



Winter 2008 (Issue 32) Using Research to Create Healthy Communities

VicHealth's investment in public health and health promotion research has exceeded \$100 million. Our research investments are tightly linked to the big issues – tobacco control, social inclusion, health inequalities, nutrition, alcohol and participation in physical activity. Through consultation and collaboration with community and government, VicHealth and Victorian researchers have helped shape the very questions that Victorians need answered to improve our collective health and wellbeing. In this issue we showcase a variety of research investments that have had a positive impact on our community's health and wellbeing.



Summer 2007 (Issue 31) To Your Health? Exploring What's Safe, Sensible and Social

Alcohol is entrenched in our society: we use it to celebrate, commiserate, relax and socialise. However alcohol is a common companion of violence and injury, unsafe sex, crime, poor mental health, car smashes and workplace absenteeism. The harms of alcohol are accelerating, particularly around young people. The urgency of addressing this cannot be stressed enough. But any strategy will need sustained commitment from local, State and Federal Governments, and the support of community organisations, workplaces, and researchers. In this issue we begin to explore what 'safe, sensible and social' can be in the face of some very serious challenges.



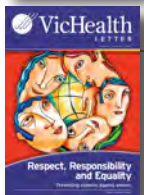
Winter 2007 (Issue 30) Making the Link between Cultural Discrimination and Health

For some time VicHealth has identified discrimination and its resulting disadvantages as one of the important drivers of mental ill health. Discrimination based on a person's ethnicity, culture or religion carries an enormous cost on the individual and has devastating effects on families and communities. It has the potential to harm us all by undermining community relations and social cohesion, stifling productivity and placing an unnecessary burden on our health, welfare and legal systems. In this issue we not only raise awareness of the problem of discrimination and its associated health, social and economic costs, but provide some ideas towards reducing it.



Autumn 2007 (Issue 29) The Gold Medal for Participation: A New Role for Sport

Despite sports of all kinds emerging over the last 50 years, we've seen a steep decline in the amount of time allocated to sport and physical activity. People are less active than they were, and this is playing havoc with our health. So wouldn't it seem logical that the connection between sport and public health would be as tight as a rugby scrum? That public health strategies would include sports and active recreation as an important element in tackling obesity and other health issues? Unfortunately, it isn't happening to the degree necessary and although mutual understanding between the sectors is increasing, there remains much work to be done. We explore some of the challenges of a public health/sport partnership. We also highlight some of the best examples of how sport is attracting more participants and promoting healthy environments.



Spring 2006 (Issue 28) Respect, Responsibility and Equality: Preventing Violence Against Women

Violence against women is a universal problem and one of the most widespread violations of human rights. It has severe and persistent effects on women's physical and mental health and carries with it an enormous cost in terms of premature death and disability. It also has devastating effects on families and communities. To reduce the levels of violence perpetrated against women we need preventative approaches at all levels and a stronger evidence base about violence prevention that will lead to better health. This issue explores the myriad ways in which government, service providers and women's and men's groups are working to develop a program of research, community strengthening, organisational development and advocacy activity focusing on primary prevention.



Winter 2006 (Issue 27) The New Frontline of Health: From Roads, Rates and Rubbish to Community Wellbeing

As a hub of knowledge, resources and networks, councils are increasingly using their unique position to encourage businesses, arts groups, community services, sports groups and others to find the common ground and work together to promote health and prevent ill-health. This issue profiles some of the work being done by local councils across Victoria. It demonstrates how they are responding to local circumstances and meeting the challenges of promoting health at a local level by developing practical, creative and often brave solutions.



Summer 2006 (Issue 26) Healthy Planet, Healthy People: Shaping a Sustainable Healthy Future

There are a bewildering number of terms used to describe the links between the environment and health – ecological public health, healthy sustainable communities and eco-cities to name a few. What they are all trying to articulate is that our health depends on the quality of our environment – natural, built, social and cultural. To help push the debate forward about how sectors can work better together to promote healthy environments we have asked some influential commentators to contribute to this VicHealth Letter, including the ACF's Prof. Ian Lowe and ANU social analyst Richard Eckersley.



Winter 2005 (Issue 25) An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure: Making the Case for Choosing Health Promotion

If an ounce of prevention really is worth a pound of cure, why don't government and societies fund health promotion appropriately? In this issue we look at what needs to be done to overcome the many barriers to investing in public health, be they economic, commercial, political, cultural or administrative. The articles cast light on a number of different facets of the interaction between health promotion and prevention concepts, our practice, and the decision-making processes in our society.

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