



year in -  
**review**  
2011-12



# Action in priority health areas

Effective health promotion has the capacity to improve health, reduce the costs of treating chronic disease, enhance economic productivity, bridge the health divide between population groups, and add healthy years to life expectancy. The past year has seen many of VicHealth's partnerships and investments deliver considerable outcomes. On pages 14 to 55 you'll find highlights and significant achievements from the past 12 months.

## About us

The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) is a statutory authority established by the Victorian Parliament in accordance with the *Tobacco Act 1987*. It has a mandate to promote good health for all Victorians.

**Front cover image:** Polyglot Theatre's Tangle is a giant structure made from 132 kilometres of brightly coloured elastic, woven around seven-metre poles. Coupled with music, this interactive play-space encourages physical movement, imaginative play and artistic decision-making. Tangle is funded under VicHealth's MOTION program.

## Our vision

- VicHealth envisages a community where:
- » health is a fundamental human right
  - » everyone shares in the responsibility for promoting health
  - » everyone benefits from improved health outcomes.

### Credits

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## Our mission

- Our mission is to build the capabilities of organisations, communities and individuals in ways that:
- » change social, economic, cultural and physical environments to improve health for all Victorians
  - » strengthen the understanding and the skills of individuals in ways that support their efforts to achieve and maintain health.





# CHAIR'S REPORT

**IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO PRESENT THIS REPORT ON VICHEALTH'S WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2011-2012.**

Mark Birrell, Chair of the Board

**V**icHealth is a great innovator, advocate and team builder, and over the last year has acted successfully to prevent ill health in Victoria, as well as taking stock of fresh opportunities in the external environment. It is now well positioned to work – in partnership with others – to advance best practice in health promotion.

Our Board, with the excellent support of our CEO Jerril Rechter, is committed to progressing VicHealth's long-term mission and objectives and has established a common understanding of the tasks ahead. We are actively advising on new solutions to health challenges and assessing and approving new investments.

Externally, key developments have taken place that show the Victorian Government's continuing commitment to the prevention of ill health, with some complementary initiatives at a national level.

The Victorian Department of Health launched our state's first ever public health plan to fight chronic disease. The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2011-2015 sets the agenda for improving health and wellbeing over four years.

This was followed by the roll-out of the Prevention Community Model, a major investment to support and encourage Victorians to turn around unhealthy lifestyles through targeted health plans, initially in 14 local government areas. The Department also put in place actions to address childhood obesity such as the Victorian Healthy Eating Advisory Service.

To support preventative health research and ensure evidence-based action, The Centre of Excellence in Intervention and Prevention Science was established to gather the best possible research partners.

The impetus for these moves is compelling.

Earlier this year, the findings of the Victorian Population Health Survey 2009, based on

research of 7500 adults, pinpointed priority areas for health promotion. It showed Victorians do not eat enough fruit and vegetables, and more and more Victorians are becoming obese or developing Type 2 diabetes. It also showed that while smoking rates have decreased, there are still almost 4000 Victorians who die each year from tobacco-related illness.

Such developments reinforce the purpose of VicHealth's mission, showing that there is much work to be done to successfully prevent ill health and address the social and economic determinants of health that influence the broader risk conditions in which people find themselves.

VicHealth's unique role focusing on health and wellbeing has been articulated consistently in our programs and investments for a quarter of a century – with considerable and enduring results.

This year VicHealth forged its work in healthy environments with major investments in addressing determinants of workplace health and in community sport.

As a leader and innovator in health promotion, the organisation's achievements and successes in 2011-2012, as highlighted in the CEO's report, encapsulate best practice in Australia.

VicHealth's role and focus complements the work of public and private health bodies, and makes it an asset for efforts in illness prevention and the attendant costs and burden to the health system.

As we reach our 25th year, we are looking to a renewed strategic direction.

A 'stocktake' exercise commenced in early 2012 and its findings were documented in a report which articulates where, why and how VicHealth is focusing its health promotion work. This report will be drawn upon in the development of the 2013-2016 Strategic Plan.

VicHealth's future direction will be created from an assessment of current and future priorities and the broader environment with its emerging issues, mindful of lessons from the body of health promotion work to date.

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank members of both previous and current Boards for their unfailing support, as well as our committee members and the VicHealth staff for their dedication and perseverance to pursuing our objectives.

I especially acknowledge former Board Chair Ms Jane Fenton, for her work and outstanding commitment to VicHealth for 10 years. Our appreciation also goes to Mr Peter Gordon, who was a Board member since 2006.

I thank CEO Jerril Rechter for confidently leading the organisation with fresh perspectives and a renewed energy and enthusiasm.

We are also indebted to our partners, advocates and supporters without whom the successes of this year would not have been achieved.

On behalf of the Board, I thank the Victorian Minister for Health, The Hon. David Davis MP, for his support and leadership.

I look forward to the next steps in our journey as we work with our partners to address fresh and continuing challenges, and deliver meaningful outcomes for the state of health in Victoria.

Mark Birrell  
Chair of the Board

## Further reading

**Health promotion awards 2012**  
[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/awards](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/awards)

**Funded projects 2011-2012**  
[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

**Policy submissions 2011-2012**  
[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

**Strategy and Business Plan 2009-2013**  
[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/strategic](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/strategic)

**Annual Report of Operations 2011-2012**  
[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

**Board of Governance**  
[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/board](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/board)

**Advisory Committees**  
[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/committees](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/committees)

**VicHealth staff**  
[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/staff](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/staff)



# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



Victorian Minister for Health The Hon. David Davis MP and VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter officially launch MOTION – a new VicHealth program that fuses creativity, physical activity and social connection.

**IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO REPORT BACK ON OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS**

It has been an honour to build on the work of my esteemed predecessors who have kept true to the vision of a leading health promotion body that improves the lives of all Victorians and beyond.

This report recognises the efforts of our Board and Advisory Committee members, partners and staff, for their contributions in the last 12 months to driving innovative approaches to health promotion.

We are working in myriad ways to create safe, accessible, inclusive and equitable sporting environments.



## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

### Increasing participation in sport and active recreation

We expanded our work in sport and active recreation through the **State Sporting Association Participation Program**, a \$10.2 million funding program over three years that aims to create sporting environments that are safe, accessible, inclusive and equitable. Targeting 30 State Sporting Associations, it offers the potential to reach 80% of direct and indirect formal sport participants in Victoria.

Our **Everyone Wins** resource, a comprehensive system of support to sporting groups, is being trialled at the state level and provides a rich and profound base of knowledge and strategies to help these groups develop sustainable projects to improve community sport environments.

The **Be Active** program – commenced in June 2012 – is a partnership with local governments and Sport and Recreation Victoria to increase participation by children, families and older people, and increase civic leadership through volunteering. This program will be implemented with Local Government Areas, which are also part of the Victorian Government's Prevention Community Model. This allows us to identify and respond to physical activity participation challenges as they emerge at the community level.

We evaluated our **Streets Ahead** program to analyse the enablers and barriers to children walking to and from school, and around their neighbourhood. The lessons from this program complement the findings from our research report *Towards active and independently mobile children* on Victorian community attitudes about active travel for children. These endeavours significantly raised the awareness of active travel at the local government level and highlighted areas for consideration to increase active travel.

Our **Active Club Grants** continued to support community sport and active recreation clubs and organisations with sports injury prevention, essential sporting equipment, portable shade and volunteer training. In some Victorian towns, the sport's club is the only opportunity for families to gather and connect with their communities. These grants have had a positive impact on more than half a million Victorians in the past three years.

### Creating healthy environments

VicHealth is playing a leading role in building the Australian knowledge base on effective workplace health interventions with our **Creating Healthy Workplaces** program.

With 11.4 million Australians in workplaces – 70% in full-time employment, each month working a total of 1.6 million hours – workplaces are ideal to promote health and wellbeing to a large audience. Underpinned by a rich base of international workplace health research, VicHealth has established five large-scale pilot projects to find solutions to prevent workplaces from contributing to ill health. These areas include the reduction of stress, prolonged sitting, alcohol-related harm, and the prevention of race-based discrimination and violence against women. The program puts VicHealth in a leadership role, partnering with researchers and corporate organisations to translate health knowledge into tangible actions.



**SUPPLYING ALCOHOL TO TEENAGERS COULD NOW COST YOU A \$7,000 FINE**



Top: The Teen Drinking Law project is making parents and young people aware of new Laws.

Lower: The Streets Ahead evaluation showed significant gains in the understanding of active travel among the participating councils.

In sport, our **Healthy Sporting Environments** program took the valuable lessons from our demonstration project that ran in the Barwon region over the last two years, and translated them into a comprehensive support system for nine Regional Sports Assemblies to roll out. The Barwon region project ran in partnership with the regional sports assembly Leisure Networks. It sought to improve club culture through changes to the use of alcohol in clubs, reduced tobacco use, encouraging healthy eating, creating safe and inclusive environments for women and reducing race-based discrimination.

The new statewide program has the potential to reach a quarter of a million Victorians in order to improve their participation and experience of sport, and will benefit both their physical and mental health.

### Reducing harms from alcohol, tobacco consumption and UV

Our work with the **Australian Football League (AFL) Victoria** continued to focus on a cultural change program addressing alcohol consumption by integrating what we know from research with policy development. This includes trials of reduced alcohol beverages in community AFL Victoria events.



With research partners Australian Drug Foundation and Turning Point, we released various findings of the impact of alcohol in the community. Notably, our work with Turning Point has revealed disturbing trends of an increase in alcohol outlets in areas where people can least afford it.

In partnership with Turning Point, we also researched the relationship between **social occasions and alcohol consumption**, pointing to increases in harms during such periods, a finding corroborated by data from law enforcers and emergency services.

To address the growing trend of alcohol use by young people, we worked with the Departments of Health and Justice and the Australian Drug Foundation to launch the **Teen Drinking Law** project, to make parents and young people aware of a new law prohibiting the supply of alcohol to minors without parental consent. This project, which also focused on raising awareness about the harms alcohol can cause teenagers, includes practical resources such as a website, mobile device application and series of community forums to drive home these important messages.

We also supported **Say When**, the Department of Health's free and confidential online tool that gives Victorian adults a chance to assess their drinking and what it means for their health and wellbeing.

We continued to work with our partners **Quit** and **SunSmart** to direct public programs to change attitudes and behaviours on smoking and UV exposure.

### Healthy eating

This year we partnered with the Heart Foundation Victoria to develop and disseminate a manual to improve knowledge and skills that ensure **urban planning and design includes food supply** and access. This work will ultimately benefit those with busy lifestyles to ensure that healthy eating is possible within the realm of city life.

Our work with the Obesity Policy Coalition, focusing on **reducing overweight and obesity** particularly in children, has resulted in submissions to government enquiries and advocacy work with regulatory bodies.

### Addressing health inequalities

Recognising the significant **impact of housing** on health and wellbeing, we released our research reports on housing 'stress' being experienced by many Victorians. This piece of work has made an important contribution to the evidence base in this area, and the work on determining housing and health interventions.

Our support for the **Indigenous Surfing** program has continued to yield gains from the participation of Indigenous Victorians in surfing. In addition, the program has been expanded to address broader opportunities for the participants through links to education and employment in the aquatic and sporting industry.

### Increasing social connection

This year we launched **MOTION**, a truly enabling program that helps build community connections. This arts, social connection and physical activity program fuses creativity through physical movement such as dance with engagement with other people.

### Preventing violence against women

Building upon our body of work in preventing violence against women, the evaluation of our **Respect, Responsibility and Equality** program resulted in tools and strategies for local governments and community organisations. The support for these groups was enhanced with the release of the final report of the **Local Government Networking and Capacity Building** project, which reinforces the leadership role that local governments play in addressing violence against women through planning and policy making.

In sport, the **Fair Game: Respect Matters** program with the Australian Football League has continued to introduce the importance of respectful relationships through training sessions and resources. Through this program we work closely with community football clubs across Victoria to develop safe, inclusive and respectful environments for girls and women.

The release of our research findings on **bystander (witness) attitudes to sexist behaviours** and language showed that Victorians do not accept these behaviours and many are willing to act. Sexism has known links to violence against women. Our research included a statewide survey to examine readiness for bystander action against sexist comments and behaviours. The findings provide a solid base with which we and others can develop programs that encourage pro-social bystander action and push for respectful attitudes.

### Reducing race-based discrimination

We developed and implemented the social marketing campaign **See Beyond Race** in the cities of Shepparton and Whittlesea, engaging local residents who became the faces of this Australian-first four-month campaign. This fostered discussion and greater understanding about cultural differences and community connection.

Our **Arts About Us** program supported 16 organisations to share the benefits of diversity as well as the harmful impacts of discrimination on health, reaching 700,000 Victorians through audiences in arts events or through articles in the media. We have funded a second phase of performances and art installations until June 2015.

### Building capacity

As a leader in developing the health promotion workforce, we have conducted **Short Courses** on health promotion (see p40), including specific areas such as healthier sporting environments. We have also established a partnership with the Department of Human Services and the Department of Justice to introduce skills and knowledge in illness prevention to local governments.



In partnership with Surfing Victoria we expanded the Indigenous Surfing program.



See Beyond Race engaged local residents in Shepparton and Whittlesea who became the faces of this Australian-first social marketing campaign.

## CONCLUSION

**It has been an exceptional year for VicHealth. Some of these highlights are pioneering projects in Australia. Some involved many partners. This is the essence of VicHealth – performing our mission and objectives using creative ways to build and reinforce knowledge, and trialling solutions – a unique but vital approach.**

This essence will continue into the next VicHealth strategic plan, while refining our unique role and focus to address new challenges in health and wellbeing.

I would like to thank the current and previous Boards and Advisory Committees for their leadership and guidance. In particular, VicHealth is indebted to former Board Chair Jane Fenton for her commitment and contribution.

I would also like to thank the staff for their dedication and commitment to our work, and for their support and encouragement as I embarked upon my first year at VicHealth.

Congratulations and thanks are due to our partners at both state and community levels who have worked with us to champion common goals. Our appreciation goes to the Department of Health and other state agencies whose broader work helps sharpen our focus.

I look forward to the next year as we continue our work in partnership with organisations and communities to promote good health and prevent ill health for all Victorians.

**Jerril Rechter**  
Chief Executive Officer



**\$27,504,000** of our Victorian Government funding was invested in **802** grants in Victoria

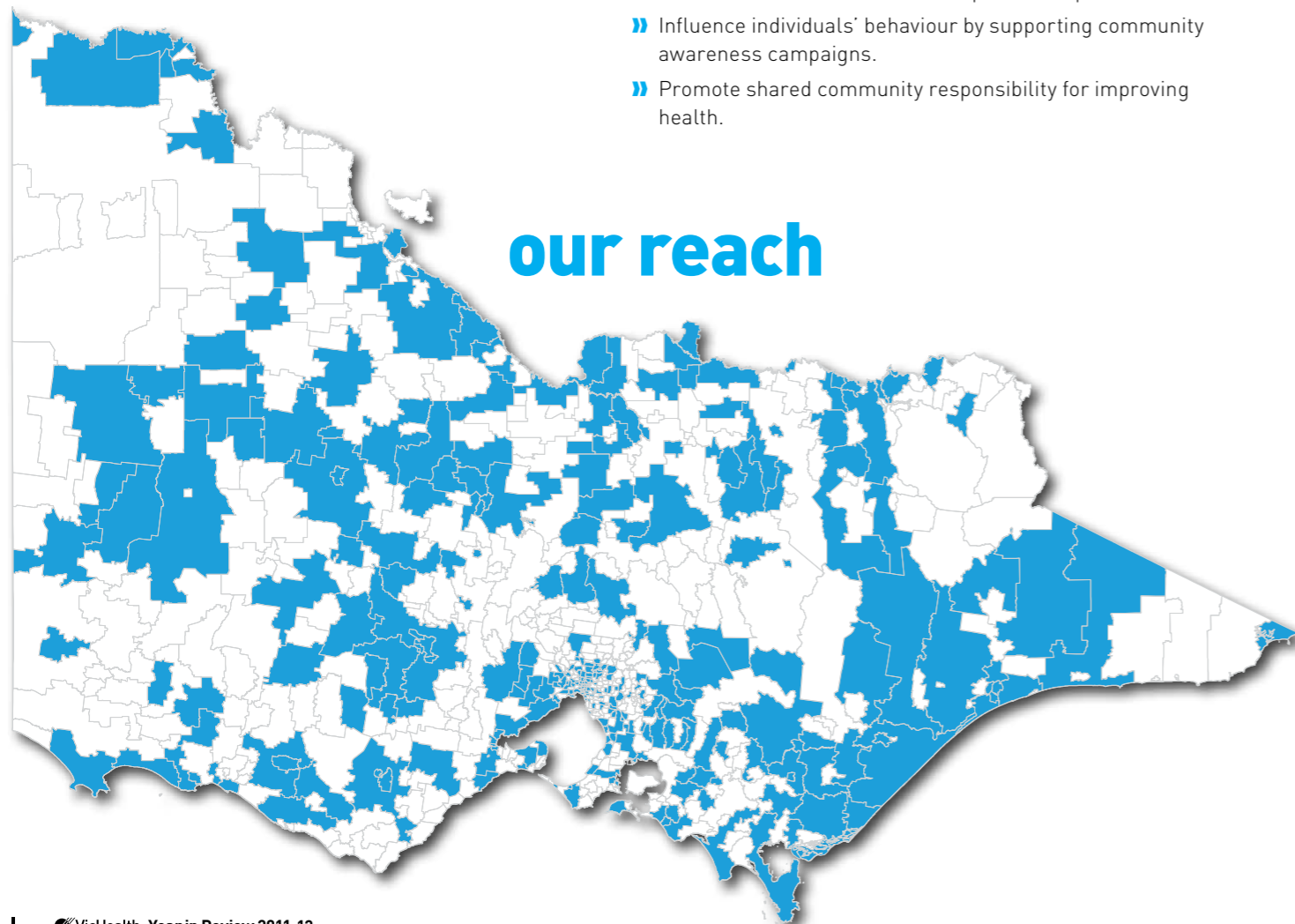
# Activity and performance

2011-2012

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

## How we work

- » Deliver innovative programs in response to the social, economic, cultural and environmental factors that influence health.
- » Invest in projects that target the greatest preventable risk factors for ill health.
- » Lead, support and advocate for excellence in the development of health promoting policies and programs.
- » Foster environments and cultures that support health and wellbeing.
- » Develop new knowledge and raise awareness of best practice in health promotion.
- » Collaborate with others working with disadvantaged groups to reduce health inequalities.
- » Complement state government policy and programs, and national and international health promotion priorities.
- » Influence individuals' behaviour by supporting community awareness campaigns.
- » Promote shared community responsibility for improving health.

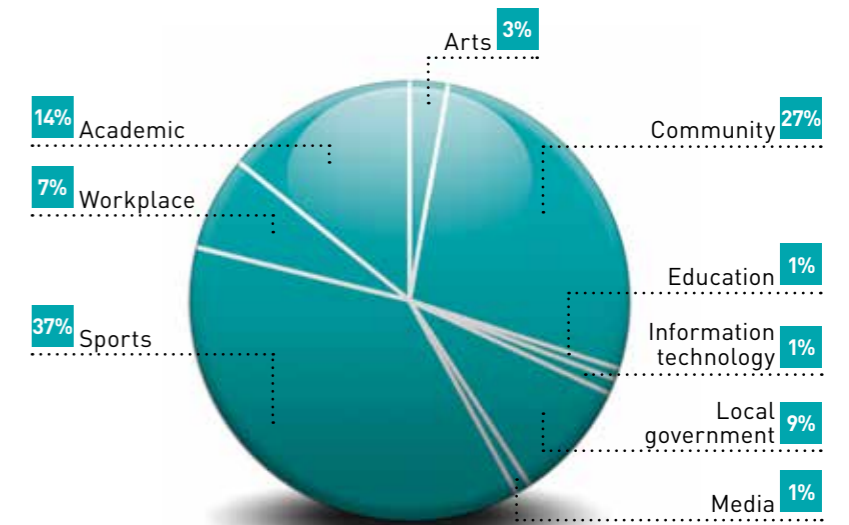


## our objectives

(AS MANDATED BY THE TOBACCO ACT 1987)

- » 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.

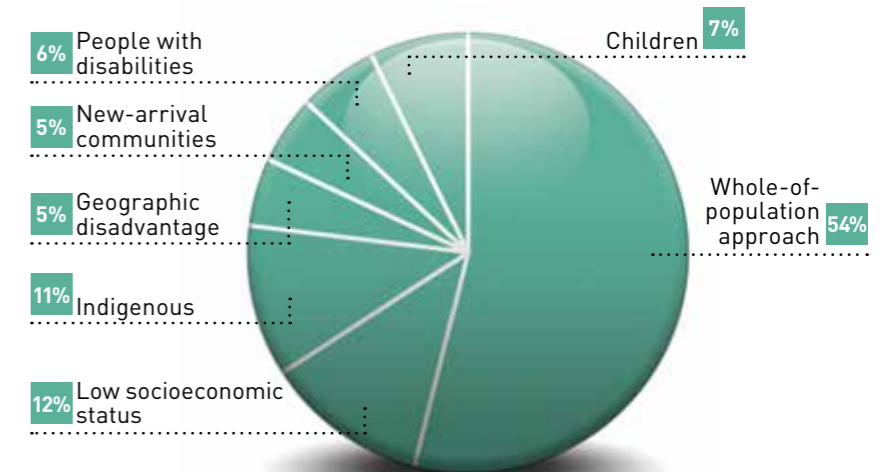
## GRANT EXPENDITURE ACROSS SETTINGS



- \$10,406,000** was invested through sporting bodies (30%\* of our appropriation)
- \$16,718,000** was invested in other health promotion activity (48% of our appropriation)
- \$6,510,000** was invested towards research and evaluation across our strategic priority areas (19% of our appropriation)
- \$4,739,000** was invested towards tobacco health issues (14% of our appropriation)

\* The discrepancy between sports figures is because some of the work that occurs within the sports setting is not undertaken by sporting bodies.

## GRANT EXPENDITURE ACROSS TARGET POPULATION GROUPS



On pages 14-55 you'll find highlights from the past 12 months for each of our priority areas.

## we funded

- 20** local governments
- 564** sporting organisations
- 63** community organisations and NGOs
- 31** tertiary education and research institutes
- 11** health service organisations
- 6** partnered investments with state government and statutory bodies



# VicHealth IN THE MEDIA

VicHealth upholds a valuable relationship with media professionals, who provide the opportunity to inspire informed debate and connection with the public.

VicHealth's media mentions have continued on an upwards trend over the past four years. Between 1 July 2011 and 30 June 2012, VicHealth was mentioned in the media more than 1500 times.

When circulation is taken into account, media analysts estimate VicHealth reached 71,000,000 people in 12 months. Unfavourable coverage accounted for less than 1% of all reports.

VicHealth achieves a good balance of regional, rural, national and metropolitan coverage on a full spectrum of health promotion issues.

This year, alcohol was the topic which interested the media most, accounting for 41% of VicHealth's overall coverage.

This was due in part to the launch of landmark research that showed a correlation between social occasions and alcohol-related harm in Victoria, which was launched with Victoria Police before Australia Day, and resulted in more than 150 news items, with pieces on all major metropolitan news stations that evening.

Physical activity ranked second as the hottest VicHealth media topic, with the announcement of our annual Active Clubs Grants resulting in significant coverage in the regional and rural press.

Coming in third was coverage of VicHealth's work in arts participation, primarily due to the announcement of our MOTION program and robust coverage of Arts About Us and Heartlands Refugee Art Prize projects.

VicHealth continues to support initiatives that acknowledge and recognise excellence in journalism, such as the VicHealth Outstanding Award for Journalism in Health Promotion and the annual Eliminating Violence Against Women Awards (EVAs).

We also worked with journalism educators this year by hosting a round table with senior editorial staff and academics to discuss ways to improve media reporting on violence against women, following in-depth analysis of media reporting on this issue.

## MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS 2011-2012

**Drinking Cultures and Social Occasions research launch.** This report showed a peak in alcohol-related accidents and violence in Victoria directly correlated to certain social occasions, particularly Australia Day, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Victoria Police, the Victorian Ambulance Service and emergency room doctors joined forces to launch the data at VicHealth. The launch was a phenomenal success, with representation from every major metropolitan media outlet in Melbourne.

The announcement of the State Government's new **Secondary Supply of Alcohol legislation** and accompanying education campaign, a partnership with the State Government, VicHealth and the Australian Drug Foundation, garnered significant coverage. The law prohibits adults from supplying alcohol to minors who are not their children, without parental consent. A large media contingent covered the announcement at a press conference and the statewide education forums were promoted widely in regional and rural media.

New research into the **dietary habits of young apprentice tradesmen** garnered coverage in television news, print and key trade magazines.

In May 2012, VicHealth launched unique new research into the **willingness of bystanders to intervene in situations of violence against women**. Four major metropolitan television news crews covered the launch, as well as the *Age*, *Herald Sun* and AAP.

The launch of VicHealth's \$1.8 million **Creating Healthy Workplaces** program was covered in the *Herald Sun*, the *Australian Financial Review* and occupational health and safety publications. ABC television filmed a feature piece for its new health program, Tonic TV.

This period was a stand out for VicHealth opinion pieces. Highlights included a piece stating the case to **ban alcoholic energy drinks** in the *National Times*, an open letter to tobacco companies about **plain packaging of cigarettes** in the *Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald* online, a call to ban solariums published in the *Herald Sun*, a piece on the modern phenomenon of 'cotton wool kids', also in the *Herald Sun*, and pieces on **alcohol and weight gain**, **traffic light labelling**, **alcohol warning labels** and **racism in sports**.



Victoria Police Deputy Commissioner Lucinda Nolan helps launch landmark research into alcohol-related harm and public holidays in Victoria.

### Clubs funded

ANDREW ROGERS

A NUMBER of local clubs are among those to receive equipment and training funding from VicHealth. The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) has awarded 387 sports clubs in flood affected regions of Victoria essential funding to purchase sporting and injury prevention equipment, portable shade and to train volunteers through its Active Club Grants round. Woorinen Football Netball Club received \$1300 for a portable shade structure that will be used primarily for junior football at Kin Harrison Reserve. Woorinen's Lisa Paraci said the \$1300 structure would also be used by the club at other venues and at netball games.



She said the structure would allow junior foot- ballers to sit undercover without being too far from the action when on the interchange bench. "The bench players want to sit on the ground and watch, so it's for them to be able to do that," Paraci said. Nyah Nyah West United's Gary Saville said the club received \$2750 for a shade sail. "They were unable to have a permanent structure at courses," p-

SUPPORT:

Association

Ranke, will

### CORKING THE BINGE



### Driving our children to obesity



Jerril Richter

One in four Victorian kids is overweight. Two-thirds are driven to school. Parents have nothing to fear by letting them walk

Australia's first large-scale study into parental fear. At the end of this work, we'll have a clearer picture of why fewer children are walking to school than ever before — as well as some real solutions for parents. Time and convenience is certainly part of it, but we have surveyed thousands of parents over the past few years and one thing is clear: fear is keeping kids cooped up.

Parents are becoming increasingly concerned about stranger danger, traffic and neighbourly crime.

of 'alcohol' tax 9% drop in sales drinks. A P. In 2010 saw. But that young people 'insure their something health its. Reason: itself (it this is a from awareness of Range. Drinking 2008, which provides as to address here- among young people. 'strategy includes pro- courage youth to police and the health over counselling and about their acciden- are.

young people are drinking at increasing and dangerous levels. As a member, the 2009 Victorian Youth Alcohol and Drug Survey found 42% of young people in 2009 engaged in high-level drinking in the past year, an increase of five percentage points since 2004 and 16 points since 2002. This increase was more marked among females. So do we need more drastic measures to combat the problem? Are strategies such as the alcohol tax simply tinkering at the edges of a problem that needs working, there of a major cultural shift? Robin Room is professor of social research in alcohol at the University of Melbourne and



VicHealth has a proud tradition of excellence in public health research. Research complements all of our health promotion investments and is closely linked to policy and practice. By building evidence and supporting innovation we increase the impact of health promotion and public health programs for all Victorians.

**This year, through consultation and collaboration with community and government, VicHealth and Victorian researchers continued to shape the very questions that Victorians need answered to improve our collective health and wellbeing.**

➤ For research investments that specifically support our health priority areas, see pages 18 to 55.



# investing in health promotion knowledge



## HIGHLIGHTS AND SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS

### Vichealth Indicators Survey 2011

The VicHealth Indicators Survey collects unique and vital information from over 25,000 Victorians every three years. The focus of the survey is on the social determinants of health, rather than health outcomes. It collects information on a range of topics including life satisfaction, participation, access to parks and open space, safety, work-life balance, time pressures, hours sitting per day, sleep, smoking, soft drink and alcohol consumption, and select community attitudes.

The aim of the survey is to provide information at a local government area (LGA) level to assist with Municipal Public Health Plans, strategic planning and policy development to make informed decisions and effectively plan for the future. Data collection and analysis is complete. Resources were published in November 2012.

In addition, we are collaborating with RMIT and the Australian Urban Research Infrastructure Network (AURIN; The University of Melbourne) to provide the urban and public health research community with datasets and information to help them better understand patterns of environmental, social and economic sustainability within Australian urban and built environments.

### Vichealth Research Fellows

VicHealth supports outstanding public health/health promotion research by awarding five-year Public Health Research Fellowships. These sought-after fellowships allow for longer-term research to be undertaken and are designed to attract and support high-quality public health research talent in Victoria. The work undertaken by VicHealth Fellowships is aligned to VicHealth's Strategic Plan. For more information, go to: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/researchfellows](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/researchfellows)

### Conference Support Scheme

Through this scheme, VicHealth provided support to 12 conferences conducted by other providers. This annual funding assists non-government organisations, local government and educational institutions to inform, debate and educate in the field of health promotion and public health.

### The Cochrane Collaboration

VicHealth continued to fund and house the Cochrane Collaboration's Cochrane Public Health Group, which undertakes systematic reviews on health promotion and public health interventions.



# External research

VicHealth supports research aligned to its strategic objectives through a range of grants. All grants require partnership between researchers and key stakeholders such as government, industry, practitioners or communities to ensure research creates practical knowledge that is applicable to end users and can be used for policy and advocacy. Grants for this year are listed on these pages.



**VicHealth is one of 13 essential partners of the Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre**

## 1 Innovation Research Grants

These grants provide two years' funding to trial an innovative idea, research a new concept or methodology, or to develop better supporting evidence relevant to the theory, policy and practice of health promotion. Until recently, this VicHealth scheme was open only to researchers based at Victorian not-for-profit organisations. It is now listed on the Australian Competitive Grants Register. This means we can expand and enhance our research networks and collaboration, which offers significant potential for improving population health in Victoria.

### PROJECTS FUNDED THIS YEAR

**Professor Michael Kimlin**  
Queensland University of Technology

*Does adherence to current guidelines regarding UV exposure effectively maintain adequate vitamin D levels in the Victorian population?*

This study will provide much-needed evidence to enable the balance between risks and benefits of sun exposure to be accurately assessed, and to inform public health messages that will help Victorians minimise risks of UV over-exposure, while ensuring vitamin D adequacy.

**Associate Professor Margaret Kelaheer**  
The University of Melbourne

*The role of new models of governance in improving the quality of health promotion programs*

This project will use a theoretical framework to understand how governance in health promotion is linked to program implementation, quality, effectiveness, knowledge transfer and intervention upscaling.

**Professor Chris Ryan, The University of Melbourne**  
*How can food hubs catalyse healthy and resilient local food systems in Victoria: Developing a food hub in the City of Casey*

This project will use the City of Casey to investigate the design and development of a food hub. Food hubs can make fresh food accessible and affordable and strengthen long-term local supply, providing fair returns to farmers.

**Dr Gillian Fletcher, La Trobe University**  
*Beyond the glass box of silence and invisibility: Examining inclusion and participation programs from a GLBT perspective*

Sport is recognised as a site of harassment, discrimination, and exclusion on the grounds of someone's known or assumed sexuality or gender identity. This project will contribute to the creation of a healthy, socially connected, welcoming and safe environment for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex people within mainstream sport in Victoria.

**Dr Patsie Frawley, La Trobe University**  
*Adopting a mainstream approach: Effective violence and abuse prevention strategies for people with an intellectual disability*

Despite strong policies backed with significant allocation of resources, the implementation of primary prevention of violence and abuse strategies have given little attention to people with intellectual disability. This study will contribute to the translation into practice of theoretical evidence about the use of ecological prevention models and the importance of bringing people with intellectual disability into mainstream primary prevention efforts.



## 2 Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grants

The scheme is a Federal Government initiative that supports collaborative research projects between higher education researchers and industry. This year, seven joint research projects in partnership with VicHealth were successful in receiving ARC funding.

**Dr Anna Peeters, Deakin University**  
*What will it take to decrease socioeconomic inequalities in obesity?*

**Dr Jenny Veitch, Deakin University**  
*The impact of park renewal on park usage and park-based physical activity*

**Associate Professor Yin Paradies, Deakin University & Professor Andrew Jakubowicz, The University of Technology Sydney**  
*Cyber racism and community resilience*

**Associate Professor Yin Paradies, Deakin University**  
*Using museums to counter racism and increase acceptance of diversity among young people*

**Associate Professor Jodie McVernon**  
The University of Melbourne  
*Networks, neighbourhoods and newborns: Defining household and local area influences on social connectedness to understand pathways to health*

**Dr Mark Lawrence, Deakin University**  
*Modelling policy interventions to protect Australia's food security in the face of environmental sustainability challenges*

**Dr Kerry O'Brien, Monash University**  
*Exposure to alcohol advertising and sponsorship in Australian televised sport: association with explicit and implicit alcohol cognitions and drinking*

## 3 Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Program

This highly competitive Federal Government scheme supports collaboration between researchers, industries, communities and governments to solve major challenges facing Australia. Projects can run up to 10 years. VicHealth is one of 13 essential partners of the Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre (CRC), which was launched in 2011. This Australian-based, international research centre ([www.yawcrc.org.au](http://www.yawcrc.org.au)) was established to explore the role of technology in young people's lives, and how it can be used to improve the mental health and wellbeing of people aged 12 to 25.

## 4 National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Partnership Project Grants

These grants provide funding and support to create new opportunities for researchers and policy makers to not only work together to define research questions and undertake research, but also to interpret and implement the findings. This year, two research projects were successful in receiving NHMRC funding.

**Professor Anne Kavanagh, The University of Melbourne**  
*Does access to paid parental leave improve young mothers' social and economic participation and mental health?*

**Associate Professor Vicki White**  
The Cancer Council Victoria  
*What is the role of alcohol outlet density, alcohol price and alcohol promotion in adolescents' drinking behaviours?*

**FUNDED PROJECTS** For a full list of our program investments in public health research, go to: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)



**H**ealth inequalities result when people lack access to the things we all need for good health, such as income, education, housing, and good living and working conditions. Access to these resources is largely beyond an individual's control. That's why VicHealth focuses on making changes in society to provide everybody with the opportunity to live a healthy life.

This year our work has again focused on promoting the health of people from lower socioeconomic groups, Indigenous people, people from culturally diverse communities, and people with disabilities – the population groups that do not experience the same health status that other Victorians enjoy.

# Reducing health inequalities

“**People with disabilities experience a greater burden of ill health than other Victorians.**”

➤ All of our health promotion programs seek to reduce health inequalities (see pages 14 to 55). However, separate investments are also made in discrete areas.

## IMPROVING THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH OF THOSE EXPERIENCING SOCIAL, ECONOMIC OR GEOGRAPHIC DISADVANTAGE

### HIGHLIGHTS AND SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS

#### Housing program

Recognising the significant impact that housing has on health and wellbeing, we have contributed to building the evidence base by publishing and disseminating new research. We are also developing indicators to measure the health impact of housing interventions, and trialling the use of the indicators by evaluating the Lakewood Housing Cooperative in Ringwood. This model is an Australian first that aims to create a strong and sustainable community of social housing residents.

#### Disability framework for health promotion

VicHealth recognises that people with disabilities experience a greater burden of ill health than other Victorians. Much of this inequality is not due to physical or intellectual limitations but to attitudes, practices and structures in society that prevent fair and equal participation.

We commissioned a project to scope the issue of disability and health inequalities.

We are also developing a framework and evidence-based resource to support health promotion action, which are due for release in mid-2013.



## Health inequalities framework

In conjunction with our partners, we are developing a VicHealth health inequalities framework that will outline the mechanisms through which health inequalities are created in our society and guide the organisation's approach to reducing inequalities in health status in the Victorian population.

## Early childhood program

With the Children's Protection Society and the Department of Human Services, VicHealth is supporting the implementation and economic evaluation of an intensive child care program designed to address the needs of the most vulnerable, at-risk children and their families in one local catchment area. If successful, the model can be replicated across Victoria.

## The McCaughey Centre (University of Melbourne)

VicHealth provides ongoing support for this centre, which aims to build and share knowledge about the social and economic determinants of community health and wellbeing, with a focus on reducing health inequalities. The Centre undertakes research, policy development, teaching and workforce development, including initiatives such as Community Indicators Victoria.

### OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, ADDITIONAL FUNDED ACTIVITY INCLUDES:

- » research projects exploring socioeconomic factors that impact on health, such as employment and housing
- » supporting a demonstration project for the Australian National Development Index that aims to develop a community wellbeing indicator set informed by articulated community needs and priorities
- » exploring models of good practice in creating environments that benefit the health of priority populations, such as Football Federation Victoria's 'United Through Football' program which aims to increase the capacity of football (soccer) clubs to promote diversity through their operations and address barriers to participation for new arrivals.

## CLOSING THE HEALTH GAP BETWEEN INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS VICTORIANS

### HIGHLIGHTS AND SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS

#### VicHealth Indigenous Health Promotion Plan

In 2011 we worked with the Department of Human Services on the development of the 'Life is health is life' resource designed to support good practice in improving Indigenous health. Subsequent to this we have been working on the organisation's first Indigenous Health Promotion Plan which, among other things, identifies priorities for new investments. It will be launched and implemented next year.

#### Indigenous Research Fellow

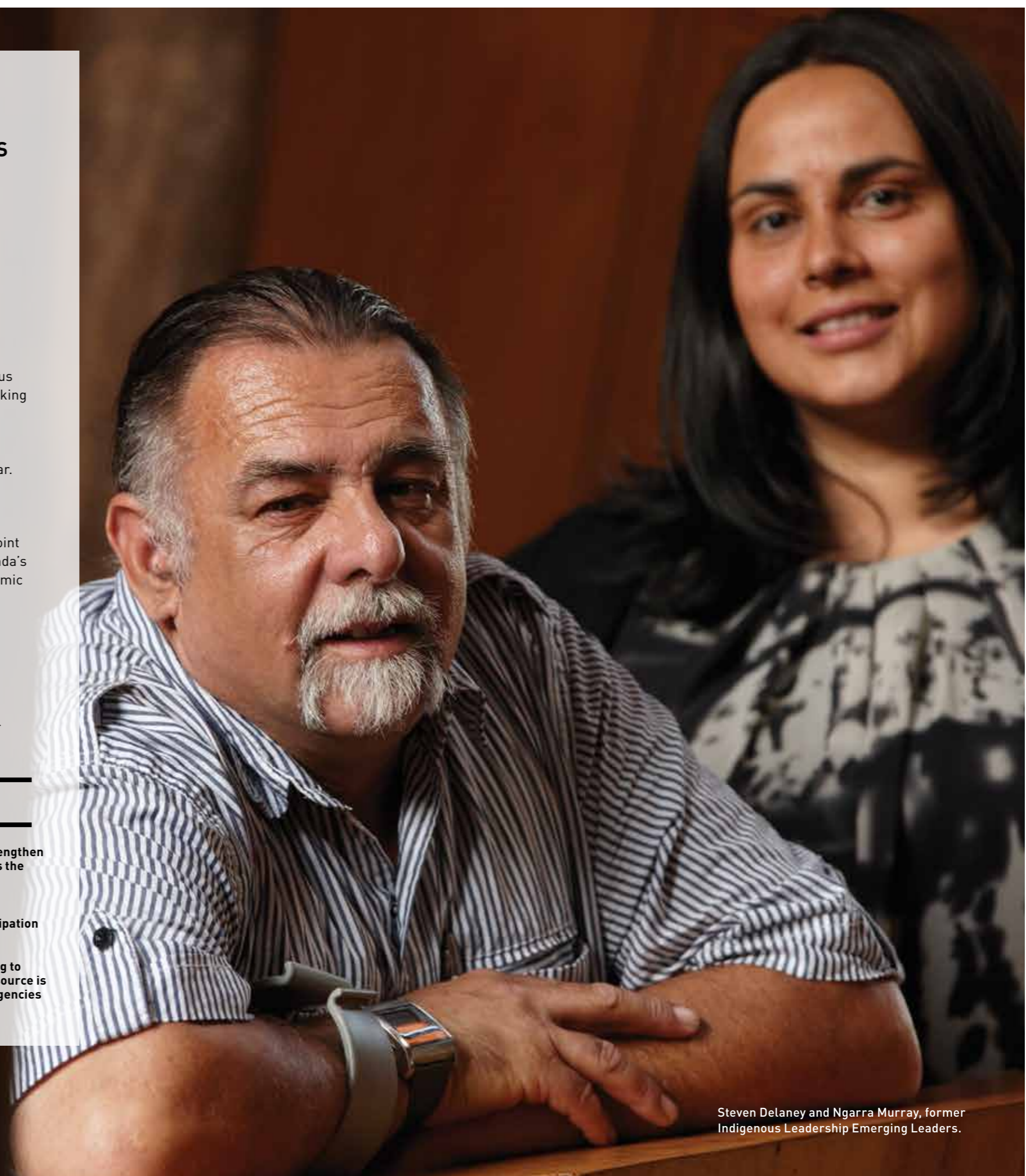
We worked with the Onemda VicHealth Koori Health Unit (University of Melbourne) to appoint a senior research fellow to strengthen Onemda's focus on the contribution of social and economic factors to Indigenous health.

#### Indigenous Surfing Program

In partnership with Surfing Victoria, we are expanding the Indigenous Surfing Program. The program aims to create training and employment opportunities in the surfing industry and other water-based activities for Indigenous young people.

### OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, ADDITIONAL FUNDED ACTIVITY INCLUDES:

- » continuing to support activity designed to strengthen Indigenous leadership across Victoria such as the Fellowship for Indigenous Leadership
- » supporting the development of a sustainable structure to increase Indigenous sport participation across Victoria
- » providing workforce development and training to ensure the use of the 'Life is health is life' resource is utilised across Indigenous and mainstream agencies to improve Indigenous health.



For a full list of our program investments to reduce health inequalities, go to: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

Steven Delaney and Ngarra Murray, former Indigenous Leadership Emerging Leaders.





# Increasing participation in physical activity

**R**egular physical activity can improve health and wellbeing and reduce the risk of premature death, illness and disability. In fact, physical inactivity is ranked second only to tobacco control as the most important factor affecting our health.<sup>1</sup>

Participating in sport and active recreation also provides an important form of social contact, and can reduce feelings of stress and depression. The positive social and psychological effects include increased self-esteem, better development of life skills, decreased involvement in risky behaviour and an increase in academic achievement.<sup>2-4</sup>

For these reasons, VicHealth collaborates with government and community organisations, amongst others, to expand opportunities for participation in organised sport, active recreation, walking and cycling, and to reduce barriers to participation. Integrating action across the social, cultural, built, economic and natural environments is a key focus of our work.



## HIGHLIGHTS AND SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS

### ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT

#### State Sporting Association Participation Program (SSAPP) 2011–2014

Thirty State Sporting Associations are sharing in almost \$10.2 million over three years from VicHealth through this pilot program, which aims to create safe, accessible, inclusive and equitable sporting environments for all Victorians, with a particular emphasis on increasing participation for people with disabilities, Indigenous Australians, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (especially new arrival communities), and women and girls. Beyond encouraging more people to play, this initiative aims to bring about sustainable organisational and cultural change.

- » To assist State Sporting Associations and local clubs to monitor their progress as they build healthier sporting environments, a comprehensive resource called *Everyone Wins* was developed by VicHealth in partnership with more than 20 organisations, including sport, government bodies, community groups, peak agencies and academic institutions. *Everyone Wins* comprises more than 350 tools and information resources available through a website that is fully accessible for people with hearing and vision impairments, and is underpinned by training and education. A comprehensive evaluation is being conducted by Deloitte Access Economics to determine the effectiveness of *Everyone Wins* in bringing about organisational change at a state level.
- » We have also been working closely with selected **State Sporting Associations** as they undertake more in-depth work designed to increase participation of particular target communities (approximately \$3 million over three years). Australian Football League (AFL) Victoria is focusing on women; Football Federation Victoria – culturally and linguistically diverse communities; Surfing Victoria – Indigenous communities; and Basketball Victoria – people with disabilities.

### Be Active – increasing physical activity in partnership with local government

VicHealth, in partnership with Sport & Recreation Victoria, is providing funding of \$2.7 million over three years for a new initiative to increase active participation in recreation for children, families and older people and to increase civic leadership through volunteering. The program is being implemented in partnership with five Local Government Areas, which are also part of the Victorian Government's *Prevention Community Model*. The program will strengthen Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans, increase physical activity participation, respond to emerging physical activity challenges, and create new partnerships.

### Sport growth plans

VicHealth is working with Sport & Recreation Victoria, vicsport, the University of Ballarat and Victoria University to develop sports growth plans for selected State Sporting Associations. The development of these plans is a relatively new concept. They aim to provide robust analysis of sports participation, health and facility data to assist sports to increase participation.

### Healthy Sporting Environments

Last year, VicHealth's Healthy Sporting Environments demonstration project was implemented with 78 sports clubs around the Barwon South West region of Victoria. Successful initiatives tested by clubs are informing the model for implementation across Victoria, in partnership with other Regional Sports Assemblies. See page 42 for more information.



**PHYSICAL INACTIVITY IS RANKED SECOND ONLY TO TOBACCO CONTROL AS THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR AFFECTING OUR HEALTH.**





## PARTICIPATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

### MOTION: Arts, social connection and physical activity program

VicHealth's MOTION program is all about improving people's health by giving them opportunities to get creative, active and involved in their local community through art. We supported seven outstanding projects that explore the health benefits of arts activities and provide new and different ways to get healthy. The evaluation and assessment of these seven projects is being used to extend the program.

### Active Club Grants

This year, 521 sports clubs in Victoria received funding to purchase essential equipment, fund training of volunteers, purchase injury prevention and management equipment, and portable shade through VicHealth's annual Active Club Grants round. The grants are designed to increase participation in physical activity, particularly for people who may be disadvantaged and less likely to take up a sport. Priority was given to junior clubs, Indigenous communities, people with a disability, older people, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Sports clubs and organisations in rural and low socioeconomic areas were also a priority for funding.



### Hanover ConnectEast Ride for Home

We continued our support of this cycling event, which gives riders the opportunity to travel the full length of the EastLink freeway while raising money and awareness for Hanover, so that it can help some of the estimated 20,000 Victorians who are homeless. The event also highlights the many health, social, environmental and financial benefits of cycling for active transport.

## RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

### Evaluation of Streets Ahead 2008–2011

This year we released the final evaluation report of our Streets Ahead program. The program was located in clusters of primary schools in six Victorian local government areas facing high levels of social disadvantage and health inequalities. It was specifically designed to promote children's independent mobility as well as active travel. The report highlights best practice examples and valuable insights gained through the diverse projects.

### Evaluation of Participation in Community Sport and Active Recreation (PICSAR)

This year we completed an evaluation of our PICSAR state and regional grants program. We are very proud of the outcomes that have been achieved by the 61 projects across the state undertaken by State Sporting Associations, regional sports assemblies and peak bodies. The evaluation report highlights the breadth of activities undertaken to increase participation for Victorian communities and the potential of sports to move beyond a traditional service model that delivers competitions and physical health benefits into a sporting environment, to one where a range of health promotion messages can be shared to help shape attitudes and behaviours to ultimately foster healthier communities.

### Victoria Walks

VicHealth conducted an independent review of Victoria Walks to assess its contribution and effectiveness, and make recommendations to strengthen walking participation. Funded by VicHealth, Victoria Walks is a walking-for-transport health promotion charity that encourages more people to walk more often – for transport, recreation and fitness. It has a particular emphasis on increasing physical activity for children and older people and strengthening family engagement.

We also funded the development of Victoria Walks' new three-year strategic business plan, which has a focus on advocating for more walkable and liveable communities to increase awareness of the health, environmental, social, cultural and economic benefits of walking.

## Physical Activity Participation Framework

We have developed an evidence-informed framework to guide future practice, programs and policies to increase physical activity participation. The framework has been designed to inform policy makers, practitioners and leaders about the barriers contributing to physical inactivity, and includes examples of how to overcome them to achieve short to long-term physical activity outcomes. It will be underpinned by training and education.

### Parental fear research

VicHealth awarded \$600,000 to the Parenting Research Centre to undertake research (over three years) into parental fear as a barrier to children's independent mobility and their resultant physical activity.

**FUNDED PROJECTS** For a full list of our program investments to increase participation in physical activity, go to: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

## Tim Gill – expanding children's horizons

VicHealth, in partnership with Sport & Recreation Victoria and Playgroups Victoria, organised a number of stakeholder forums with Tim Gill, one of the UK's leading thinkers on developing resilient children, to discuss how to balance the protection of children and provide opportunities to expand their physical, emotional and social skills.

» Watch all 6 parts of the Tim Gill interview on VicHealth's YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/vichealthmedia](http://www.youtube.com/vichealthmedia)

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**B**elonging and being connected and engaged in group and civic activities are intrinsic to good mental and physical health. Social isolation is associated with stress, anxiety, depression and increased death rates, particularly from heart disease and stroke.<sup>1,2</sup> To improve health, VicHealth supports initiatives that increase opportunities for participation and social connection.

This year we continued to invest in programs and research that build people's skills, self-confidence and ability to connect with others in their community; increase a sense of group belonging and purpose; and encourage civic engagement and a voice on important issues.

Increasing opportunities for

# social connection

## HIGHLIGHTS AND SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLACE-BASED ARTS APPROACHES

#### Localities Enhancing Arts Participation (LEAP) program

This three-year program with three local governments aims to strengthen the organisations, networks, partnerships, resources, arts activity and events that expand participation in – and sustain – arts and cultural activities. The program is being implemented by Mildura Rural City Council, the City of Casey and Ballarat City Council. An evaluation by Synergistiq will identify successful strategies for application in other localities. Through its efforts to increase access to the arts in rural, remote and outer-suburban areas, the LEAP program has engaged 250,000 people who are connecting with community arts for the first time either as audience members or in the process of making arts.

### TECHNOLOGY-BASED STRATEGIES

#### Technology-focused projects

Over the past five years, VicHealth has explored the potential of technology to increase participation and create innovative opportunities for social connection. As part of this work, we have funded 14 organisations who undertook activities to build social connection through engagement with the digital environment. An evaluation of the program indicated positive outcomes and these findings have since been distilled into resources for dissemination to relevant audiences.

#### Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre (CRC)

Launched in late 2011, this Australian-based international research centre was established to explore the role of technology in young people's lives, and how it can be used to improve the mental health and wellbeing of people aged 12 to 25. The centre unites young people with researchers, practitioners, innovators and policy makers from over 70 agencies across the non-profit, academic, government and corporate sectors. VicHealth is one of 13 essential partners. Find out more and get involved at: [www.yawcrc.org.au](http://www.yawcrc.org.au)



Left: Technology creates innovative opportunities for social connection.

Centre: Building connection through the arts with the Ilbijerri Theatre Company.

Right: Hip hop dance crew Kick Back Kids, part of the LEAP program in the City of Casey.





### Technology and new media

Civic engagement is about having ideas, opinions and input into issues that affect our daily lives. Research shows us that self-determination and control and being engaged in community life is fundamental to health. We are exploring ways to build on our existing work using technology and new media as a connecting health promotion tool, with a particular focus on increasing civic participation and connections.

### Action plan for building health through arts and new media

Using arts activity as a health promotion tool is now an accepted part of the Victorian health landscape. Consequently, over the past decade arts activity in the health arena has escalated, alongside evaluation studies. We are undertaking a project designed to capture the learnings from evaluated activity so that it can inform the work of others.

### ACTIVITIES THAT ADDRESS ARTS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

#### MOTION program

The health benefits of the arts in connecting people, engaging communities and contributing to the culture and vitality of our environments are well known. It is also well known that many people do not participate in sport or active recreation pursuits but rather enjoy other forms of recreation. VicHealth's MOTION program is all about working with arts organisations and their partners to improve people's health by giving them opportunities to get creative, active and involved in their local community through art. Over the past 18 months, we supported seven organisations to implement projects that increase physical activity and consequent physical health. The program will be extended in 2013.

### ACTIVITIES THAT BUILD COMMUNITY CONNECTION

#### Indigenous arts program

Creative story telling and other forms of art have been embedded in Indigenous culture for centuries. We are currently partnering with the Koorie Heritage Trust, Ilbijerri Theatre Company, The Black Arm Band and Songlines Aboriginal Music Corporation to provide opportunities for Indigenous Australians to showcase their arts skill, improve cultural understanding and provide opportunities for Indigenous Victorians to participate in creative mediums. Through the combination of theatre, music and technology, the cultural exploration undertaken through performances impacts significantly on audiences and instils pride in Indigenous community members.

#### Performing arts

This year we continued our partnership with the Australian School of Performing Arts, the Australian Girls Choir and AMES (Adult Migrant Education Services) to engage refugee and newly arrived migrants in performing arts activities. Through music, dance and song, participants improved their English language skills, made friends and became more confident and connected to their community.

#### Fitzroy Stars Football Club

The Fitzroy Stars Football Club (FSFC), based in the Indigenous community in Melbourne's northern suburbs, is a Victorian institution. VicHealth continued to support consolidation of the club which not only provides opportunity for Indigenous people to participate in the Northern Football League but also acts as a community hub for the Indigenous community. Families and community members spend weekends and week nights engaged in supporting their team and undertaking volunteer activities to ensure that the club is sustained and grows. The physical and emotional health benefits of the club at the individual and community level are clear.



As part of the MOTION project, the City of Melbourne received funding from VicHealth for the Giant Theremin, a world-first, super-sized musical instrument controlled by movement.

### Heartlands Refugee Art Prize

This prestigious art prize celebrates the creative contribution refugees bring to the Victorian community. This year, 78 entries were received from artists representing 15 countries. Minela Krupic took out first prize for her etching *Kolekcija*, which focuses on the experiences of her migration to Australia from war-torn Bosnia. Now in its third year, the Prize is presented by AMES and Multicultural Arts Victoria in partnership with VicHealth, Parks Victoria and the Sidney Myer Fund. The project makes a considerable contribution to the state's celebration of multiculturalism and connects artists with the wider Victorian community.



For a full list of our program investments to increase opportunities for social connection, go to: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

#### References

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2. Barefoot JC, Grønbaek M, Jensen G, Schnohr P & Prescott E. Social Network Diversity and Risks of Ischemic Heart Disease and Total Mortality: Findings from the Copenhagen City Heart Study *Am. J. Epidemiol.* [15 May 2005] 161(10): 960-967.





The Anti-Racism Action Band (A.R.A.B) perform Northern Trax in the streets of Melbourne. VicHealth has funded a second phase of Arts About Us performances and art installations until June 2015.

**The most recent census results confirmed that Victoria is more culturally diverse than ever before. It is critical that we continue to make sure our communities and organisations are free from race-based discrimination because exposure to discrimination is linked with poor health, especially poor mental health.<sup>1</sup>**

For these reasons, VicHealth works with the community to support cultural diversity, increase social cohesion and reduce race-based discrimination.

This year we continued to raise Victorians' awareness of the prevalence of race-based discrimination, increase knowledge about the health, social and economic impacts, and work with a range of partners to build skills and knowledge and trial new approaches to reduce it.

Our work complements existing discrimination legislation and other programs across Victoria that provide direct support to those affected by discrimination and disadvantage.

It also complements other VicHealth programs: reducing health inequalities (p18), increasing participation in sports and physical activity (p22), increasing opportunities for social connection (p26) and improving workplace health (p38).





## HIGHLIGHTS AND SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

#### Localities Embracing and Accepting Diversity (LEAD) program

VicHealth's Localities Embracing and Accepting Diversity (LEAD) program aims to showcase how local governments can prevent discrimination and support cultural diversity within local communities. LEAD is delivered in partnership with the Cities of Greater Shepparton and Whittlesea, the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and the Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission and co-funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Lowitja Institute and *beyondblue*. The councils work with local workplaces, retail operators, sporting clubs and schools to strengthen policies and cultures to minimise unfair treatment and ensure that cultural diversity is valued.

#### Local Government Networking and Capacity Building

VicHealth funds the MAV to build the capacity of local governments and support them to lead efforts that reduce race-based discrimination in their local communities. We have shared the lessons and resources from the LEAD sites so that these promising approaches can be replicated elsewhere.

#### See Beyond Race campaign

This was the first Australian social marketing campaign to tackle race-based discrimination by featuring local people from diverse cultural backgrounds and their real-life interests. Created to support the LEAD program, the campaign was a partnership between VicHealth, the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, the City of Whittlesea and the City of Greater Shepparton. See Beyond Race appeared on billboards, at sports grounds, in newspapers, and on TV and radio in Shepparton and Whittlesea.

» To see the images and listen to the radio ads from the campaign, go to: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/SeeBeyondRace](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/SeeBeyondRace)

### ARTS PROGRAMS

#### Arts About Us

Art provides a positive, dynamic way of raising and addressing important community issues and connecting people across cultures. The Arts About Us program engages thousands of Victorians on the topics of race-based discrimination and the value of cultural diversity through creative mediums such as photography, music, comedy and performance art. Building on the energy and the powerful community response to the first three years of operation, VicHealth has funded a second phase of the Arts About Us performances and art installations until June 2015. Seven

Victorian arts and cultural organisations will deliver a thought-provoking collection of projects designed to inspire the community to embrace cultural diversity and raise awareness of the harm caused by race-based discrimination.

» More info: [www.artsaboutus.com.au](http://www.artsaboutus.com.au)

### COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

#### Action in workplaces

Workplaces can influence employee health and wellbeing and promote respectful cultures. As part of our Creating Healthy Workplaces program (see p38) we are running a large-scale intervention with the Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission, AMES (Adult Multicultural Education Services) and Insight SRC to develop and evaluate effective workplace health promotion strategies to reduce discrimination.

#### Supporting reconciliation of divided communities in Victoria

VicHealth supported a Centre for Dialogue (La Trobe University) project, *Capacity Building for Reconciling Divided Communities in Victoria*. The project focuses on selected Middle Eastern and Sri Lankan communities whose homelands are in conflict. The project aims to foster dialogue and mutual understanding between the communities and to support them to identify areas of mistrust or misunderstanding. Resources will be tailored to the needs of the participating communities, but will also be adapted for use in a wider range of communities.

### SUPPORTING PROGRAMS

#### Healthy Sporting Environments

This program supports initiatives to create inclusive, safe and supportive sporting environments for Indigenous people and people from culturally diverse backgrounds in hundreds of sports clubs across a range of codes. For a full description, see p42.

#### Rumbalara Football and Netball Club

We supported the Rumbalara Football and Netball Club, a Shepparton-based Aboriginal organisation, to record their story of how they used sport as an important means of promoting health and overcoming racism.

### RESEARCH & EVALUATION

#### McCaughey Centre

We continue to fund a program of research at the University of Melbourne's McCaughey Centre that is dedicated to supporting program development and increasing our understanding of race-based discrimination and acceptance of diversity.

#### Bystander action in the community

VicHealth funded research that investigated why people may or may not 'take a stand' when they see race-based discrimination occurring. This research will be released in 2013 and will provide a framework for the development of our future programs and activities.

#### More Than Tolerance Survey

We are building on our understanding of community attitudes to cultural diversity through conduct of the second More Than Tolerance survey, which focuses on experiences of race-based discrimination and community attitudes towards race and cultural diversity in Victoria. Through this knowledge, programs can be better targeted and there is a statewide survey method now in place to evaluate our progress.

#### Building Bridges scheme 2006–2010

VicHealth's Building Bridges scheme worked with community groups to promote cultural diversity through positive contact and cooperation between people from a range of ethnic backgrounds, including those of Anglo-Australian heritage. The underpinning evidence review we conducted indicated that by creating opportunities to undertake cross-cultural activity, stereotypes and fear of 'others' is reduced. An evaluation report will be released in 2013.

#### Other research projects

We are supporting a range of research projects that are exploring the following topics: the economic costs of racism; the role of parental socialisation in children's response to racism; means of preventing cyber-racism; the impact of racism on children's health; the use of museums as a site to counter racism; and the health benefits of living in a society where cultural diversity is valued.

#### Anti-racism strategy

VicHealth has received increased interest from all levels of government since it released the *Building on our strengths framework* which synthesises the current evidence and knowledge base. VicHealth is well placed to support the Victorian Government's implementation of the *Multicultural Victoria Act 2011* and to contribute to the national anti-racism strategy to be developed by the Australian Government.



**FUNDED PROJECTS**

For a full list of our program investments to reduce race-based discrimination and support cultural diversity, go to: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

#### References

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# promoting respectful relationships

## *to prevent violence against women*

**Intimate partner violence contributes to more ill health and premature death in Victorian women under the age of 45 than any other well-known risk factor, including alcohol, unhealthy food and tobacco consumption.<sup>1</sup>**

### HIGHLIGHTS AND SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS

**V**icHealth focuses on preventing violence against women before it occurs by promoting respectful relationships and non-violent cultures within families, organisations and communities.

This year VicHealth worked in partnership with government, local councils, community and health services, the sport and recreation sector, workplaces and women's health organisations. Our program of research, community strengthening, organisational development and advocacy is focused on building evidence and promoting best practice in primary prevention.

#### **Bystander program**

We undertook research to strengthen our bystander program and better understand what motivates Victorians to intervene to prevent violence against women. This project is the first of its kind in Australia and included an evidence review to identify research gaps in the field and a statewide survey about the willingness of Victorians to speak up against certain situations of sexism, harassment and discrimination against women. The research shows that silent bystanders are an untapped resource and have a potentially greater role to play in the prevention of violence against women.

#### **Respect, Responsibility and Equality**

Through this program we supported the development of in-depth prevention programs in workplaces, local councils, faith communities, and health and community organisations. The strategies and tools that have emerged from these projects will enable more organisations to undertake best practice primary prevention activities. Subject to positive evaluation, it is likely that at least 65 councils potentially reaching 4.5 million Victorians will go on to implement these strategies. The program strategies are now being introduced intensively in the City of Monash through a demonstration site project where VicHealth has partnered with Monash City Council and MonashLink Community Health Service.





### Creating Healthy Workplaces

As part of our Creating Healthy Workplaces program (see p38), we are undertaking a major project with the YMCA to build more equal and respectful relationships between women and men at work, increasing women's representation and leadership in the workplace and creating a positive, respectful and equitable culture and working conditions. This pilot project follows the release of an international evidence review on how gender inequality contributes to chronic disease.

### Violence against women in Victorian print media

We supported researchers at The University of Melbourne to investigate trends in the portrayal and reporting of violence against women in Victorian print media. This research has provided valuable insight into the ways that media reporting can be strengthened. Cross-sector collaboration and partnerships between the health promotion sector and media industries will be consolidated to improve the accuracy of media reporting.

### Preventing Violence Against Women Short Course

VicHealth delivered this short course several times in the last year with practitioners from local government, health, community and other sectors. The Short Course provides education and tools for on-the-ground workers to plan, implement and evaluate evidence-based strategies to prevent violence against women.

### Local Government Networking and Capacity Building

This project has enhanced the leadership role of local government to prevent violence against women. It has enabled more than half of Victoria's local governments to address the determinants of violence through their planning and policies. The evaluation report was published earlier this year.



### Fair Game: Respect Matters

Through the Fair Game: Respect Matters program we continued our partnership with AFL Victoria to create safe, respectful and inclusive environments for girls and women in community football clubs in Victoria. It has introduced the importance of respectful relationships to 100,000 Victorians through training, information sessions and written resources.



### National Community Attitudes Survey

VicHealth has partnered again with the Commonwealth Government to undertake the next National Community Attitudes Survey on Violence Against Women. This is scheduled for delivery in 2014.

### You wanna feel safe DVD

VicHealth developed the *You wanna feel safe* DVD for our Preventing Violence Against Women Short Course. Due to popular demand, we have made this resource available to organisations and individuals working to build capacity around the primary prevention of violence against women. The DVD and training exercise is based on the work of US violence prevention expert Jackson Katz (2006). To order a copy, please email: [pvaw@vichealth.vic.gov.au](mailto:pvaw@vichealth.vic.gov.au)

➤ For more information on these projects, go to: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/publications](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/publications)

💰 **FUNDED PROJECTS** For a full list of our program investments to prevent violence against women, go to: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

#### References

1. VicHealth 2004. *The health costs of violence: measuring the burden of disease caused by intimate partner violence*. Victorian Health Promotion Foundation. Melbourne.



# IMPROVING HEALTH IN WORKPLACES AND WORKFORCES

Workplaces directly influence the physical, mental, economic, and social wellbeing of employees, and in turn the health of their families. Workplaces play a critical role in the health of society, and are an important place for health action and improvement. That's why VicHealth has made health promotion in the workplace a priority.

## CREATING HEALTHY WORKPLACES PROGRAM

VicHealth has identified five areas where workplaces can begin to make advances, not only in improving the health of employees and preventing future problems, but also in enhancing productivity and reducing absenteeism and staff turnover.

In April this year, the Victorian Health Minister The Hon. David Davis MP launched our \$1.8 million program to improve health in Victorian workplaces.

Five international evidence reviews on how stress, gender inequality, alcohol, race-based discrimination and prolonged sitting at work contribute to chronic disease were released. Along with the reports, several large statewide organisations have commenced three-year pilot projects to find solutions to prevent workplaces from contributing to ill health.

Thousands of Victorian employees will participate in the pilot programs, led by Australia's foremost researchers in workplace health. These will result in new evidence and practical tools for other workplaces to reduce risk factors for illness.

Workplaces really are the new frontier for health promotion. If you want to be involved email [workplace@vichealth.vic.gov.au](mailto:workplace@vichealth.vic.gov.au)

### Reducing workplace stress

Researchers Anthony LaMontagne (The University of Melbourne) and Andrew Noblet (Deakin University) are working closely with probationary constables in **Victoria Police** (14,000 workers) to identify the sources and effects of job stress experienced by recently inducted members and to use this information to develop more tailored, needs-based approaches to stress prevention. They are also working with all levels of **Eastern Access Community Health** (500 workers) to test the efficiency of a range of stress reduction initiatives.

### Reducing prolonged sitting

Researcher David Dunstan from Baker IDI Heart & Diabetes Institute is working with the Commonwealth Department of Human Services to design, implement and evaluate organisational and systems strategies for reducing prolonged sitting in office workers in **SMART call centres** (360 employee workstations).

### Preventing violence against women

Researcher Sue Dyson from LaTrobe University is working with the **YMCA** (6000 workers) to build equal relationships between men and women, increase women's representation and leadership in the workplace, and create a positive, respectful and equitable culture and working conditions.

### Preventing race-based discrimination and supporting cultural diversity

The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) is working with AMES (Adult Multicultural Education Services) and Insight SRC to support two Victorian organisations to explore how reducing and eliminating race-based discrimination in the workplace can improve the wellbeing of employees.

### Reducing alcohol-related harm

LeeJenn Health Consultants, the National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction, and South East Business Networks will trial a project with 800 workers to reduce harm caused by alcohol-use on and off the job at **Corex Plastics (Australia) Pty Ltd** and **Hilton Manufacturing Pty Ltd**. A range of initiatives will be designed to promote a culture of responsible drinking and ultimately create a precedent for other workplaces to trial similar projects.



## METEOR

The METEOR project (Matching Employees and Training to Employers for Ongoing Recruitment and Retention) is based at Business Work & Ageing (BWA) Centre for Research at Swinburne University's Faculty of Business & Enterprise.

This five-year VicHealth-funded research fellowship is based on a Finnish Workability approach which provides training, research and implementation tools to assist industries in the retention of more mature workers. This research project promotes productivity in our ageing workforce and has engaged a large number of partners from employment, philanthropic, corporate and the aged sectors, both nationally and internationally.

BWA is working with residential aged and home care organisations, vocational trainers, employment services providers and a range of other community organisations to develop pathways towards longer working lives for a sustainable aged care workforce. The METEOR approach is applicable across all industry sectors and has moved beyond its initial focus on the aged care industry to now being implemented more broadly in other sectors.

» More info: [www.meteorworkability.com.au](http://www.meteorworkability.com.au)

## GANBINA INDIGENOUS SCHOOL-TO-WORK PROJECT

This VicHealth-funded project continued to exceed expectations with its highly successful placement and retention of Aboriginal students in schools, training and employment. VicHealth has worked with Ganbina Koori Economic Employment Training Agency and The RE Ross Trust to secure ongoing funding to strengthen the model.



# WORKFORCE CAPACITY BUILDING

ONE OF VICHEALTH'S STRENGTHS IS ITS ABILITY TO CREATE, TRANSLATE AND DISSEMINATE KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE.

SINCE 2004 WE HAVE DELIVERED A UNIQUE MODEL OF WORKFORCE SUPPORT AND TRAINING TO DEVELOP THE HEALTH PROMOTION SKILLS OF WORKERS ACROSS A WIDE RANGE OF SECTORS IN THE COMMUNITY.

## THERE ARE THREE MAIN COMPONENTS TO THE PROGRAM

**Health promotion training to build skills**

**Development of resources and tools to enhance practice**

**Knowledge exchange, forums, networks and communities of practice sharing their learnings**

Our customised training program (known as short courses) distils health promotion knowledge from VicHealth research and evaluation reports and translates this into practical curricula and resources which are then delivered to external audiences by a group of senior external professionals who are contracted/licensed to VicHealth as endorsed trainers. These trainers represent some of the diverse sectors with which VicHealth wants to engage and partner, such as education, the arts, sports, alcohol, youth, local government, health and workplaces.

Our courses continue to be delivered to nearly 1000 organisations each year and cover a range of health issues, including:

- » addressing the social determinants of health
- » preventing violence against women
- » reducing race-based discrimination
- » increasing participation in physical activity
- » creating welcoming sports environments.

Participants build their knowledge and skills in health promotion mapping, planning, project design, delivery and evaluation.

VicHealth's health promotion training has three audiences: internal VicHealth staff, VicHealth grant holders and external workers. Complementary courses have been developed specifically for senior managers and CEOs of the organisations.

These courses are delivered to workers in rural, regional and metropolitan Victoria across a range of sectors, including sports, community services, arts, local government and workplaces.

VicHealth has broad access to information on gaps in skills for health promotion practice, gained from years of partnerships, research and funded activity. To address these gaps, VicHealth develops resources and tools for effective practice, including policy and practice reform. Examples such as the *Partnerships Analysis Tool*, *Everyone Wins* and numerous research summaries and fact sheets are evidence of our ability to create and translate knowledge to improve health promotion skills.

Workforce development is not a one-way communication. Instead VicHealth regards learning *exchange* as a two-way process. By bringing together networks and arranging forums for workers from diverse sectors, VicHealth's commitment to sharing, exchanging and building knowledge is enacted.

➤ For information about courses in 2013, go to the VicHealth website: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/workforce](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/workforce)

💰 **FUNDED PROJECTS** For a full list of our program investments to improve health in workplaces and workforces, go to: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

Our courses continue to be delivered to nearly 1000 organisations each year and cover a range of health issues







# CREATING ENVIRONMENTS THAT IMPROVE HEALTH



## THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

VicHealth works with private developers, local government authorities and urban designers as they create new communities to influence them to include health and wellbeing outcomes in their master planning.

The built environment work is focused on the new growth area developments of Melbourne. The Victorian population is growing dramatically and, as a result, our settlements are changing. This includes the development of new suburbs on the outskirts of Melbourne.

These changes could potentially influence lifestyles because of:

- » a decrease in open space, walking/cycling paths and other infrastructure that promotes exercise
- » a reduction in personal time for those with long daily commutes, potentially affecting their food preparation, exercise and socialising
- » an increase in social isolation of residents, including children and teenagers who have been found spending more time alone as their parents commute longer
- » an increase in pollution associated with increased car dependence and congestion
- » decreased access to a range of healthy food because of a lack of shops.



### FUNDED PROJECTS

For a full list of our program investments to create environments that improve health, go to: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

**Behavioural risk factors for chronic disease are shaped not only by individual preferences but by built, social, natural and economic environments. That's why VicHealth collaborates with a range of partners to ensure health is factored into the development and growth of our existing and future communities.**

This year we continued to work with a diverse range of partners, including local government, the sport and recreation sector, and community organisations.

**Our work is focused on:**

- » the built environment – particularly the new suburbs of Melbourne
- » the sports club environment
- » the natural or open space environment.

➔ **Information on our work to create safer social, physical and economic environments can be found in the highlights section of our other priority areas.**

## HIGHLIGHTS AND SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS

### Healthy Sporting Environments

Last year, VicHealth's Healthy Sporting Environments demonstration project was implemented with 78 sports clubs around the Barwon South West region of Victoria. Successful initiatives tested by clubs are informing the model for implementation across Victoria, in partnership with other Regional Sports Assemblies. More than 250 local sporting clubs in Warrnambool, Ballarat, Bendigo, Horsham, Mildura, Gippsland, Geelong, Wangaratta and Shepparton will now join the program across 2012–2014. Community sport in regional and rural Victoria will be supported by the Regional Sports Assembly Network as they strive to become healthier by addressing six preventable illness risk factors.

**These clubs will be supported to:**

- » reduce harmful alcohol use
- » offer more nutritious options at the canteen
- » work to reduce spectators' and players' exposure to harmful UV
- » reduce smoking in and around the club grounds
- » manage and reduce injuries
- » increase the number of women, culturally and linguistically diverse people and Indigenous people in local sport.

### Armstrong Creek growth area

This year we have been contributing to the development of liveable communities in Greater Geelong's Armstrong Creek growth area, which will provide physical and social infrastructure at an early stage, rather than just releasing land for development. In particular, we have been sharing our knowledge about creating sporting environments that are safe, accessible, inclusive and equitable.

### Selendra Rise housing development – Research Practice Fellow

Selendra Rise is a property development of 1132 residential lots in Melbourne's southeast local government area of Casey. The master plan was developed through an innovative partnership between Stockland, the City of Casey, the Planning Institute of Australia, VicHealth and the Growth Areas Authority. It has a particular focus on creating a healthy and engaged community by promoting physical activity and active transport, and encouraging social interaction. We have funded a research practice fellow to evaluate the effectiveness of the master plan in promoting health outcomes.

### Recreational opportunities in open space

There is significant research to support the notion that open spaces offer health benefits to people by exposing them to a natural environment. With this in mind, we are working in partnership with Parks Victoria, Heart Foundation (Victoria) and Sport & Recreation Victoria to highlight the importance of recreation-focused open space where people can walk, run, play or spend time sitting or reading.



# Promoting healthy eating

**H**ealthy eating is essential for good physical and mental health, which is why VicHealth invests in programs and research to increase the accessibility, affordability and sustainability of healthy food and to create a culture that supports the consumption of healthy foods.

This year VicHealth continued to provide expert advice to guide policy and regulation, invested in research to further understand the barriers to healthy eating, and funded projects that support the development of environments that encourage healthy eating.

We have also been developing an evidence-based *Nutrition and Food Systems Strategic Framework* to guide future practice, programs and policies.

Access to healthier foods



A culture that supports healthy eating



A secure supply of healthy food



## What we know

Nutrition-related disease risk factors contribute significantly to Victoria's burden of disease.<sup>1</sup>

Most Victorians do not meet the healthy eating guidelines for fruit and vegetables.<sup>2</sup>

Overweight and obesity affect 50% of adults and 25% of children.<sup>3</sup>

Access to safe and affordable healthy foods (known as food security) at both an individual and community level is an ongoing issue.<sup>4</sup>





# External research

This year VicHealth funded many research projects through its various research grants, including those on:

- » food security
- » parental influences on food choice
- » transitions in children and adolescents and effects on obesity
- » environmental and cultural determinants of obesity
- » relationships between the built environment, socioeconomic status, physical activity and obesity
- » the impact of income and poverty on food choices
- » the impacts of environmental changes to future food supply
- » mapping arable land in peri-urban Melbourne
- » regulatory approaches to obesity prevention
- » the impacts of localised food supply

## HIGHLIGHTS AND SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS

### Policy coalitions

VicHealth continued to invest in three groups to provide expert advice to guide policy and regulation:

- » **The Obesity Policy Coalition (OPC)**, comprising VicHealth, the Cancer Council Victoria, Diabetes Australia (Victoria) and the WHO Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention at Deakin University, focuses on reducing overweight and obesity, particularly in children, at a local, state and national level.

The OPC continued to raise important issues about the health consequences of junk food marketing to children and food labelling, generating a high level of media coverage this year.

- » **The Food Alliance**, based at Deakin University's Food Policy Unit, focuses on promoting a food system that ensures sustainable food security and healthy eating for the Victorian population.

The Food Alliance continued to work with key stakeholders to promote sustainable fruit and vegetable supply in Victoria and launched their position paper this year. A report of the outcomes of the roundtable lists a range of recommendations and actions that they will continue to pursue in the future.

- » **The Parents' Jury** is an initiative of VicHealth, the Cancer Council Australia, Diabetes Australia (Vic), the Australian and New Zealand Obesity Society and YMCA Victoria. It provides an online network of parents, grandparents and guardians who are interested in improving the food and physical activity environments of Australian children with focuses on food labelling and advertising.

The Parents' Jury expanded its membership, launched a new website, and became a feature on Facebook and Twitter this year. The annual Fame and Shame Awards continue to showcase the worst (and best) of food advertising directed at children.

### City of Casey food hub feasibility study

Through our Innovation Grants (see p16), VicHealth is supporting a demonstration project assessing the feasibility of the development of a food hub in the City of Casey. The project will focus on the types of interventions required to change the scale of activity and viability of local and regional food distribution systems by considering infrastructure and systemic needs. Key objectives include increased healthy eating, reduced petrol use and emissions in the local food supply chain, and opportunities for skill development, community interaction and new jobs. The concept has the potential to reach nearly a quarter of Melbourne's residents who live in the urban fringe areas.

### Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation project

VicHealth is working with VACCHO to develop healthy eating policies and innovative implementation strategies as identified in the *Victorian Aboriginal Nutrition and Physical Activity Strategy 2009-2014* (such as healthy catering guidelines and workplace healthy eating policies for Aboriginal organisations).

### FUNDED PROJECTS

For a full list of our program investments to promote healthy eating, go to: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

» VicHealth also incorporates healthy eating strategies into other program areas, such as the Healthy Sporting Environments program (see p42).

### References

1. Department of Human Services 2005, *Victorian Burden of Disease Study: Mortality and Morbidity 2001*, Public Health Group, Department of Human Services, State Government of Victoria.
2. Department of Health 2011, *Victorian Population Health Survey 2009*, Victorian Government, Department of Health, Melbourne, Victoria.
3. Booth M, Wake M, Armstrong T et al. 2001, The epidemiology of overweight and obesity among Australian children and adolescents, 1995-97, *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 25: 162-9.
4. Department of Human Services 2005, *Victorian Burden of Disease Study: Mortality and Morbidity 2001*, Public Health Group, Department of Human Services, State Government of Victoria.



# reducing smoking

In Victoria, smoking costs around 4000 lives and \$5 billion every year.<sup>1</sup> Though much progress has been made, smoking remains the leading preventable cause of many cancers and respiratory, cardiovascular and other diseases. VicHealth was set up specifically to reduce tobacco harm and has been investing in this area for 25 years.

Smoking rates continued to decline, with only 14.4% of Victorian adults now regularly smoking.

## HIGHLIGHTS AND SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS

VicHealth is at the forefront of research, advocacy and program development in the anti-smoking arena. We are a key partner of the Victorian Government in the implementation of its Tobacco Control Strategy 2008–2013 and a major funder of both Quit Victoria and the VicHealth Centre for Tobacco Control at the Cancer Council Victoria. We also support national-level tobacco policy reform.

### Plain packaging for cigarettes

In April 2012 the world's largest tobacco companies fronted the High Court in a bid to overturn the Commonwealth's new plain packaging laws. The Federal Parliament passed the new laws in November 2011, which will require cigarettes to be sold in plain olive green packs. The new packaging laws are due to come into effect in December 2012. Australia will be the first country to introduce plain packaging laws, and a world leader in public health efforts to stop people smoking.

Plain packaging of cigarettes will remove the last opportunity for the tobacco industry to promote its product directly to consumers, given the bans on advertising and promotion at point of sale already in place.

In partnership with Quit Victoria and other leading health organisations, VicHealth was instrumental in engendering public and political support for legislation for plain packaging for cigarettes and we have continued to support this policy reform.

### Reduced Victorian smoking rates

Smoking rates continued to decline, with 14.4%<sup>2</sup> of Victorian adults now regularly smoking, down from 18.3% in 2005. Young people are also getting the message about the dangers of smoking with adults aged 18–29 no longer the age group with the highest proportion of regular smokers. These findings put Victorian adult smoking rates within reach of the 13.8% target set for 2013 by the Victorian Government.

### Decreasing smoking prevalence

We continued to support Quit Victoria to decrease smoking prevalence among smokers in low socioeconomic groups and disadvantaged groups. This requires a focus on a range of people, including those experiencing mental health issues, people in/exiting Victoria's prison system, Indigenous people in Victoria, and pregnant women from highly disadvantaged areas.

VicHealth's longstanding investment in Quit Victoria's anti-smoking campaigns continues to reach over 1.5 million Victorians per annum. Each year, there are about 24,000 calls to *Quitline* and 211,000 hits on the Quit website.

### Healthy Sporting Environments

Through this program, VicHealth is supporting initiatives to reduce tobacco use in sporting environments. For a full description see p42.



For a full list of our program investments to reduce smoking, go to: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

### References

1. The Cancer Council Victoria 2005, *The Tobacco Tragedy: Deaths caused by smoking in Victoria 1999–2002*, Cancer Council Victoria, Melbourne.
2. The Cancer Council Victoria 2011, *Smoking Prevalence and Consumption in Victoria* report, Cancer Council Victoria, Melbourne.

## FUTURE FOCUS

In the coming 12 months, VicHealth will work with the Victorian Government, Quit Victoria and other partners to:

- » maintain Victoria as a leader in tobacco control by working to achieve the greatest possible reduction in smoking prevalence in the shortest possible time, and reducing smoking prevalence disparities in the Victorian population
- » support Quit Victoria to continue its world-leading work in the areas of research, social marketing, cessation services, and policy and advocacy
- » support and provide advice to Quit Victoria to develop a strategy to guide efforts in reducing smoking prevalence disparities that:
  - identifies priority groups, key partners, settings, geographic locations, approaches and resource allocation
  - includes a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation program to assess the effectiveness of these efforts.
- » contribute to discussions relating to smoking in outdoor areas
- » pay particular attention to the development and evaluation of new strategies including use of social media, e-cessation, and capacity building of other organisations.



# Reducing harm from alcohol

Alcohol-related harm is a significant preventable health issue in Victoria. While the social use of alcohol is widely accepted, alcohol is associated with more than 200 different health problems, including liver failure, brain damage, obesity, stroke and cancer.<sup>1</sup> It also causes a range of social problems that affect the drinker and those around them.

**C**hanging the hazardous drinking culture is a challenging task that requires an innovative approach to tackling the broader social, economic, geographical, historical and economic factors of alcohol consumption.

This year we have strengthened our efforts to reduce alcohol-related harm and induce cultural change by advocating for policy change and regulation, and gathering further evidence on effective strategies to reduce harm from alcohol. We have also coordinated public communications for key Victorian Government alcohol initiatives and policies.

The focus of our future work will be on core settings and research. We will be trialling methods to reduce alcohol-related harm in workplaces and in sport, and examining the interactions between alcohol preferences and behaviours.



## HIGHLIGHTS AND SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS

### Teen Drinking Law campaign

From 1 November 2011, Victorian law changed to make it illegal to supply alcohol in a private home to anyone under 18, unless their parents or guardians have given permission. Adults who break the new law face fines of more than \$7000 – the same amount a licensee would be fined for selling alcohol to a minor.

VicHealth, the Australian Drug Foundation, the Department of Health (Mental Health, Drugs and Regions Division) and Responsible Alcohol Victoria worked together to deliver a communication and education project targeting parents, guardians and teenagers. This project focused on providing practical information about the new law, and increasing awareness of the health and social reasons why young people should delay drinking alcohol.

» The **Smartphone app** is free and packed with interactive information. It's available from the iTunes App Store.

» The comprehensive **website** features information, including webinars and podcasts: [www.teendrinkinglaw.vic.gov.au](http://www.teendrinkinglaw.vic.gov.au)

### Say When

*Say When* is a free and confidential online tool that gives Victorian adults a chance to assess their drinking and what it means for their health and wellbeing. Developed by the Queensland University of Technology for the Victorian Department of Health, *Say When* is supported by VicHealth. It's been carefully designed to be supportive and informative and gives people the chance to make small changes to their drinking habits and lessen their risk of injury and developing serious health issues later on.

» *Say When* can be found on the Better Health Channel at: [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/saywhen](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/saywhen)

### Creating Healthy Workplaces: Reducing alcohol-related harm

As part of VicHealth's Creating Healthy Workplaces program, we are undertaking a major project with the National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA), LeeJenn Health Consultants and South East Business Networks (SEBN) to reduce the harm from alcohol in the workplace. The project will focus on a manufacturing worksite in the City of Greater Dandenong over three years. This pilot project follows the release of an international evidence review on how harmful alcohol use contributes to chronic disease.

### febfast evaluation

VicHealth commissioned a survey of 1300 febfast participants to find out if this annual event had any impact on future alcohol consumption and whether it raised awareness about the long-term harms associated with alcohol.

### Bottle shop density and binge drinking

A University of Melbourne and VicHealth study showed that Victorian residents with eight or more takeaway alcohol outlets within 1km of their homes are twice as likely to binge drink.

### Reducing alcohol-related harm in licensed premises

Australian Drug Foundation and Deakin University research evaluated a community-based intervention that aimed to reduce alcohol-related harm associated with licensed premises in Geelong. The intervention consisted of a formalised accreditation program that systematically implemented demand, supply and harm-reduction strategies within licensed venues. Moreover, the project aimed to mobilise communities through the media, social marketing and targeted enforcement.

### Alcohol during pregnancy

With VicHealth funding, the Murdoch Childrens Research Institute developed effective tools to document and assess the level of drinking that is occurring among Australian pregnant women. A major study into Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) has now begun and is expected to provide new evidence that will contribute to policy review and development, health professional education and consumer information about alcohol consumption for women during pregnancy.

### Reducing alcohol-related harm in sporting environments

Through the Healthy Sporting Environments demonstration project, which involved 78 clubs in the Barwon South West region of Victoria, VicHealth supported initiatives to reduce alcohol-related harm in sporting environments. The first-year evaluation revealed that clubs were more likely to support price increases as a harm-reduction strategy than limiting the choice of alcohol beverages available to club members. It was recommended that in future, pricing differentials are developed that provide incentives for the consumption of lower alcohol choices. For a full description of this project, see p42.

### Good Sports

Good Sports, run by the Australian Drug Foundation, is a national alcohol management program for sporting clubs that serve alcohol. The program, which receives the majority of its Victorian funding from VicHealth, was reviewed by VicHealth in 2009 and innovations are being trialled and evaluated in response. Nearly 2000 sporting clubs have implemented alcohol management strategies, qualifying them for accreditation as Good Sports clubs.

» Find out more: [www.goodsports.com.au](http://www.goodsports.com.au)

### AFL and alcohol in community football

VicHealth has entered into a three-year agreement to engage the AFL in a cultural change program focused on alcohol consumption. The program integrates research with policy development, and trials of reduced alcohol beverages in community AFL settings to reduce alcohol-related harm.

### National Alliance for Action on Alcohol

This national coalition of more than 70 health and community organisations, including VicHealth, continued to pool their collective expertise around what needs to be done to address Australia's drinking problems.

### The Alcohol Policy Coalition

This coalition, which comprises the Australian Drug Foundation, the Cancer Council Victoria, the Heart Foundation (Vic), Turning Point Alcohol & Drug Centre and VicHealth, continued to provide expert advocacy and policy advice on a state level.

➤ Reports for many of these projects are available online: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/publications](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/publications)

💰 **FUNDED PROJECTS** For a full list of our program investments to reduce harm from alcohol, go to: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

**References** 1. Rehm J, Mathers C, Popova, S et al. 2009. 'Global burden of disease and injury and economic costs attributable to alcohol use and alcohol-use disorders'. *The Lancet*, vol. 373, Issue 9682, pp. 2223–33.



# Reducing harmful UV exposure

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world – at least two in three people will be diagnosed before the age of 70.<sup>1</sup> The good news is that skin cancer is one of the most preventable cancers in Australia. That's why VicHealth invests in the Cancer Council Victoria's SunSmart program, which leads the world in promoting the balance between the benefits and harms of UV.



## HIGHLIGHTS AND SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS

### Schools and early childhood

For the first time, membership in the SunSmart schools program reached 90%. This is one of the highest participation rates of any public health program in Australia, directly reaching approximately 416,000 Victorian school children.

### Healthy Sporting Environments program

This VicHealth program involves sporting clubs across a diverse range of codes. UV exposure is one of six key health related standards to be addressed by clubs in the process of creating healthier environments. Initiatives are helping to reduce spectators' and players' exposure to harmful UV. For a full description of this project, see p42.

### New SunSmart campaign launched

In November 2011 Her Royal Highness the Crown Princess Mary of Denmark launched a new SunSmart campaign urging Victorians to guard against the dangerous effects of excessive sun exposure.

New research released by the Cancer Council Victoria revealed that Victorian teens are in denial about their risk of skin cancer and are not using adequate sun protection

despite the high incidence of melanoma in young people.<sup>2</sup> Based on this research, the SunSmart *Wes Bonny Testimonial* – featuring the story of 26-year-old Wes Bonny who died from melanoma in 2010 – aired across Victoria in summer as part of the continuation of the successful *Dark Side of Tanning* campaign.

A \$1.043 million grant from the State Government allowed the Cancer Council Victoria to continue the campaign in partnership with the Victorian Department of Health and VicHealth.

### Vitamin D campaign

SunSmart continued its vitamin D campaign, encouraging Victorians to get sufficient and safe sun exposure to help with vitamin D levels. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun is the main cause of skin cancer but also the best natural source of vitamin D, essential for strong bones, muscles and overall health. Research shows that up to one-third of Australians are vitamin D deficient.

### New SunSmart shade tool

In October 2011 SunSmart launched a new online planning tool – *Developing effective shade* – to assist schools, childcare centres, community groups and local government to ensure adequate, quality shade is provided in their parks, playgrounds and public open spaces. Shade alone as a sun protection measure can reduce overall exposure to UV by up to 75%.

### Skin Cancer Prevention Framework

The Department of Health has developed a draft Skin Cancer Prevention Framework for 2012–2016, which has been released for public consultation. The framework aims to establish ways in which the government, in partnership with the health sector, private sector and local communities, can reduce the incidence of and mortality from skin cancer in Victoria over the next five years. SunSmart is contributing to the Victorian Government's UV strategy, with set targets around changing the sun protection behaviour of Victorians, particularly children, teenagers and young adults.

## FUTURE FOCUS

To see sustained changes in sun protective attitudes and behaviours, SunSmart will continue to:

- » build on its successful campaigns to improve awareness and knowledge about UV among priority population groups, including adolescents
- » integrate SunSmart activity within the context of the Prevention Community Model and the Victorian Prevention and Health Promotion Achievement Program
- » advocate for quality shade provision in schools, early childhood settings, parks, and sporting, aquatic and recreation facilities
- » innovate, implement and evaluate campaigns and health promotion tools using new technologies and social media.



For a full list of our program investments to reduce harmful UV exposure, go to: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport)

### SUNSMART iPhone APP

The SunSmart iPhone app makes it easier than ever for Australians to be SunSmart. It provides people right across Australia with free, easy-to-access information about ultraviolet (UV) radiation levels. The free app is available from the iTunes App Store.

## References

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2. Hearne K, Volkov A, Dobbins S. 2011. *National Sun Protection Survey: Melbourne Youth (12-24 years) Report 1*. Skin cancer prevention knowledge, attitudes and beliefs among Melbourne youth in summer 2010–11 (unpublished). Cancer Council Victoria: Research Report for SunSmart. Melbourne.



## Time to ban solariums in Victoria

In February 2012, VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter called for a ban on all solariums in Victoria in an opinion piece to the *Herald Sun*.

Before her death in 2007, Clare Oliver, aged 26, became a household name. Clare told her tragic story of skin cancer to warn young women about the consequences of solariums. It has been estimated that each year in Victoria, 51 new melanomas, seven deaths and 294 new cases of deadly squamous cell carcinoma are attributed to solarium use.

Research by Cancer Council Victoria revealed that 80% of Melbourne solarium operators surveyed allowed access to teenagers who concealed their age or claimed to be 18, despite the ban on under-18s using solariums. This compliance research shows that the vast majority of solarium operators surveyed are disregarding the laws that have been designed to protect the consumer.

Cancer Council Victoria and VicHealth, through the SunSmart program, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre and the Department of Health, have positioned Victoria as a national and international leader in solarium legislation, effectively reducing the number of solarium venues in Victoria by 65% since introducing the new legislation in 2008.





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