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THIS ISSUE:

MEGATRENDS,
STRATEGY & A NEW
FOCUS ON RESILIENCE

CREATING NEW WAYS
TO GET PEOPLE ACTIVE

SALT PARTNERSHIP
UPDATE

USING MOBILE
PHONES TO REDUCE
YOUTH DRINKING

APRIL 2016 / ISSUE NO.

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Professor Emeritus John Catford
Chair

At any one time, a person can experience multiple health and wellbeing issues. These are often interrelated.

Mental wellbeing, physical health, quality of life, social connection, and productivity can all influence each other positively and negatively. We are not isolated individuals – “no one is an island”. Rather we are bound to the physical and social environments in which we live.

So, if we are to improve the health and wellbeing of Victorians we need to address broader environmental factors and consider every aspect of our life in the community.

Since our last edition of the Letter we have seen the successful completion of cricket’s inaugural Women’s Big Bash League, which has helped to raise the profile of women’s sport in Victoria and Australia. On 2 January a record national average of 372,000 viewers watched the inaugural VicHealth derby between the Melbourne Renegades and Melbourne Stars, both of whom are also VicHealth partners.

We have seen increased participation in six different sporting codes via VicHealth’s Changing the Game campaign. With VicHealth funding, these sports are offering new activities to improve physical health, mental wellbeing and social connection by making it easy, sociable and fun to get active.

Domestic violence is another area that has gained significant attention. Recently, we saw the launch by Our Watch, VicHealth and ANROWS of a national framework for the prevention of violence against women and their children – Change the Story. The framework highlights the links between gender inequality, violence against women and health. Supported by research, it identifies the key actions to prevent violence and the strategies and approaches required to address this urgent health problem.

At the end of March 2016 we welcomed the findings of the Royal Commission into Family Violence, which cited VicHealth’s contribution to preventing violence against women over the past 15 years. The recommendations will help guide VicHealth’s health promotion and prevention future work. This includes providing forums for Victorian policy-makers to take action on the findings, as well as driving new approaches to building gender equality in sporting organisations, schools, workplaces and communities.

A recent report by PwC, in partnership with VicHealth and OurWatch, has shown the economic cost of violence against women and their children in Australia is \$21.6 billion each year. With Governments carrying more than a third of the cost burden, this staggering statistic further highlights the need for investment in prevention.

VicHealth’s work in the Latrobe Valley demonstrates the link between economic and social disadvantage and health. In the aftermath of the Hazelwood mine fire in 2014, VicHealth has worked with the community to build resilience and social connection. A community already experiencing disadvantage, VicHealth’s investment has helped strengthen people’s health and mental wellbeing through difficult circumstances.

When the Hon. Martin Foley MP launched Victoria’s ten-year mental health plan in November last year, he said: “Mental health is everyone’s business.” I agree. It is all connected: physical health, mental wellbeing, social connection and the environment in which we live.

This holistic view of health and wellbeing, focused more broadly on environmental and social factors, strengthens our ability to address the causes of a range of health and wellbeing issues. The progress that we Victorians are making to enable one million more of us to enjoy better health and wellbeing by 2023 is truly inspiring.

Congratulations and thanks for all your efforts. ■

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Research commissioned by VicHealth paints a picture of the challenges facing young people into the future and provides a unique opportunity to build young people’s resilience, social connection and mental wellbeing to withstand and bounce back from the stresses of these rapid changes (see pages 6–11).

The factors that affect our health and wellbeing are as diverse and far-reaching as our level of social connectedness, how well we cope with challenges, the technology around us and the content of our food.

Mental wellbeing, a topic that is finally starting to receive the attention it requires, is a particularly complex area of health and requires broad investigation. Since the 1990s, VicHealth has undertaken groundbreaking mental wellbeing research with a focus on promoting diversity and gender equity. Our achievements in this area have contributed to a new direction: aiming to build resilience in young people.

We need to build resilience in the younger generation so that our community of the future is able to cope and thrive in a high-paced, competitive global world. Social connections, information and support help individuals achieve positive outcomes despite adverse events.

VicHealth's Mental Wellbeing Strategy 2015–2019 will guide us as we work towards our goal of 200,000 more Victorians resilient and connected by 2023. This edition of the *VicHealth Letter* highlights the strengths of VicHealth's evidence-based approach in developing

new initiatives and putting them into practice to benefit Victorians now and for many years to come.

VicHealth is proud of our leadership role in building the evidence to understand the health impacts of violence against women in Victoria and Australia. The findings of the Royal Commission into Family Violence have highlighted the vital importance of primary prevention to address this problem and given VicHealth a refreshed focus. VicHealth will continue to support sporting organisations to promote women's participation and leadership in sport, test new ways to protect children from online pornography, bring experts together to discuss alcohol and violence, and collaborate with a range of new and existing partners to encourage respectful and equal relationships between men and women. We all have a responsibility to prevent violence against women and our community is now poised to achieve a world-first reduction, preventing violence before it starts.

Drinking habits develop at an early age. We need to empower our younger generation with the education and support needed to develop healthy behaviours around alcohol. With the knowledge that 89 per cent of Australians aged 18–29 own a smart phone, VicHealth is researching how mobile phone technology could be leveraged as a platform to collect data and communicate with young Australians in real-time, as alcoholic drinks are being consumed. Many Victorians, particularly women, find it hard to fit physical activity into their busy lives. We are excited to be funding six new

programs through our Physical Activity Innovation Challenge, which will offer sociable, flexible and less-structured ways to participate in sport.

Ranging from walking football aimed at older people, to a version of water polo where players float in inner tubes, the programs will be trialled to make it easier for more Victorians to get active in new and fun ways.

Salt has been described as a 'silent killer' in manufactured foods. This year, we continue to work closely with The George Institute, the Heart Foundation, the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, Kidney Health Australia, The Stroke Foundation and Deakin University to engage and support the food industry to reduce salt levels in foods and evaluate the effectiveness of earlier strategies.

For much more on our activities and insights, enjoy reading the *VicHealth Letter*. Every edition is packed with diverse content but each underlines a powerful approach at the core of VicHealth's work. Our actions are supported by robust evidence – a result of the research that we commission, as well as learnings and evaluation from our programs. Our approach positions us as experts in health promotion and enables us to make the strong partnerships that are essential to tackling health and wellbeing issues. In turn, our partnerships afford us insights, reach, collective resources and imagination, deepening our understanding of the complex issues in health and wellbeing and the most promising pathways forward. ■

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We need to build resilience in the younger generation so that our community of the future is able to cope and thrive in a high-paced, competitive global world.”

Jerril Rechter
Chief Executive Officer



REGIONAL CONVERSATIONS

Regional Victorians can face unique health and wellbeing challenges, and the way they're addressed at a local level is different in every community.

In March and April 2016, VicHealth teamed up with the Victorian Regional Community Leadership Program (VRCLP) to hold conversations with local community leaders from the not-for-profit, government and corporate sectors across regional Victoria about how the whole community can work better together to tackle important local health promotion issues.

VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter said: "It has been great to engage with community leaders in Ballarat, Shepparton, Bendigo, Gippsland and Geelong.

"The local community's advice and insights will contribute towards the upcoming refresh of our Action Agenda for Health Promotion, our roadmap for VicHealth's work to 2023."



WORKPLACES INTO THE FUTURE

Australia's new Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Kate Jenkins (pictured above), opened a VicHealth forum where local and international experts gathered on 23 March 2016 to discuss what it takes to improve health and wellbeing in our rapidly changing workplaces.

Findings from the Creating Healthy Workplaces project reports were presented at the forum and highlighted the important role workplaces have in leading changes that create healthier environments for their employees.

The program funded five large-scale projects in Victorian workplaces over four years. VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter said: "VicHealth's Creating Healthy Workplaces Program, in conjunction with a range of important partners, has built a body of knowledge about how to address alcohol-related harm, reduce prolonged sitting, prevent violence against women and minimise stress in the workplace."



ROLL UP, ROLL UP! ACTIVE ARTS AT WHITE NIGHT 2016

VicHealth brought the circus to town as part of Circus Circus at White Night Melbourne on 21 February 2016.

From 7pm to 7am, the VicHealth Active Arts stage entertained the crowds and demonstrated how circus skills can be fun and active, with performances from troupes including Circus Oz, Cirque Africa, Performing Older Women's Circus, National Institute of Circus Arts and the Women's Circus.

Along with professional performances, the audience had a rare opportunity to see what goes on behind the scenes with an exposé of circus rigging, training and preparation for each act. Some brave Victorians even had a go on the trapeze, or got active by trying out their hula and juggling skills. Circus Circus is part of VicHealth's Active Arts Strategy, giving Victorians a great chance to get moving and have fun through art.



#FINDYOURMOTIVATION

VicHealth launched a new campaign in March 2016 to inspire Victorian women to find their motivation and rediscover how good it feels to get active.

We're partnering with Melbourne Vixens, Parkrun, Geelong Football Club, Hawthorn Football Club, Melbourne City Football Club and Richmond Football Club on a range of initiatives to help women find simple ways to get active.

Many women have strong intent to be more active, however only one-third is active enough to benefit their health. The Find Your Motivation campaign aims to empower women aged 25–44 by providing a range of options to turn intention into action.

Find out more at vichealth.vic.gov.au/find-your-motivation

THE HON. MARTIN FOLEY MP

Minister for Mental Health



Martin Foley MP has responsibility for the social justice portfolios of Housing, Disability and Ageing, Mental Health and Equality, as well as Creative Industries, in the Victorian Government. His portfolios are linked by a generational opportunity to look beyond narrow responses to addressing disadvantage.

Last November you launched the 10-Year Mental Health Plan for Victoria (the Plan). What are the key actions in relation to young people's mental wellbeing?

The Andrews Labor Government wants to help all Victorians experience their best mental health. This includes support for families and for children early in life to help them develop the necessary life skills to manage their own mental health. Young people will also benefit from our focus on reducing the suicide rate and diverting people with mental illness from the justice system. We have also begun planning for the new Orygen Youth Mental Health Care and Research Centre at Parkville, to which we will contribute \$60 million as part of a commitment to world-leading practice and research. We have already increased support for the wellbeing of young people through expansion of the Safe Schools program and investing \$5.9 million in programs that promote the mental health of LGBTI Victorians, as well as investing \$4.4 million to support high-risk young people with an eating disorder.

What insight did you gain from consultation with people who have experienced mental health conditions, during development of the Plan? Many people shared their concerns about services that are fragmented, siloed, difficult to navigate, hard to access, crisis-driven, facing increasing demand, under-resourced, stigmatised and stigmatising. We heard the frustration of trying to access services only to be turned away. We heard about families and carers feeling isolated and excluded. But we also heard many positive stories about what helped recovery, including support from peer workers, clinicians and other mental health workers.

The Plan identifies mental illness prevention as an action area.

Why is prevention important to the government? Who should be involved in the prevention effort? Many people responding to the consultation spoke about the benefits of investment in mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention across all age groups. Clearly, prevention is better than cure, both in terms of human hardship and medical costs. Early and appropriate intervention is a key goal for our mental health system.

What role do you think health promotion has in improving mental health in Victoria? We want to see promotion of mental health for all ages and stages of life, helping people to build protective factors for good mental health and to seek support when they recognise risks. It is also crucial that we build respect for people living with mental illness and work towards including them more in society, reducing stigma and discrimination. ■

MENTAL WELLBEING

MEGATRENDS, STRATEGY AND A NEW FOCUS ON RESILIENCE



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Our aim is for 200,000 more Victorians to be resilient and connected by 2023. A cross-sector approach is critical to reaching this goal.”

For every generation, a part of their youth is dedicated to weighty, life-forming decisions over which the future looms large. However, the current generation of young Australians face unique challenges, many alien to their predecessors just a decade ago.

Today's young people are more connected to their peers, the media and a broader globalised community than ever before. They are more aware of their many options, both beneficial and negative. They are faced with the challenge of not only forging an authentic identity but creating and managing their online identities too. Conflicting messages come in fast and relentlessly. The future is seemingly brimming with opportunity just within reach; grasping it requires a new set of life skills.

LAUNCH OF THE VICHEALTH MENTAL WELLBEING STRATEGY

VicHealth seeks to promote the wellbeing of this generation and develop strategies to target the key issues facing young Victorians' mental wellbeing now and into the future.

This focus was consolidated in December 2015 with the launch of the VicHealth Mental Wellbeing

Strategy 2015–2019¹ by the Minister for Mental Health, the Hon. Martin Foley MP. The four-year strategy incorporates and builds on VicHealth's extensive experience in promoting mental wellbeing and introduces a new focus: building resilience and social connection in young people.

The strategy is based on robust evidence, data and VicHealth's experience in identifying and addressing key factors affecting mental health dating back to the 1990s, including: violence against women, race-based discrimination, barriers to education, employment and housing, and social isolation.

As well as conducting the landmark young Victorians' resilience and mental wellbeing survey, VicHealth commissioned a CSIRO report, *Bright Futures: Megatrends impacting the mental wellbeing of young Victorians over the coming 20 years*,² and extensive reviews of existing research by academics.

The strategy introduces research and initiatives to build and foster resilience, prevent mental illness and promote sustainable mental wellbeing in young Victorians aged 12 to 25.

UNDERSTANDING MENTAL WELLBEING

Mental wellbeing can be described as a dynamic state in which the individual is able to develop to their potential, work productively and creatively, build strong and positive relationships with others and contribute to the community.³ Mental wellbeing sits alongside physical and social wellbeing in the definition of health as more than just the absence of disease.

We know a lot about mental illness because of its more publicised impact on individuals, families and the wider community, but we know significantly less about mental wellbeing – how it is formed, experienced, sustained and how it might be measured.

Launching the strategy, VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter placed emphasis on continuing to build the knowledge and evidence base in this critical area.

“Because of the extensive research done to build this strategy, VicHealth has a unique and solid evidence base to identify opportunities for effectively improving mental wellbeing in young people,” Ms Rechter said.

“Our aim is for 200,000 more Victorians to be resilient and connected by 2023. A cross-sector approach is critical to reaching this goal.”

OUR NEW FOCUS: RESILIENCE

Resilience is defined as the ability to achieve positive outcomes despite adverse events, circumstances, or risk factors. Resilience enhances our ability to cope with, adapt to and bounce back from any life changes or challenges.

The concept of resilience has received growing attention in the last decade, including increased research from academics, wellbeing professionals, policymakers and preventative health advocates. Evidence shows that building resilient communities fosters good health and prevents illness. Resilience in children and young people not only prepares them to deal positively with challenges, but also to build healthy communities around them. Jerril Rechter says resilience can be developed in young people through a range of means.

“Factors that promote resilience include individual skills and strengths, family support and relationships, and involvement in community clubs and organisations,” she said.

“Social connection often underpins resilience, and includes positive relationships, supportive networks and community connectedness. At VicHealth, we’re looking at all of these factors.”

UNDERSTANDING THE STATUS QUO

Published in November 2015, the *Young Victorians’ resilience and mental wellbeing survey* report highlights factors that may be associated with resilience and personal wellbeing in young adults, and provides a baseline measure that will help to interpret data collected in future studies.⁴ One thousand young Victorians aged between 16 and 25 participated in the telephone-based survey in May 2015. Results reveal that although most young Victorians have good mental wellbeing, there is still more that can be done to build resilience in this group. Maintaining social connection and offsetting loneliness are essential. ►

HOW ARE YOUNG VICTORIANS FARING?

WELLBEING



3 IN 4

(approx.) young Victorians scored in the normal range for wellbeing.

DEPRESSION



1 IN 4

(approx.) young people reported wellbeing scores which suggest that they may be more vulnerable to depression.

LONELINESS



1 IN 8

(approx.) young Victorians reported a very high intensity of loneliness, which is associated with an average wellbeing well below the normal range.

IDENTIFYING MEGATRENDS

VicHealth commissioned CSIRO to produce the *Bright Futures* report; an analysis of new and emerging trends in society and their impact on the mental wellbeing of young people. This report combined expert consultation, forecasting and analysis of demographic, economic, technological and social trends to identify issues that may impact young people's mental wellbeing over the next 10 to 20 years.

The report concludes that young people will require both advanced technical skills as well as sophisticated social and emotional skills in order to thrive in a future of unprecedented change and competition.

As well as many new challenges, there will be new opportunities for young people to grasp along the way. Collective efforts across government, industry and community organisations will help young Victorians to manage the risks and harness the benefits of the forthcoming change.

Find out more about the megatrends on page 10.



BUILDING AN EVIDENCE BASE

VicHealth engaged leading institutions and academics to conduct three literature reviews, with the purpose of establishing an evidence base from which to identify opportunities for further intervention.

Theories relating to resilience and young people⁵

Consensus exists that resilience is not a special quality with which only some children are born; it results from the interaction between the child and their environment. Theorists agree that protective factors exist at the child, family and community level and that social relationships are the most important protective factor.

Dr Mandie Shean of Edith Cowan University says, "Resilience research provides data that has the potential to significantly improve the psychological, educational, social and emotional outcomes in young people. A positive shift in their health affects not only their current functioning but, as adults, their future functioning in society."

Evidence relating to resilience and young people⁶

Dr Michelle Tollit from the Centre for Adolescent Health, Murdoch Children's Research Institute recommends a systematic approach to promoting

individual resilience among children and young people that incorporates a broad range of factors including family relationships, service systems, school culture, socioeconomic factors, community attitudes and cultural norms.

"The findings of this review demonstrated that families, peers, schools and the community can all play a role in enhancing the resilience of children and young people. Policies and platforms that enable a cross-sector, multi-stakeholder response to child/adolescent resilience are likely to have the greatest impact," she said.

Interventions to build resilience among young people⁷

Dr Nicola Reavley from the Centre for Mental Health, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health (The University of Melbourne) conducted a literature review of interventions designed to develop resilience among children, adolescents and young adults. Many of these interventions showed beneficial effects in promoting resilience and reducing the risk of developing mental health problems.

The review assessed the nature and quality of evidence for resilience and social connection building in a variety of settings, as outlined below:⁷

LEVEL OF INTERVENTION	EVIDENCE
Individual (emotional and social skills)	Found
Family (supporting authoritative parenting)	Found
School (being valued, belonging, participation)	Some found
Community (attachment to neighbourhood, social cohesion)	Incomplete
Society (systems interventions)	Incomplete

A YOUTH PERSPECTIVE

“

Trying to find a job with only a 12-month internship as experience was really, really stressful. I was very aware that I didn't have the skills or experience listed on the job ads, even for the entry-level positions, so it felt like I would never get a job over someone else.”



Madeleine Buchner is a 23-year old Bachelor of Business student at RMIT, and a co-founder of the charity Little Dreamers. Madeleine and her best friend started raising money for young carers – often the siblings of sick or disabled children – when they were 9 years old. The idea came from Madeleine's own experience helping to care for her epileptic little brother since she was three, and for her mother who had breast cancer from 15 years old. Now a registered charity, Little Dreamers grants wishes and runs festivals for young carers.

Madeleine views the freedoms available to her generation with equal excitement and caution. Now in her final year of university at RMIT, Madeleine has experienced for herself how hard it is to get a job as an educated young person.

“Trying to find a job with only a 12-month internship as experience was really, really stressful. I was very aware that I didn't have the skills or experience listed on the job ads, even for the entry-level positions, so it felt like I would never get a job over someone else.”

“I did eventually get a job – a part-time sales and marketing job – but I've watched so many of my friends be knocked back for more than a year.

A lot of them are now considering post-graduate studies just to try and get a foot in the door. It's emotionally and financially stressful for them.”

Regardless of the challenges, Madeleine is optimistic about the paths many of her peers are taking. “I have met so many young people who are embracing this new world – with all of its opportunities and challenges – and are dedicating their time and energy to coming up with solutions to problems that don't exist yet. They certainly aren't traditional career paths, but with technology and globalisation these days, they are attractive options.”

Madeleine is cautious of the possible mental wellbeing downsides of the freedom young people now have, and the plethora of paths available.

“I think my generation is delaying a lot of key life stages, which could lead to a lot of stress in the future. Because it's so hard to get a well-paying, stable job, we tend to study for longer and choose things like project work and travel to fill our time. In the short term this is fine, but long term we are going to really struggle to afford houses.”

As well as all these ‘real world’ challenges, there is also the unavoidable virtual world to consider.

“I love social media. I love how easy it makes it to see things that are happening on the other side of the world, and to join mass movements that have the potential to change the world for the better.”

“On the other hand, social media and the online world really do let people hide behind their computer screen. Hide from reality, from real relationships with real people, from themselves. It can make you believe that all of your friends are having amazing lives – always travelling and socialising – which can make you feel not so great about your life.”

When life becomes overwhelming, Madeleine looks inward to solve the problem. “I try to remember that I have the ability to work it out, whatever it is. I try to relax, watch an easy film on Netflix, and mentally work through everything that's going on.”

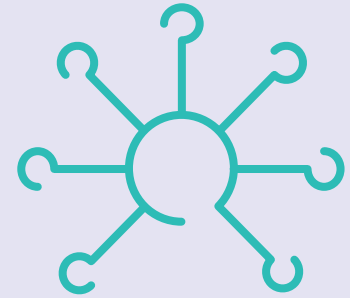
“And if I can't figure it out myself, I'll call one of my friends. We lean on each other a lot for support.”

“If I was feeling anxious or unhappy consistently, I'd certainly feel more comfortable asking for help if it was online and anonymous.”

Madeleine feels like it is a disservice to stereotype her generation.

“Just like any group of people, you can't summarise our experience through one lens – especially if you grew up in a different time or environment. I think it's so important for organisations to consult young people when designing any sort of initiative or program for us. Otherwise you run the risk of it just not being relevant.” ▶

MEGATRENDS IMPACTING THE WELLBEING OF YOUNG VICTORIANS OVER THE COMING 20 YEARS



Led by Dr Stefan Hajkowitz, Senior Principal Scientist, Strategy and Foresight with CSIRO, *Bright Futures* identifies five major themes ('megatrends') that will impact mental wellbeing for young people into the future.

"Megatrends are gradual yet powerful trajectories of change that have the potential to throw companies, individuals and societies into 'freefall,'" Dr Hajkowitz said. "Moments of freefall will happen to you, your company, your society and the world. That's assured. It's not whether change will happen that matters, but when and how you respond."

The report paints a picture of the challenges facing young people into the future and provides a unique opportunity to focus the building of young people's resilience, social connection and mental wellbeing to withstand and bounce back from the stresses of these rapid changes.

"Young people's state of mind and mental wellbeing are increasingly important in economic, social and personal terms, and the risks of disengagement and isolation are apparent," Dr Hajkowitz said.

"New stressors are emerging which as a society we need to understand and manage to ensure young people are able to maintain positive social connections and find positive life pathways that contribute to the community."

1. THE RISING BAR

The competition for employment in the global marketplace is more cutthroat than ever. Rising skills and education levels in the emerging Indian and Chinese economies, in addition to rapidly increasing connectivity and automation, will make it harder for young Victorians to compete for limited jobs.

Automation means many of the jobs young people without qualifications or extensive experience currently hold will be redundant within the next 20 years.

Simultaneously, many new and exciting jobs are forming through technological advancements. Roles in healthcare, communications, education, tourism and multimedia specialty fields will require skilled, dedicated workers.

While the jobs of the future are difficult to predict, regardless of the technical skills required, the ability to learn, adapt and remain physically and mentally agile are crucial.

Jan Owen, CEO of the Foundation for Young Australians, recognises this trend, and said that their report *The New Work Order* points to a need for increased enterprise skills in young people.⁸

"What we know is that nearly 60 per cent of Australian students are currently studying or training for occupations where at least two-thirds of jobs will be automated and over 50 per cent of jobs will require significant digital skills and yet our young people are not learning these enterprise skills in schools," Ms Owen said. "Our young people are not being adequately prepared for the new innovation economy."

2. GLOBAL REACH

Globalisation and digital technology are changing the way workplaces and individuals operate.

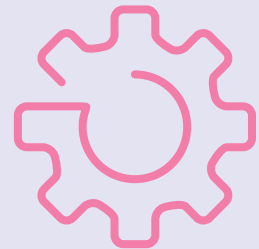
These dynamics will result in increased participation in online learning courses globally; culture, people and goods flowing across national borders in greater volumes and speed; and a new breed of workers who have no fixed abode and sell their skills and knowledge to multiple employers.

The future will see entrepreneurial individuals thrive, especially those able to identify niche markets with global scale.

Matt O'Kane, Vice President, Technical Operations at Freelancer.com said that companies are increasingly stepping outside of their traditional resourcing structures.

"More and more companies are outsourcing and crowdsourcing their work needs, globally. So what they're looking for are people who are self-motivated, accountable and able to use technology in their favour.

"No longer is where you live the most important element of your profile. Now it's so much more about how you manage yourself as a global resource."



3. LIFE'S RICHER TAPESTRY

In a multicultural country like Australia, it is no surprise that there is a trend toward a more diverse culture, society and consumer market where identification of mainstream is increasingly difficult.

For example, while there is a rise in the number of 'traditional families' where both parents are working, there is also increasing diversity in the definition of family. Single-parents, de facto couples, same-sex families and blended families are gradually receiving greater recognition and rights.

People are staying at work for longer as they grow older, the Indigenous youth population is quickly carving out their identity, and young people increasingly have more scope to find their place in society, where in previous generations young people's paths are more set.

Carmel Guerra, CEO of Centre for Multicultural Youth, says young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds have a unique challenge and opportunity in carving out their place in their new community.

"Alongside the challenges of growing up, refugee and migrant young people are figuring out how things are done and adjusting to unfamiliar cultural, academic and social expectations," Ms Guerra said.

"It's a huge challenge for them, but we often see them start thriving once they embrace their unique strengths and start bringing something completely new to their community. It's these young people's dual culture and diverse mindset that can really bring innovation to Australia."

4. OVEREXPOSURE ONLINE

Over the next 20 years, young people will face increased vulnerability to cybercrime, identity theft, privacy breaches and various forms of online victimisation like trolling, harassment, intimidation and bullying. These are the consequences of growing rates of social media use, e-commerce and overall online communication.

Ideas of relationships will also alter with the rise of global networking, social and dating websites and mobile applications. Audio and video technology allows both global connectivity and facilitates the breakdown of the clear gender, social and physical identifiers of face-to-face relationships. Young people will also be exposed to a wide range of online content which is not as strictly regulated and filtered as conventional television, print and screen media.

Maree Crabbe, coordinator of the violence prevention project Reality & Risk, said that when it comes to pornography it's not just about exposure and access – it's the nature of the content young people see.

"Young people both seek out porn and come across it accidentally. It's natural adolescent curiosity to be interested in sex and sexuality but porn's portrayal of sexuality is unrealistic and often aggressive," Ms Crabbe said.

"This negative portrayal reinforces gender inequality and increases the likelihood of violence against women."

5. OUT OF THE SHADOWS

Over time, our understanding of mental health and wellbeing has dramatically improved: not only among clinicians and health professionals but also, to a lesser but important degree, across the general population.

There is increasing global awareness that factors beyond the individual – such as poverty, poor education, homelessness, and cultural background – contribute to poor mental health and mental illness.

This awareness is vital to decreasing the stigma around mental illness and improving the potential for greater research, interventions and treatment. It also encourages governments and policymakers to focus on socioeconomic factors that enhance national wellbeing and prevent the prevalence and severity of mental illness.

Assoc. Prof. Jane Burns, Founder and CEO of Young and Well CRC, said her organisation is committed to using digital technologies to support young people and break down the stigma around mental illness.

"Social isolation is a key risk for mental illness. Among other areas, our research seeks to understand how young people integrate digital technologies into their everyday lives, so that we can find ways to support them through that technology," she said. "In particular, we are focusing on rural communities and particularly Indigenous communities that have lower access to mental health resources." ■

CREATING NEW WAYS TO GET PEOPLE ACTIVE

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INNOVATION CHALLENGE



Victoria may be on its way to becoming the Silicon Valley of sports and recreation, as VicHealth's pioneering seed-funding program for innovative sports organisations launches a second round of investment.

Six sporting groups have shared in \$354,000 for VicHealth's second Physical Activity Innovation Challenge, whose focus is on encouraging people to become active in ways that are more social, flexible and less-structured than traditional sport.

The six groups offer an eclectic mix of fun and inventive approaches to getting fit and target a range of age groups. Initiatives include Pop-up Squash Shop, which transforms empty retail spaces into temporary squash courts; Stride Basketball, a low-impact form of walking basketball for women; Pumped for BMX, which uses under-utilised BMX tracks to get young people cycling, and Active Families Playing Together, a recreation program for playgroups.

Stefan Grun, VicHealth's Manager, Physical Activity, Sport and Healthy Eating, said the idea to fund alternative sporting programs emerged in the wake of an Australian Sports Commission study which found people's attitudes to sport have dramatically

changed. "People want sport to fit in with their lifestyle rather than their lifestyle fitting around sport," he said.

"We want to work with sports to get ahead of the participation trends and develop some new offerings so that sport can still be appealing to those people who might not be considering it at the moment."

Mr Grun said while there were many new physical activity options for active people, such as fun runs, mass participation bike rides and extreme obstacle events, there were fewer options to entice less active people – the primary audience for all of VicHealth's physical activity programs including the Innovation Challenge.

Just as seed funding for technology companies focuses on enabling rapid growth, Mr Grun said one of the key priorities for the initiative was to encourage the funding recipients, many of whom already have a grassroots connection with the community, to develop and test their ideas quickly.

“We’re encouraging our partners to pilot their ideas quickly with real people from their target audience and let this feedback guide any pivots or refinements they make to the product offering or how it’s promoted.”

One recent recipient was City in the Community, an offshoot of Melbourne City Football Club. It received \$100,000 to develop City Strikers, a walking football program with a focus on passing the ball rather than running speed. City in the Community spokesman, George Halkias, said City Strikers was aimed at older people who may no longer be able to run, people with disabilities, and those from culturally and diverse language backgrounds who face barriers to fitness. “We hope that through walking football we can see improved physical health and social connectedness in participants.”

There are six City Strikers locations being piloted, including the Collingwood Seniors Club, Fawkner Italian Womens’ Health Group and the Salvation Army’s Foley House. Mr Halkias said the VicHealth funding is enabling walking football to be systematically piloted, and will allow time to refine the program, engage with stakeholders and examine how to make it sustainable. He said participants really enjoyed getting active again, adding, “It has been a massive hit with women.”

Mr Grun said the Innovation Challenge sought ideas that had potential to be scaled up, yet might not be prioritised without this funding. “Many sporting organisations are quite lean and have many competing priorities for budget and resources. We hope this seed funding provides the opportunity for ideas to receive the critical focus they need to be successful.”

One such idea that may never have seen the light of day is Bumpa Ball, a variation of water polo where players float in inflatable inner tubes, allowing less contact and a lower level of swimming ability than normal. The group behind it, Water Polo Victoria, received \$50,000 to develop and pilot Bumpa Ball across a range of community groups.

Tom Madden, sport development officer at Water Polo Victoria, said the funding will enable the organisation to test whether Bumpa Ball would be appealing to people across the community, many of whom either wouldn’t have heard of water polo or had preconceived ideas about its physical nature. “Bumpa Ball takes all of that away and offers an enjoyable and fun experience for all ages and abilities to increase their weekly physical activity.”

He said Water Polo Victoria would like to franchise Bumpa Ball to community groups and facilities and expand into other states and territories. “Changing behaviours is not easy, but offering an enjoyable activity which is hard to turn down simply because of the laughs had whilst in the tubes can go a long way in achieving broader behaviour change when it comes to being physically active,” Mr Madden said.

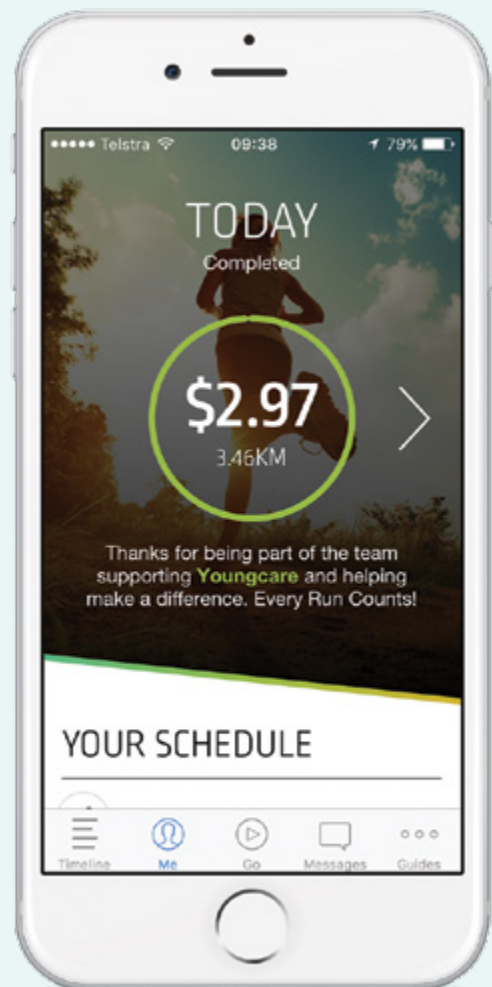
“

People want sport to fit in with their lifestyle rather than their lifestyle fitting around sport.”

PULSERAISER

The Innovation Challenge’s first investment round is delivering results: Pulseraiser, a mobile platform developed by John Emmerson and Duncan Ion, received funding in late 2014 and launched to the public last November after a successful trial. Pulseraiser enables users to raise money for a charity every time they go for a run. Donations are given by a user’s employer or via a 50-50 split between an individual and their company. Mr Emmerson said: “There are running challenges for any fitness level so anyone can get involved and get running.”

Since launching, Pulseraiser has signed charities and not-for-profits to the platform including the Jodi Lee Foundation and Baker IDI Heart & Diabetes Research Institute. It has also signed up a number of companies and is running a pilot with Suncorp Group. Mr Emmerson said one of Pulseraiser’s users had said: “Running for a charity I care about gives me motivation and makes me happy.”



SALT PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

VicHealth's Salt Reduction Strategic Partnership has been building the foundations for long-term action tackling one of the biggest drivers of the chronic disease burden in Victoria.

Victorians are consuming around twice as much salt as is recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO). As a result, Victorians are experiencing related health issues such as high-blood pressure, coronary heart disease and stroke, which are often preventable.

In 2014, VicHealth established the Salt Reduction Partnership Group. Its partners include The George Institute for Global Health Australia, the Heart Foundation, Deakin University, Kidney Health Australia, Stroke Foundation and the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services. The partnership aims to increase public awareness, strengthen policy, support food industry innovation and undertake research to reduce the average daily salt intake of Victorian adults and children. In 2015, the *State of Salt* report was launched, summarising the health and economic case for salt reduction and began to raise awareness about salt intake as a major public and policy issue in Victoria.

As part of this initiative, the Heart Foundation Victoria and VicHealth are leading a new campaign to raise awareness of the risks of excessive salt intake for health, especially that of our children, and a new project to engage the Victorian food industry in innovative approaches to salt reduction.

Ms Kellie-Anne Jolly, Director of Cardiovascular Health at the Heart Foundation Victoria, said that they will tackle the issue by engaging industry, individual businesses and consumers.

"At an industry level, we intend to support businesses to explore ways to reformulate ingredients within food. These businesses will be asked to pledge a commitment to make changes to their foods and later showcase achievements. We also hope to influence restaurants and food outlets to make changes; to remove salt shakers from the table for example," she said.

"At the consumer level, we intend to raise awareness and elevate awareness around healthy and unhealthy salt intake. In particular, we will educate parents about why it is important to reduce salt intake and what to look for when purchasing," Ms Jolly said.

Researchers from the WHO Collaborating Centre for Population Salt Reduction at the George Institute for Global Health have led a research proposal to evaluate outcomes on behalf of VicHealth and other members of the partnership.

The proposal has been successful in securing over half a million dollars of Commonwealth research funding from the prestigious National Health and Medical Research Council.

Dr Jacqui Webster, Director of the WHO Collaboration Centre at the George Institute, said that this additional funding will enable continued research into the state of salt in Victoria: "In 2016, we will continue our work as part of the multi-stakeholder partnership on salt reduction. The State of Salt initiative was launched in May last year and the partnership will

begin to implement intervention strategies throughout 2016."

This year's World Salt Awareness Week, held between 29 February and 6 March, had the theme of Hidden Salt. A parliamentary breakfast was held in Victoria on 24 March, where partnership members from the Centre for Physical Activity and Nutrition (C-PAN), Deakin University shared findings from a study to investigate the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of Victorian adults (see 'Recent research' on page 16).

A parliamentary event with the Federal Government will also take place to promote salt awareness. Both of these important events will raise the profile of population salt reduction as an effective and cost-effective strategy to prevent chronic diseases.

Dr Bruce Bolam, Executive Manager, Programs at VicHealth, who recently chaired a working group on salt reduction targets for the Australian Health Policy Collaboration, said that the Salt Reduction Partnership Group is being looked to as an initiative of national relevance.

"The group has made a strong start to 2016, securing new contracts and funding, and coordinating with World Salt Awareness Week, which will further raise awareness and engage stakeholders. We know that salt reduction strategies are up to 200 times more cost-effective than treatment with hypertension medication and are proud to be leading the way in tackling Australia's high salt intake."

USING MOBILE PHONES TO REDUCE YOUTH DRINKING

Look into any bar, pub or club in Victoria and you are likely to see three things in close proximity: young people, alcohol and mobile phones.

Mobiles go hand-in-hand with almost any activity for young people, but in particular they buzz and flash on a night out as young people take pictures, arrange to meet with friends and use social media.

This dynamic presents a question: how can we use mobile phones to access young people at the time and place they are making choices about drinking? With funding from a Vichealth Innovation Grant, Dr Megan Lim has developed a mobile phone based intervention designed to reduce alcohol consumption and associated risky behaviour in Victorian youth aged 16 to 29; particularly those youth who engage in risky binge drinking.

The innovation is called MIDY (Mobile Intervention for Drinking in Young people), and is based primarily around young people receiving tailored SMS messages while they are drinking alcohol. Before beginning to drink, young people are directed to a mobile-responsive website where they are asked to respond to questions about their drinking habits and what most matters to them.

This initial screening tailors the SMS messages they later receive to their gender, age and most meaningful concerns. For some, this will be their sporting activities and others are more concerned with how drinking affects their friendships, family relationships, work and bank balance.

Based on these responses, SMS messages will then be sent each hour during drinking as reminders about their specific goals.

The messages prompt quick replies to track how many drinks have been consumed and how much money has been spent, and adjust future messages to react to this user input.

“What makes MIDY unique is that using mobiles phones, we are able to both measure alcohol consumption and intervene during the course of a real night out drinking,” Dr Lim said.

The project began at the Burnet Institute, where Dr Lim has worked since 2003 across various youth health areas, including sexual health, mental health and illicit drug use.

Her research has specialised in new technology and its impact on health outcomes for young people. In late 2014, Vichealth awarded Dr Lim with an \$188,000 research grant to enable wider research and trials for MIDY.

Following initial trials with 42 young people, Dr Lim made changes to the original design and delivery based on feedback. “One of the biggest changes we made is that we moved away from a focus on risk and long-term health issues in the SMS messages – messages like “Alcohol causes cancer”.

Instead, short-term consequences were focused on, like the fear of making a fool of yourself, being a burden on your friends, having unwanted sex, or overspending.”

Many of the SMS messages have been scripted by the 42 young people who trialled the technology over several months (see examples above).

Keep hydrated. Remember, water is free.

So far tonight, you've spent \$250. What else could your money go towards?

How's that 7am wakeup going to feel?

You're pacing your drinks nicely. Well done, bro.

Using the VicHealth funding and an additional \$35,000 grant from Gandel Philanthropy, Dr Lim will soon trial MIDY with 300 young Victorians to assess whether the intervention is able to change drinking behaviours and attitudes over 12 weeks of consistent use. VicHealth Manager, Alcohol and Tobacco, Emma Saleeba, said MIDY aligns with VicHealth's work to prevent harm from alcohol.

“This is a world first in providing in-situ personalised feedback for young people while in the actual drinking setting and context. It supports VicHealth's focus on encouraging a better drinking culture by not only aiming to reduce risky drinking, but seeking to change young people's perceptions and expectations of alcohol,” she said.

In the future, Dr Lim aims to partner with schools and universities to encourage use of MIDY by students at risk of binge drinking and associated harmful behaviour. MIDY could also play a vital role in preventing injury and risk during Schoolies Week, school formal evenings and public holidays and festivals.

Dr Lim hopes MIDY can result in attitude and behaviour change that saves lives.

“Through MIDY we hope to reduce drinking on big nights by just a couple of drinks,” she said. “Even this small reduction is associated with a halving of the odds of a serious accident or death for young Victorians.”

VICHEALTH RESEARCH UPDATE

RECENT RESEARCH



VICTORIANS' KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS RELATED TO SALT INTAKE

A recent study into salt attitudes and consumption patterns has shown that less than a third of Victorian adults (28%) could correctly identify the maximum recommended daily intake for salt, 5g per day. It also showed Victorians are eating almost double the upper limit of salt recommended, despite only less than a third considering their own salt intake to exceed dietary guidelines. Spot urine samples from 245 adults estimate the average daily intake of salt is 9.6g per day in males and 7.9g per day in females. Commissioned by VicHealth and undertaken by Deakin University, the *Victorian consumer survey of knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to salt intake* surveyed 2398 adults 18 to 65 years, with a third responding to parent-specific questions. The study also found 59 per cent of participants saying it was difficult to find lower salt options eating out. Two-thirds of participants support laws that limit the amount of salt added to manufactured foods. Download the report vichealth.vic.gov.au/victorian-consumer-salt-survey.



VICTORIAN PARTICIPATION IN ORGANISED SPORT

Research through the VicHealth Physical Activity Research Practice Fellowship 2011–15 has provided a picture of participation in organised community sport in Victoria. The research used data from over 2.6 million Victorian participant records across seven sports – Australian football, basketball, cricket, hockey, bowls, netball and tennis – and was carried out by Associate Professor Rochelle Eimes, Federation University and Victoria University, with collaboration from a range of state sporting associations, government, peak sporting organisations and universities. The findings, covering themes including participation levels and influences on participation, have informed recommendations for state sporting associations, funders and promoters of sport participation and future research. A new Sport Participation Research Project 2016–18 involving 11 sports has now commenced to build on the Fellowship's findings. The project, which is a collaboration between VicHealth, Sport and Recreation Victoria, Victoria University and Federation University, aims to create and report on a reliable measure of sport participation in Victoria to further inform decision making by sport sector organisations. vichealth.vic.gov.au/victorian-participation



ENCOURAGING HEALTHY CHOICES IN SUPERMARKETS

Supermarkets are the main source of food for most Australians. A new series of intervention trials, undertaken as part of a 2015 VicHealth Innovation Research Project, is looking at creating supermarket food environments that encourage healthy eating. The project comprises three two-month controlled trials in supermarkets in regional Victoria, with fieldwork nearing completion.

Store sales data will be used to evaluate the effect of the interventions, with the researchers from Deakin University's WHO Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention also collecting data from around 900 shoppers on their perceptions of the interventions.

The collaboration between VicHealth, Deakin University, the City of Greater Bendigo and Champions IGA has been crucial to the success of the project to date. The project received the prestigious Konrad Jamrozik prize at the 2015 Australian Population Health Congress, a testament to the public health potential of this work.

VICHEALTH-NHMRC PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS 2015

The VicHealth-NHMRC Partnership Project Grant is for organisations applying to the NHMRC who wish to have VicHealth represented as an industry partner in their full application. Three applicants have been successful in gaining support from VicHealth. These applicants will go on to apply in the next NHMRC Partnership Projects round, closing in June 2016. Each project will receive \$150,000 over three years from VicHealth if successful with the NHMRC.

We received an exceptionally high standard of research proposals in the most recent grant round.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS

A multi-component supermarket intervention to promote healthy eating in supermarkets

Dr Adrian Cameron – Deakin University

Reflexive Evidence and Systems interventions to Prevent Obesity and Non-communicable Disease (RESPOND)

Professor Steven Allender – Deakin University

Optimising health communication with young people

Professor Catherine Lombard – Monash University

The next VicHealth-NHMRC Partnership Projects Grant, in conjunction with the VicHealth-ARC Linkage grants round, opens on 18 April 2016. For updates, visit vichealth.vic.gov.au/nhmrc

TOP READS

24-h urinary sodium excretion is associated with obesity in a cross-sectional sample of Australian schoolchildren

Grimes CA, Riddell LJ, Campbell KJ, He FJ, Nowson CA, 2016.

British Journal of Nutrition, 26: 1-9.

www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26810972

Fast food restaurant locations according to socioeconomic disadvantage, urban–regional locality, and schools within Victoria, Australia

Thornton LE, Lamb KE, Ball K, 2016 SSM - Population Health, 2: 1-9

www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352827315000142

Health prevention in Australia: A report card

Moodie R, 2016

<http://drinktank.org.au/2016/01/health-prevention-in-australia-a-report-card/>

Australian secondary school students' use of tobacco in 2014

Cancer Council, 2015

[www.nationaldrugstrategy.gov.au/internet/drugstrategy/Publishing.nsf/content/BCBF6B2C638E1202CA257ACD0020E35C/\\$File/Tobacco%20Report%202014.PDF](http://www.nationaldrugstrategy.gov.au/internet/drugstrategy/Publishing.nsf/content/BCBF6B2C638E1202CA257ACD0020E35C/$File/Tobacco%20Report%202014.PDF)

CONFERENCES

Parks and Leisure Australia State Conference

4–5 May 2016

Torquay

www.eiseverywhere.com/ehome/147193

Alcohol Tobacco and other Drugs Council Conference

12–13 May 2016

Hobart

<http://atdcconference.com.au/>

AHPA National Conference

19–22 June 2016

Western Australia

<http://ahpa2016.com.au/>

Making Cities Liveable Conference

27–28 June 2016

Melbourne

<http://healthycities.com.au/>

17th International Mental Health Conference 2016

11–12 August 2016

Queensland

<http://anzmh.asn.au/conference/>

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So get started today at vichealth.vic.gov.au/findyourmotivation and rediscover how good it feels to get active.



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