation X drinkers in regional and rural areas.

Good Sports

The Good Sports Program is a free, national accreditation program for community sporting clubs that focuses on alcohol management as a way to influence the drinking culture within the club context. VicHealth provided the initial funding for a pilot program in 2000, implemented by the Alcohol and Drug Foundation (ADF). We continued to support Good Sports after its formal launch in 2001 and helped the program to continuously innovate and improve over time.

The Good Sports Program is now Australia's largest and longest-running health initiative in community sports, involving almost 8000 clubs across the country and still growing.

VicHealth's funding of the Good Sports Program ceased in June 2017 following the implementation of a comprehensive step-down funding model over three years to ensure the program would be sustainable. As VicHealth withdraws from direct involvement in the Good Sports, funds can be redirected into new areas of innovation to promote the health of the Victorian – and broader Australian – community.



FEATURE

ALCOHOL CULTURE CHANGE: MIDY (MOBILE INTERVENTION FOR DRINKING IN YOUNG PEOPLE)

Combining young Australians' attachment to their mobile phones with a positive way to monitor their drinking on a night out represents an innovative approach to changing the nation's alcohol culture.

The Burnet Institute ran a pilot program with 42 young people that established the possibilities of such an approach. Now VicHealth and the National Health and Medical Research Council are funding the next stage of the project, which will test whether the mobile phone intervention works to change young people's drinking habits and associated risky behaviour.

Burnet Institute deputy program director Dr Megan Lim said the early research revealed that one of the key considerations for young drinkers was the cost of a night out. She recalled one participant saying it would be horrible to have to go to hospital after a night of heavy drinking, but it would be worse to have spent all their holiday savings on the night's drinking.

The intervention is being trialled among more than 300 young drinkers and will centre on three phases during their evening out. It starts with a screening process that enables the young person to explain their drinking habits and what is important to them. Those responses determine the messaging during the evening.

There will be a series of personally tailored hourly 'check-ins' from 7pm until 2am (although participants can opt out of these if they want), and a message the next morning. The messages help to measure alcohol consumption on the night and also provide interventions, based on questions about how much the drinker has had to eat, if they've had sufficient water during the evening, and reminding them that they have an appointment first thing the next day.

"Young people don't want a negative message – that drinking causes cancer, for example. So we make sure that we frame it positively," Dr Lim says.

The simplicity, familiarity and lack of cost attached to the messaging project gives the initiative a strong equity component that could ultimately give the idea widespread uptake, with application to the annual 'Schoolies' events. In the interim, another part of the research will be undertaken at the start of the Victorian university year when many students engaging with O (Orientation) Week festivities will be encouraged to trial the intervention.

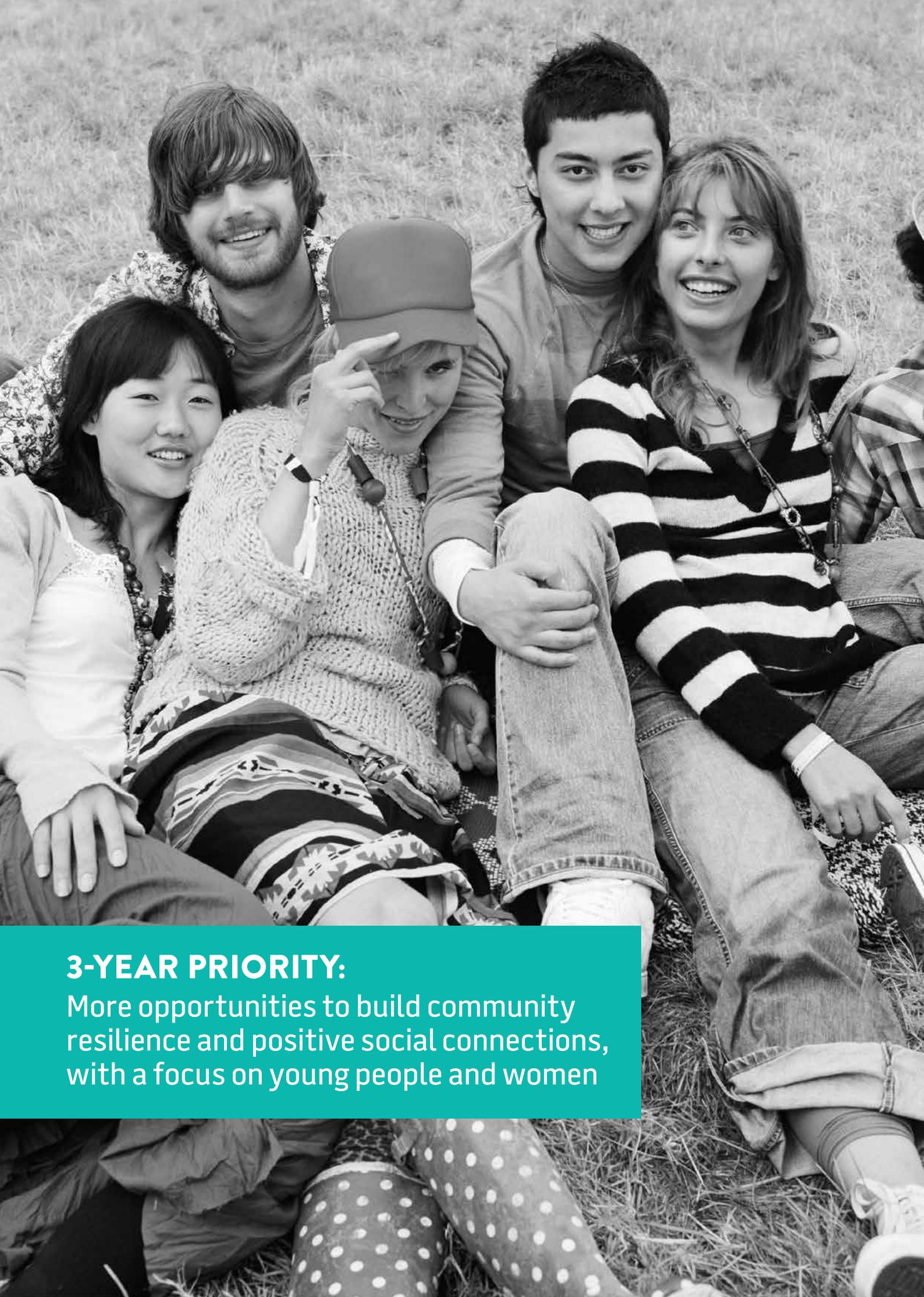
The goal is to make minor changes in behaviour: reducing a night's intake from eight to seven drinks reduces the risk of harm significantly.



The intervention is being trialled among more than 300 young drinkers



Hourly tailored 'check-ins' during an evening



3-YEAR PRIORITY:

More opportunities to build community resilience and positive social connections, with a focus on young people and women



IMPROVING MENTAL WELLBEING

Most Victorians have a good quality of life and sense of wellbeing. But almost half will experience a mental illness in their lifetime, with the first onset of symptoms most common during adolescence and young adulthood.

The environments where we live, learn, play and build relationships with others are powerful influences on our mental wellbeing and the likelihood of being free from mental illness.

VicHealth understands mental wellbeing as a dynamic state in which people are able to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, build positive and respectful relationships with others, and meaningfully contribute to the community.

Innovation Challenge: Arts

VicHealth's Innovation Challenge: Arts was about kick-starting ideas that made getting active fun for everyone. The successful projects used creative and participatory approaches to provide opportunities for Victorians of all ages to get active.

In 2015, VicHealth funded two new projects for two years that used technology to increase physical activity and social connection. Dance Break by No Lights, No Lycra is an app that gets people active wherever they are by playing an energising dance track on smart phones. In the second year of funding the Dance Break app, the design was improved, leading to more users dancing regularly and sharing it on social media.

Season 2 of The Cloud by Pop up Playground ran from January to March 2017. It was an immersive and creative street game where players found passcodes located in and around Melbourne to unlock documents and videos hidden online.



IMPROVING MENTAL WELLBEING

Creating healthy workplaces

A positive workplace can provide us with an important sense of community and connection with others, as well as help to build self-esteem and reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression. VicHealth, SuperFriend and WorkSafe Victoria have been working in collaboration since 2014 to help workplaces create supportive workplace cultures and environments that enable workers to be more engaged and effective.

Events held by the Victorian Workplace Mental Wellbeing Collaboration include regular leadership meetings which bring together business leaders to hear from expert speakers, get a better understanding of how they can support the mental wellbeing of their workforces and create a network of workplace mental wellbeing champions.

Bright Futures challenge

Almost 75 per cent of mental illness commences before 25 years of age so it's crucial we work to build the resilience and connectedness of young people with young people.

Through VicHealth's Bright Futures for Young Victorians Challenge, VicHealth provided more than \$400,000 in grants for 12 projects to support the resilience, social connection and mental wellbeing of Victorian youth. They include a project to help young dads retain quality connections with their children, a support network for young job-seekers, and a social enterprise to enhance young peoples' skills and confidence.

The projects connect councils, community and young people to codesign and trial preventative strategies that will equip young people with the tools they need to face future challenges.

Preventing violence against women in Victoria

In an attempt to design and test a place-based multi-sectoral approach to preventing violence against women, VicHealth's world-first model for preventing violence against women, Generating Equality and Respect (GEAR), was recognised with the prestigious national Excellence in Evaluation Award, announced by the Australian Evaluation Society (AES). GEAR provides accessible tools and resources for local governments, health services, businesses and non-government organisations (NGOs) to work collaboratively in taking prevention of violence against women to the next level.

VicHealth's continued efforts to inform diverse sectors of current and emerging issues in the prevention of violence against women are illustrated by the Prevention is Possible Policy Forums held during 2017. This series of three forums worked with public service policy makers to increase their understanding of, and preparedness for, the release of the Victorian government Primary Prevention strategy, as well as increasing their capacity to take action on the Royal Commission into Family Violence recommendations.



FEATURE

THE PRIDE GAME

Research shows that sport can be a challenging environment for the LGBTI community, as players or spectators.

More than 80 per cent of LGBTI participants said they had witnessed or experienced homophobia in sport. A further 87 per cent of young gay Australian sportswomen and men felt forced to partially or completely hide their sexuality.

Homophobia can have a very serious impact on the mental wellbeing of LGBTI people. Same-sex attracted Australians are up to three times more likely to experience depression and have up to 14 times higher rates of suicide attempts than their heterosexual peers.

In 2014, Yarra Glen Football Club and Yarra Junction took a step towards making football more inclusive when it staged a football match for the Community Pride Cup, which welcomed everyone from the LGBTI community.

The AFL endorsed the game and hundreds came to support the teams and local footballer Jason Ball, who in 2012 became the first male Australian Rules football player at any level to publicly come out as gay in the media.

Two years later, St Kilda and the Sydney Swans – with VicHealth’s support – met for the inaugural AFL Pride Cup, establishing an international precedent that will be a feature of each season.

Football grounds haven’t always been the most welcoming places for LGBTI fans but the rainbow colours rippling through the crowds at Etihad Stadium for the Pride Game told a different story. A VicHealth-funded La Trobe University study of 3700 footy fans found that before the 2016 Pride match 50 per cent of LGBTI football fans thought AFL games were not inclusive or welcoming. But after the game, more than 90 per cent of LGBTI fans said they found the match safe, inclusive and welcoming.

It was a message of inclusion that St Kilda CEO Matt Finnis shared. “As a club, we are proud to continue to promote the message that everyone is welcome in football,” he said.

“Through the Pride Game and other initiatives, we are striving to tackle homophobia and transphobia, and other barriers that prohibit members of the LGBTI community feeling welcome in the sporting environment.”

The Pride Game has helped inspire similar events around Victoria. Hamilton, in the western district, had two pride matches in 2017: one featured two of Melbourne’s strongest women’s VFL teams and was followed by a local football match, featuring the Hamilton Kangaroos. All teams wore Pride jumpers featuring rainbow designs. There were also Pride games in Gippsland and in the Southern Football and Netball League, which covers Melbourne’s south-eastern suburbs. Next year, there are plans for Pride games in Mornington, Daylesford and Shepparton.



BEFORE PRIDE GAME

50%

of LGBTI fans thought AFL games were not inclusive or welcoming



AFTER PRIDE GAME

90%

of LGBTI fans found the match safe, inclusive and welcoming



DURING 2016–17, WE WORKED WITH THESE ORGANISATIONS







Queensland University of Technology



397 VICTORIAN SPORT AND RECREATION CLUBS AWARDED ACTIVE CLUB GRANTS

Alpine Shire Council
 Ararat Rural City Council
 Ardeer South Primary School
 Australasian College for Emergency
 Medicine
 Australian Catholic University Ltd
 Australian Drug Foundation
 Banyule City Council
 Barwon Heads
 Bass Coast Shire Council
 Baw Baw Shire Council
 Benalla Rural City Council
 Boroondara City Council
 Borough of Queenscliffe
 Brimbank City Council
 Buloke Shire Council
 Cancer Council of Victoria
 Committee for Economic Development
 of Australia (CEDA)
 Central Goldfields Shire Council
 Cheltenham Community Centre Inc
 City In The Community
 City of Ballarat
 City of Casey
 City of Darebin
 City of Greater Bendigo
 City of Greater Dandenong
 City of Greater Geelong
 City of Melbourne
 City of Port Phillip
 City of Stonnington
 City of Whittlesea
 City of Wodonga
 Community Stars Pty Ltd
 Corangamite Shire Council
 CQ University Australia
 Diabetes Australia
 East Gippsland Shire Council
 Escaping Your Comfort Zone Inc
 Frankston Heights Primary School
 Gannawarra Shire Council
 Gemba Group Pty Ltd
 Georgetown University
 Golden Plains Shire
 Greater Shepparton City Council
 Griffith University
 Heywood Consolidated School
 Hindmarsh Shire Council
 Horsham Rural City Council
 Hume City Council
 Ilbijerri Theatre Company
 Indigo Shire Council
 Ipsos Public Affairs Pty Ltd
 Jim Stynes Foundation
 Kingston City Council
 Knox City Council
 Lancefield Primary School
 Latrobe City Council
 Loddon Shire Council
 Macedon Ranges Shire Council
 Manchester Primary School
 Manningham City Council
 Mansfield Shire Council
 Maribyrnong City Council
 Maroondah City Council
 Melton Shire Council
 Mildura Rural City Council
 Mitchell Shire Council
 Moira Shire Council
 Monash City Council
 Moonee Valley City Council
 Moorabool Shire Council
 Moreland City Council
 Mornington Peninsula Shire
 Mount Alexander Shire Council
 Murdoch Childrens Research Institute
 Murrindindi Shire Council
 Nillumbik Shire Council
 Northern Grampians Shire Council
 Orygen Research Centre
 Princeton University
 Pyrenees Shire Council
 ReActivate Latrobe Valley
 Shepparton RSL Sub
 Shire of Campaspe
 South Gippsland Shire Council
 Special Olympics Victoria
 Swan Hill Rural City Council
 Swell Mamas Inc
 The Centre for Continuing Education
 The Nossal Institute for Global Health
 The Social Research Centre
 The University of Newcastle
 The University Of Sydney
 The University of Western Australia
 Tobacco Free Portfolios Limited
 Towong Shire Council
 Traralgon Neighbourhood Learning
 House
 University of New South Wales
 Victorian Aboriginal Education
 Association
 Wangaratta Rural City Council
 Warrnambool City Council
 Wellington Shire Council
 Whitehorse City Council
 Wodonga City Council
 World Congress on Public Health 2017
 World Health Organization
 Wurinbeena
 Wurundjeri Tribe
 Wyndham City Council
 Yarra City Council
 Yarra Ranges Council
 Youth Affairs Council Victoria

ABOUT VICHEALTH



Our origin

VicHealth (the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation) is the world's first health promotion foundation, created in 1987 with a mandate to promote good health. We were established with all-Party support by the State Parliament of Victoria with the statutory objectives mandated by the Tobacco Act 1987 (Vic) (the Act). The responsible minister is the Minister for Health, The Hon. Jill Hennessy MP.

The objects of VicHealth as set out in the Act are to:

- fund activity related to the promotion of good health, safety or the prevention and early detection of disease
- increase awareness of programs for promoting good health in the community through the sponsorship of sports, the arts and popular culture
- encourage healthy lifestyles in the community and support activities involving participation in healthy pursuits
- fund research and development activities in support of these objects.

Functions

The functions of VicHealth as set out in the Act are to:

- promote its objects
- make grants from the Health Promotion Fund for activities, facilities, projects or research programs in furtherance of the objects of VicHealth
- provide sponsorships for sporting or cultural activities
- keep statistics and other records relating to the achievement of the objects of VicHealth
- provide advice to the Minister on matters related to its objects referred by the Minister to VicHealth and generally in relation to the achievement of its objects
- make loans or otherwise provide financial accommodation for activities, facilities, projects or research programs in furtherance of the objects of VicHealth
- consult regularly with relevant Government Departments and agencies and to liaise with persons and organisations affected by the operation of this Act
- perform such other functions as are conferred on VicHealth by this or any other Act.

VicHealth performs and manages these functions by:

- developing a strategic plan, including concept, context and operations
- initiating, facilitating and organising the development of projects and programs to fulfil the strategic plan
- ensuring an excellent standard of project management for all project and program grants paid by VicHealth
- developing systems to evaluate the impacts and outcomes of grants
- ensuring that such knowledge is transferred to the wider community.

Our commitment

- Fairness – we promote fairness and opportunity for better health for all Victorians, by making health equity an aim of all our work.
- Evidence-based action – we create and use evidence to identify the issues that need action and to guide policy and practice by VicHealth and our partners.
- Working with community – we work with communities to set priorities, make decisions and create solutions.
- Partnerships across sectors – we collaborate with governments at all levels and form alliances with others in health, sports, research, education, the arts and community, as well as nurture strong relationships with health promotion practitioners and the media.

Our difference

VicHealth has played a unique role since its inception. We champion positive influences for health and seek to reduce negative influences. This means helping individuals and communities make better-informed decisions, and shaping environments that support healthier choices.

Our strategy incorporates a behavioural insights lens that considers the influences on people's behaviour and choices. This complements existing approaches with new ways to accelerate better health outcomes for all Victorians. Our culture of innovation enables us to be a catalyst for, and early adopter of, new health promotion approaches.

We work in partnership with all sectors as a trusted, independent source of evidence-based practice and advice. We play a critical role in creating and strengthening this evidence base through our rigorous research and evaluation of our actions.



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