

# Integrated theme: Knowledge for health



## Knowledge makes us sharper and focuses our research efforts on where we can make the most difference in our *Action Agenda*.

VicHealth strives to be an international leader in the production and dissemination of cutting-edge health promotion research.

Research complements all of our health promotion investments. We support a mix of strategic research, investigator-led research and evaluation research to build evidence for health promotion interventions. We explore opportunities for collaborative research investments to support major Victorian preventative and health promotion initiatives, and we act as an industry partner to support applicants for Australian Research Council Linkage Grants and National Health & Medical Research Council Partnership Grants.

This year, we have strengthened our ways of working across the health sector to research, evaluate and build internal and external capacity to meet our most pressing health challenges.

We have partnered with policy experts and researchers to ask clearly framed questions and enhanced the rigour of the answers.

We now have a much sharper focus on where to target investments to get the best results, and a shared understanding among our internal and external stakeholders on how best to work with us to drive better health outcomes.

Across our five strategic imperatives we have conducted evidence reviews to shape the work and put the academic evidence into real policy and practice. And we have sharpened our focus on evaluation. We are now much clearer about what we expect to change in 3 years and 10 years so that we can better track our progress and the benefits of our investments.

We are also preparing for the 2015 VicHealth Indicators Survey – a Victorian community wellbeing survey that focuses on a range of key health and wellbeing issues. It is a critical piece of work that informs public health planning and complements other population health surveys such as the State Government's *Victorian Population Health Survey*.



“VicHealth’s research investments and thought-provoking projects continue to raise awareness of discrimination and its associated health costs, as well as provide some of the intelligence required to reduce it.”

**KATE JENKINS**

Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commissioner

### This year’s research highlights include:

- **Australian’s attitudes to violence against women (p. 51)**  
Findings from the 2013 National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey developed by VicHealth in partnership with The University of Melbourne, the Social Research Centre and experts across Australia.
- **Past trends and future projections of overweight and obesity (p. 22)**  
Research by world-leading obesity expert Associate Professor Anna Peeters.
- **Modelling policy interventions to protect Australia’s food security (p. 20)**  
A joint Australian Research Council project between VicHealth and Professor Mark Lawrence from Deakin University.
- **Evaluating the impact of incorporating health into urban planning (p. 28)**  
Dr Cecily Maller’s 5-year research fellowship examining the progress of Selandra Rise and how urban planning and the design of the built environment are linked with residential community health.

- **Parental fear research (p. 31)**  
3-year study by La Trobe University and the Parenting Research Centre to investigate the role that parental fear plays in shaping children’s independence and physical activity.
- **Snapshot of Victoria’s alcohol culture (p. 42)**  
Pioneering research examining Victoria’s alcohol culture, including the acceptability of drunkenness across a range of social situations and contexts.
- **Drinking-related lifestyles (p. 43)**  
RMIT University’s Associate Professor Mike Reid’s exploration of the role alcohol plays in Victorians’ lives.
- **Understanding and reducing alcohol-related harm among urban youth (p. 45)**  
Research by Turning Point’s Dr Sarah MacLean identifying how young adults’ drinking patterns and attitudes vary across Melbourne.
- **Children’s exposure to alcohol advertisements (p. 45)**  
The nature of alcohol and junk food advertising and promotion through sport on broadcast television in Victoria by La Trobe University’s Associate Professor Matthew Nicholson.



“VicHealth has been at the forefront of raising awareness about the health hazards of sitting by supporting researchers like myself and through health promotion initiatives in the workplace that encourage workers to sit less and move more.”

**PROFESSOR DAVID DUNSTAN**

Head, Physical Activity, Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute