

YEAR IN REVIEW 2012-2013



{ CONTENTS }



Our recent financial year has been an ambitious and rewarding one as we closed off our 2009–13 Strategy and Business Plan and developed the VicHealth Action Agenda for Health Promotion.

*Jerril Rechter,
CEO VicHealth*

[Turn to p6 to read more.]



Chair's report	4
Chief Executive Officer's report	6
Activity and performance 2012-13	10
Connecting with Victorians	12
Program highlights	
Promoting healthy eating	18
Increasing participation in physical activity	20
Reducing smoking	24
Reducing harm from alcohol	26
Increasing opportunities for social connection	28
Reducing race-based discrimination and supporting cultural diversity	32
Promoting respectful relationships to prevent violence against women	36
Improving health in workplaces and workforces	40
Creating environments that improve health	42
Reducing harmful UV exposure	44
Investing in research, evaluation and knowledge for health	46
Reducing health inequalities	50

October 2013
Publication Number: C-078-CO



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Front cover image: Many of Melbourne's finest sportspeople are supporting VicHealth's TeamUp campaign, including Melbourne Tigers' Chris Goulding and Adam Ballinger. Find out more on p13.

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This document reports on the final year of VicHealth's Strategy and Business Plan 2009–13.

We have a new Action Agenda for Health Promotion which outlines our commitments and priorities in the next three years and beyond to 2023. The Action Agenda provides an impetus for progressive actions for our five strategic imperatives: promote healthy eating, encourage physical activity, prevent tobacco use, prevent harm from alcohol, and improve mental wellbeing. It also articulates the new VicHealth model – Innovate, Inform, Integrate – for delivering on our work to create a Victoria where everyone can enjoy better health.

WWW. vichealth.vic.gov.au/actionagenda

About us

Our focus is promoting good health and preventing chronic disease.

- » We pinpoint and prevent the negative influences of ill health.
- » We champion the positive influences on good health.

Our origin

VicHealth is a world-first health promotion foundation. We were established in 1987 by the State Parliament of Victoria with the statutory objectives mandated by the *Tobacco Act 1987* (Vic):

- » 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.

Our commitment

- » In partnership with others, we promote good health.
- » We recognise that the social and economic conditions for all people influence their health.
- » We promote fairness and opportunity for better health.
- » We support initiatives that assist individuals, communities, workplaces and broader society to improve wellbeing.
- » We seek to prevent chronic conditions for all Victorians.

Our work

VicHealth has played a unique role since 1987.

- » We have been at the forefront of health promotion and illness prevention.
- » We have addressed sensitive and difficult issues – many that involved venturing into untested territory or affecting Victorians with limited capacity to have their voices heard.
- » We have funded unproven but promising practice, including highly successful programs that are now recurrently funded by other sources.
- » We have invested in exploratory research and grown a research culture in health promotion.

{ CHAIR'S REPORT }

It is my pleasure to present this report on VicHealth's work and achievements for the financial year 2012–13.

It has been a momentous year for health promotion. There have been significant successes from long-standing health promotion campaigns and a suite of fresh initiatives – including the launch of the *VicHealth Action Agenda for Health Promotion*.



Mark Birrell, Chair of the Board

Australia sealed its leadership in tobacco control with the world-first legislation on plain packaging of cigarette products which came into effect in December 2012. In addition to mandating the removal of branding on packs, the size of the graphic warnings on the front of packs has increased to 75%. This was a historic step towards building a smoke-free, healthier generation.

In Victoria, the State Government implemented smoke-free patrolled beaches and announced the introduction of smoke-free public spaces such as children's playgrounds and swimming pools. VicHealth welcomed these changes as part of our work to protect non-smokers from second-hand smoke, as well as to reduce among young people the desirability of a product that kills one in every two long-term users.

We also welcomed the release of the Victorian Government's new alcohol and drug strategy, *Reducing the alcohol and drug toll: Victoria's plan 2013–2017*, which specifies actions to prevent alcohol-related injuries, diseases and death as well as implement a plan to strengthen liquor licensing bans. The Government's plan addresses key contributors to excessive drinking; a necessary move given risky alcohol use continues to be a leading cause of preventable mortality and morbidity. VicHealth will play a role in this plan from the next financial year by supporting the development and commencement of an alcohol cultural change program. This initiative aims to foster healthier attitudes to alcohol consumption.

In the fight against obesity, we worked with our partners to vigorously promote the messages of banning junk food advertising during television viewing hours of children. VicHealth also funded a range of physical activity initiatives to give as many Victorians as possible the opportunity to increase their activity levels in sports and in workplaces. We made submissions to the State Government including a response to the Road Safety Strategy with recommendations to address important concerns such as parental road safety fears which are preventing parents from letting their kids walk to school.

As a leader and innovator in health promotion, VicHealth launched several ground-breaking programs to build on its achievements, including the Creating Healthy Workplaces pilot projects and the Healthy Sporting Environments program, which will deliver a wealth of evidence on how we can prevent chronic disease and improve Victorians' health and wellbeing in places where they work and play. VicHealth also launched TeamUp – a digital campaign that offers people easy opportunities to increase their physical activity – acknowledging that digital technology is the new frontier in health promotion.

VicHealth celebrated its 25th anniversary in November 2012. It was an occasion to reflect on our beginnings, from the buy-out of tobacco sponsorship to the challenging health promotion action areas that VicHealth has strived to address since. It was also an opportunity to renew our commitment to our mandate of preventing illness, knowing that the landscape of health promotion is changing rapidly.

During the 25th anniversary celebration held at Government House in December, we presented awards to eight of the state's health promotion champions, with nominations from VicHealth-funded projects as well as externally funded work. The awards signal VicHealth's recognition of the value of health promotion across all sectors and its potential to save lives and millions of dollars.

In the new financial year and beyond, we expect to make new and greater strides to overcome barriers that prevent Victorians from enjoying the benefits of health and wellbeing. In addition to our involvement in the Government's alcohol and drug strategy, we will also participate in the Active Cities initiatives in an effort to boost physical activity among those employed in the city.

These are examples of new initiatives that VicHealth will trial and develop to deliver our commitments and priorities in the next three years and beyond to 2023, as stated in the *VicHealth Action Agenda for Health Promotion*. In this plan of action, we have identified five strategic imperatives: promote healthy eating, encourage regular physical activity, prevent tobacco use, prevent harm from alcohol and improve mental wellbeing. These imperatives address the greatest burden of disease and disability in our state.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my appreciation to all the Victorian Members of Parliament for their support of VicHealth, in particular the Minister for Health, The Hon. David

Davis MLC, for his continuing support and leadership. I also want to express my gratitude to the many government agencies for their work with us.

We are indebted to our previous and current Board and partners whose encouragement and contributions along the journey of our 2009–13 Strategy and Business Plan were invaluable. I would like to thank Mr Leigh Johns, Chair of our Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, for his service to VicHealth from April 2005 to May 2013.

In particular, I thank CEO Jerril Rechter for her leadership of this unique organisation, championing the new *Action Agenda for Health Promotion* and advocating new initiatives that will help VicHealth navigate through an increasingly complex and fast-moving context.

Finally, none of the accomplishments of the past year and strategic plan would have been possible without the efforts and professionalism of VicHealth staff – they can be proud of these achievements.

I look forward to the next three years as VicHealth takes on fresh challenges in the new Action Agenda to deliver its work for the health and wellbeing of Victorians.

Mark Birrell

Chair of the Board

Further reading

Action Agenda for Health Promotion
www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/actionagenda

Annual Report of Operations 2012–2013
www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/annualreport

Health promotion awards
www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/awards

Board of Governance
www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/board

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



Change. Challenge. Collaboration. Our recent financial year has been an ambitious and rewarding one as we closed off our 2009–13 Strategy and Business Plan and developed the *VicHealth Action Agenda for Health Promotion*, which details our focus for the next three years against the bigger picture of our vision and aspirations over the next decade.

In the last financial year we witnessed shifts in our environment, notably the groundswell in digital technology and how Victorians have embraced new ways of communicating and engaging. The persistent problems emanating from tobacco harms and risky alcohol consumption, continuing high prevalence of obesity, and increasing rates of mental illness revealed the need for new approaches. There is clearly more for VicHealth to do in partnership with others to address these health issues.

In the 2009–13 Strategy and Business Plan we continued our work on preventing chronic disease by focusing on risk behaviours (e.g. alcohol misuse), risk conditions (e.g. stress) and the broader social and economic factors contributing to them (e.g. poor community connections).

The 2012–13 financial year has demonstrated some of the gains in these areas and I am proud to report on our achievements.

{ HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR }



Encouraging healthy eating

In a first, VicHealth with support from The Australian Centre for Social Innovation launched the **Seed Challenge** which brought together individuals and groups to collaborate and develop innovative, contemporary solutions to get more Victorians eating healthy food. The two winners will each receive \$100,000 to roll out their initiatives over the next 12 months, which will connect community members, farmers and fresh food distributors in an approach never tried in Victoria before to help secure the state's fresh food supply and access. These projects will help address the problem of nine in 10 Victorian adults not meeting the recommended minimum daily intake of vegetables and half not meeting the intake for fruit, both fundamental for good health.

Increasing physical activity

Nearly 40% of our grant expenditure went to our strategic priority of increasing physical activity.

We opened a new \$3.3 million funding opportunity under the **Healthy Sporting Environments** program, so that hundreds of Victorian sports clubs can make comprehensive changes to become healthier places. This will be realised through nine regional sports assemblies partnering with clubs to reduce harmful alcohol use, offer more nutritious food, reduce smoking, and increase the number of women, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people and Indigenous people in local sport. This builds on the learnings from VicHealth's Healthy Sporting Environments Demonstration Project with 78 sports clubs in the Geelong region.

VicHealth also established partnerships with five councils to deliver the **Be Active** program with a total funding of \$2.7 million to get more people more active, more often. This program, located within the Healthy Together Victoria community sites, is particularly targeted at children, families, older people and volunteers.

These investments, along with our **State Sporting Association Participation Program** and the **Active Club Grants**, comprise a third of our funding provided to sporting bodies.

We approached our **Walk to School** campaign in October 2012 with a significant change — making this a month-long activity instead of a single day event. The return on investment was remarkable. Over 14,000 children walked a total of 241,363 kilometres in October 2012, equivalent to six times the circumference of the Earth. We are proud of the achievements of the participating schools, their staff,

parents and children. Our research has confirmed that in addition to its physical benefits, children who make walking their primary mode of transport benefit from better motor skills, self-esteem and social skills, and start off a great lifetime habit — improving fitness and preventing obesity.

This year, VicHealth launched **TeamUp**, a new digital campaign to make physical activity more accessible to everyone. It offers all Victorians an easy way to find sports and physical activities or create their own and join in with others. TeamUp acknowledges that people have different lifestyles and preferences and offers opportunities to participate easily in a range of ways. This campaign includes partnerships with both elite and grassroots sports, working with ambassadors to encourage wide participation.



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Ambulance Victoria's Paul Holman at VicHealth's press conference on alcohol-related harm and sporting occasions.



Plain packaging of tobacco, introduced in December 2012.

Health warning images used with the permission of the Australian Government.



VicHealth research highlighted the potential to encourage more bystander action in workplaces and sports clubs.



In an Australian first, VicHealth is testing a new model to promote equal and respectful relationships to prevent violence against women.

Reducing harm from alcohol, tobacco and UV

VicHealth funded landmark research that showed the **rise in harms from alcohol during public holidays** and major sporting events. The research consisted of data compiled from hospital admissions, ambulance and police attendances and emergency department presentations. The results clearly showed the need for a change in our attitudes, behaviours and actions towards drinking, as well as the impact of linking alcohol promotion to such events, an exposure that is particularly harmful to young people.

We are proud to be the recipient of additional funding from the Department of Health to develop and commence in 2013–14 the statewide **alcohol cultural change program** as part of its alcohol and drug strategy, *Reducing the alcohol and drug toll: Victoria's plan 2013–2017*, launched by the Minister for Mental Health, The Hon. Mary Wooldrige MP. This important work will focus on encouraging a healthier drinking culture among young Victorians.

This year, we welcomed the implementation of the **plain packaging legislation**, a significant achievement to further drive down the smoking rates. Research has shown that while fewer people are taking up smoking, one in 10 smokers still do not believe that smoking causes illness. With its established links to lung cancer, heart disease and emphysema, smoking continues to be a scourge and a block to preventing chronic disease.

Through our investment in Quit Victoria and its work and campaigns, we contributed to the **decline of smoking** among Victorian adults to 13.3% regularly smoking, down from 18.3% in 2005. This surpasses the 13.8% target set for 2013 by the Victorian Government.

We are proud to have been a major supporter of **SunSmart**. After more than 30 years, the program has produced one of the most remarkable changes in the attitudes of Victorians towards

preventing disease. Skin cancer rates have decreased, 90% of schools now participate in the program and the iconic Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek, Slide campaign is widely recognised. We acknowledge this fruitful partnership and are confident that this exemplary work will continue to contribute to the reduction of cancers from UV exposure.

Social connection and the arts

VicHealth opened a second round of **MOTION** funding which awarded grants to five arts and cultural organisations to produce creative new ways to get communities physically active through participating in art. This follows the success of seven projects in the original MOTION program. The opportunities that these new projects will create for community members will enable anyone to participate in physical activity while benefiting from the social connection such group activities bring, and improving their mental wellbeing.

like to acknowledge the support and encouragement from the Minister for Health, The Hon. David Davis MLC, the Department of Health and other government agencies.

Our achievements need to recognise the contribution of our partners and other supporters who share our values and vision.

We are never immune from ongoing challenges and I congratulate and thank all the staff at VicHealth for their

Reducing race-based discrimination

This year, we released the results of a **survey** conducted among people of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and Indigenous backgrounds showing that a majority have experienced high levels of racism and have been targets of verbal or physical abuse or discriminatory behaviour. At the same time, reports showed higher levels of psychological distress as racism increased. This adds to the evidence of the serious impact of racism on health.

Our research findings on **bystander attitudes** and behaviours when witnessing racism, also released this year, showed that we need to support such bystanders with tools and approaches, and trigger their willingness to stand up against racist behaviours. The release of these findings generated extremely strong media coverage, public debate and commentary, with several newspapers running supportive editorials on the importance of tackling race-based discrimination citing our research as evidence of its impacts.

untiring dedication and efforts towards achieving our goals.

The rapidly changing environment will influence our approaches and the scope of what we can do. How fast we learn, re-learn and apply will be key as we deliver on our Action Agenda. We, together with our collaborators, are eager to take on the opportunities and

Preventing violence against women

We announced the funding of a groundbreaking **\$1 million project** over three years that will see an integrated program across an entire local government area, employing a range of proven prevention initiatives to promote respectful relationships and ultimately prevent violence against women. Our partner Monash City Council, along with MonashLink Community Health Service, will drive the cultural change working with schools, workplaces, youth services, health services and community education programs. This trial will build a collection of evidence and best practice that can be rolled out to other municipalities.

We welcomed the State Government's \$7.9 million **action plan** to minimise the impact of violence against women and support much needed activity to take action for the health and wellbeing of women.

challenges that lie ahead as we continue on with our unique role in health promotion and illness prevention.


Jerril Rechter

Jerril Rechter

CEO, VicHealth

Creating healthy environments

This year, we announced the funding of pilot projects in workplaces as part of our \$3 million **Creating Healthy Workplaces** project, to trial ways to make workplaces healthier. These organisations will implement a range of initiatives to reduce stress, prolonged sitting and race-based discrimination, promote a culture of responsible drinking, and increase gender equity. With many adults spending a third of their day at work, the impact of these changes will be far-reaching and have the potential to improve the health of working Victorians.

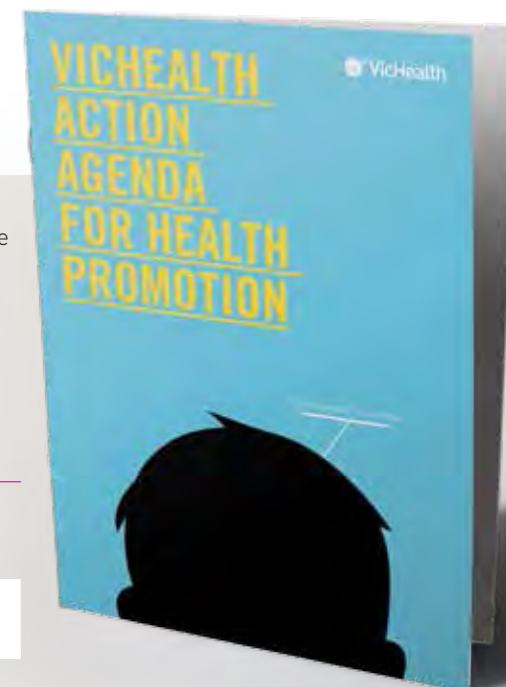
See page 50 for highlights of our investments focused on reducing health inequalities, and look out for the icon on pages 18 to 49. 

Where we are headed

The achievements over the last four years have been significant. VicHealth's new Action Agenda for Health Promotion is our response to the challenges facing us today. It charts our vision for the next decade and our priorities for 2013–16. We will continue to work on the most important areas that will reduce the impact of chronic disease on the lives of Victorians and increase their health and wellbeing.

In this plan, we will approach our work using a new business model with the key elements of 'Innovate, Inform, Integrate'. This ensures that we continue VicHealth's legacy as a risk-taker backed by evidence, and subsequent creator of proven innovations that are ultimately integrated into mainstream work.

I thank our Chair Mark Birrell for his support and guidance, and members of the VicHealth Board and Committees for their expertise and insights. I would also



WWW. Discover our Action Agenda for Health Promotion
vichealth.vic.gov.au/actionagenda

ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE 2012-13

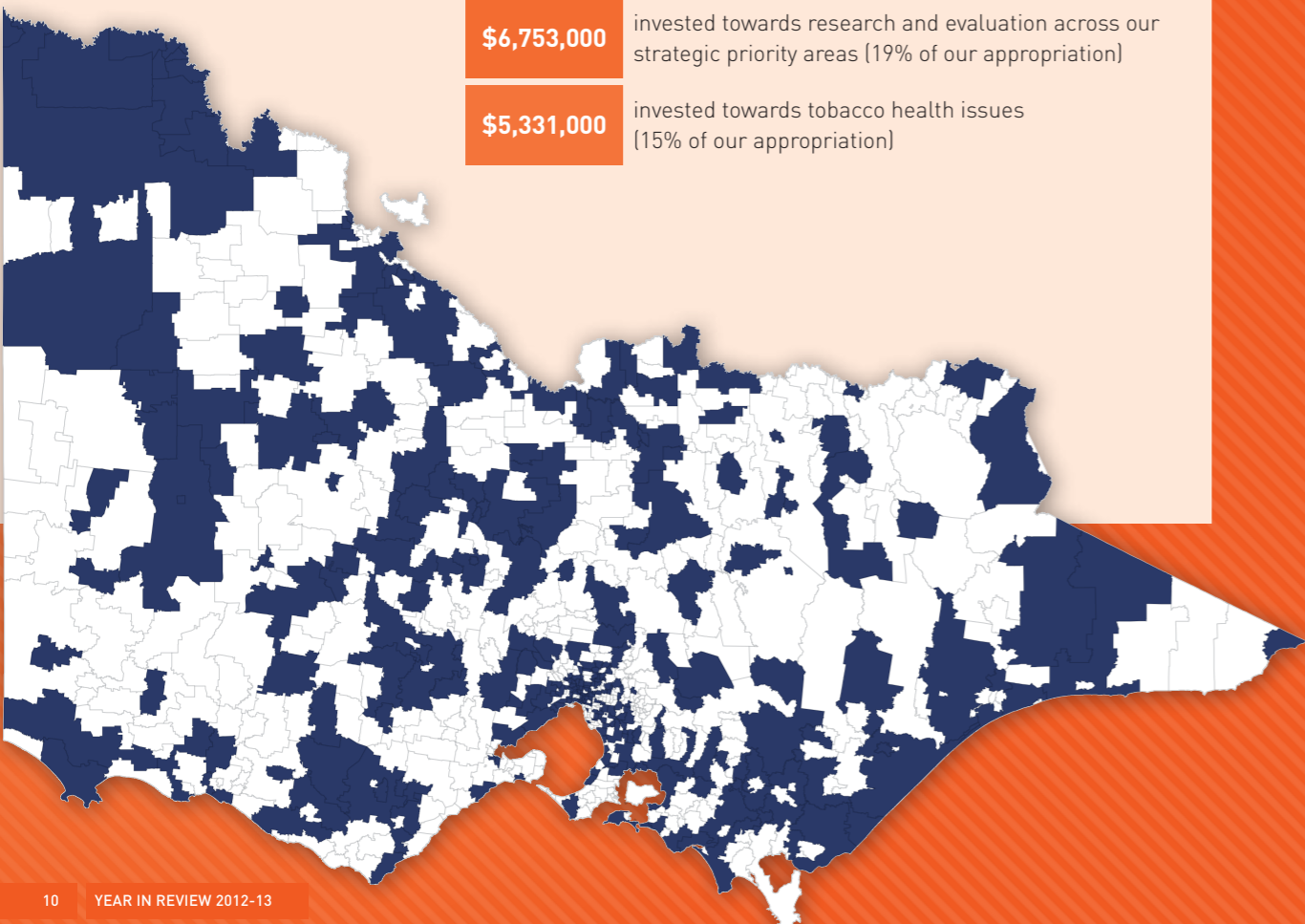
\$ 25,360,000 of our Victorian Government funding was invested in 674 grants in Victoria.

Our reach

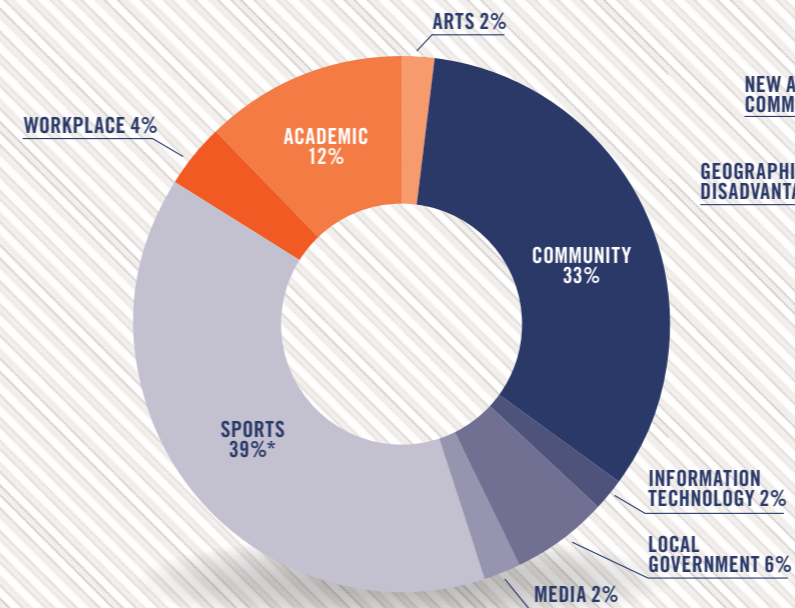
VicHealth works in partnership with communities, organisations and individuals to promote good health and prevent ill health.

A snapshot of some of our key investments:

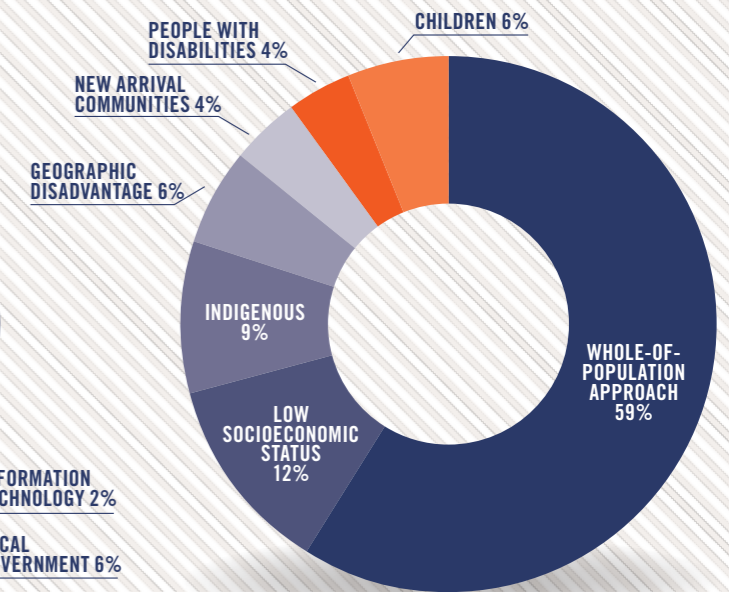
\$10,663,000	invested through sporting bodies (30% of our appropriation)
\$6,753,000	invested towards research and evaluation across our strategic priority areas (19% of our appropriation)
\$5,331,000	invested towards tobacco health issues (15% of our appropriation)



GRANT EXPENDITURE ACROSS SETTINGS



GRANT EXPENDITURE ACROSS TARGET POPULATION GROUPS



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

Our objectives

(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.

We funded

8	local governments
525	sporting organisations
51	community organisations and NGOs
31	tertiary education and research institutes
7	health service organisations
5	partnered investments with state government and statutory bodies

CONNECTING WITH VICTORIANS

VicHealth's new TeamUp campaign includes partnerships with both elite and grassroots sports to encourage wider participation. TeamUp Ambassador John Aloisi (Melbourne Heart Football Club) is pictured third from right with participants.



Digital campaigns

TeamUp

March 2013 saw the launch of VicHealth's TeamUp, a unique digital 'physical activity marketplace' platform.

Created to encourage people to connect and take part in any physical activity, when and where they want, TeamUp aims to address some of the key barriers to participation in physical activity – time, transport, social isolation and cost. TeamUp is driving participation in structured and organised sport, as well as catering to people interested in unstructured physical activity. To date, thousands of Victorian adults have downloaded the app on iPhone, Android and Facebook. See page 21.

Seed Challenge

Also in the digital arena was VicHealth's Seed Challenge – where we put the call out to anyone in Victoria to present an idea to help secure Victoria's fresh food supply and access. This project attracted 54 entries; 10 were shortlisted, and the two winners will each receive \$100,000 to roll out their initiatives during the next 12 months. We have been working with The Australian Centre for Social Innovation, which is providing specialist business development support to the winning entries. See page 18.



Community campaign: Walk to School



Walk to School is an annual event which has been funded by VicHealth since 2006. The event is designed to raise awareness of the physical, environmental and social benefits of active transport (walking to school), and encourage school children to walk to and from school more often.

In previous years, event activity has taken place on a single day in October. Last year, VicHealth broadened the program scope from a focus on a single day to

encouraging walking every school day in the month. This shift was to increase the amount of exposure the project receives in the community, and create a stronger foundation from which lasting behaviour change can be achieved.

In 2012, more than 14,000 students from 151 primary schools in 53 local government areas took part in Walk to School throughout October. The students walked the equivalent of the circumference of the globe six times.

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VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter walks to school with children from Moonee Ponds West Primary School.

At VicHealth, we know how vital it is to engage with the Victorian community and our stakeholders for effective health promotion.

Our communication and social marketing engagements occur through a range of methods and channels. To the right are some of the year's highlights.

Social marketing: evidence and practice

This year, VicHealth appointed Dr Krzysztof Kubacki at Griffith University to undertake a 5-year Social Marketing Research Practice Fellowship. This fellowship is a first for VicHealth and acknowledges the need to embrace social marketing as a critical way of understanding the public's needs and wants in order to drive change in awareness, attitudes and, ultimately, behaviour.

Dr Kubacki said: "The fellowship allows Social Marketing @ Griffith to work with VicHealth to examine evidence on social marketing effectiveness in the long term. It provides a unique opportunity to challenge conventional social marketing thinking."

Dr Kubacki's work will help VicHealth to continue to deliver, support and build high-quality social marketing campaigns and tools to benefit the health of all Victorians.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS 2012-13

Media highlights from the financial year 2012-13 include:

- » **Opinion pieces** on: energy drinks and obesity link; plain packaging of cigarettes; community attitudes to violence against women following the tragic murder of Jill Meagher in Brunswick; a call to ban solariums in Victoria; youth binge drinking and violence on Melbourne Cup Day; and a piece on the role of bystanders in preventing race-based discrimination (more on page 33).
- » Promotion of the annual **Active Club Grants** round in March 2013, where small community sports clubs from all corners of the state are given cash injections to buy essential equipment, such as uniforms and injury prevention gear. These grants were highlighted in the rural and regional media (see page 21).
- » Wide promotion of VicHealth's new physical activity programs, including **Be Active**, a program to run in five local government areas as part of the Victorian Government's Healthy Together Victoria program, and our **Healthy Sporting Environments** program to reduce alcohol, smoking in local sports clubs and encourage inclusive behaviour – which this year was expanded to include sports clubs across the state (read more on page 43).
- » Coverage of VicHealth's **Walk to School** event in the suburban, regional and rural media, as well as coverage of the Victorian Health Promotion Awards in December 2012.

Nafisa Yussf, a Somali-born Melbourne woman, courageously spoke out about what it's like to be a target of racism.

Media

VicHealth enjoys a good relationship with the media and has forged particularly valuable ties with key media influencers in the state over the past year.

As well as issuing regular media releases to promote VicHealth's funded research, programs and projects, VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter was a regular contributor to public debate in the media with a number of letters and opinion pieces published.

There is no doubting the value of media to support health promotion key messages and highlight the valuable work being undertaken across the state.

From 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013, VicHealth was mentioned in the media 2804 times (print, online, radio and TV – including TV/radio syndications) – an increase in coverage of 200 items from the

previous year. An independent evaluation by iSentia Media estimated the value of VicHealth's editorial coverage in all media to be worth the equivalent of \$8.85 million in advertising space – an increase of \$2.1 million from the previous year.

The biggest media event was held in June 2013, when VicHealth and The University of Melbourne released a ground-breaking study into the behaviour of Victorian bystanders when they witness racism.

Around 600 people were surveyed about their willingness to intervene. The research revealed one in four people who disagreed with racism would not feel supported to step in when it matters (more on page 33).

VicHealth held a media conference with experts and people from culturally diverse backgrounds who courageously spoke

about what it's like to be a target of racism every day and the importance of people stepping in to show support for the victim.

Opinion by Jerril Rechter ran in *The Herald Sun* centre spread on the day of the launch. Radio covered the report findings throughout the day on news bulletins and on talkback programs on 774 ABC, 3AW and ABC Radio National. It was covered on the evening television news and continued to run in the regional media throughout the week.

The launch followed on from two VicHealth reports published in November 2012 which found racism has a profound impact on mental health. This research was widely reported and produced excellent commentary, including an editorial in *The Age*.

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The number of times VicHealth was mentioned in the media (print, online, radio and TV).



The equivalent advertising space value of VicHealth's editorial coverage.



This year we produced 22 videos, including a number of motion graphic videos which are an effective way of communicating health messages to a broad audience.



VicHealth's flagship publication the *VicHealth Letter* was revamped and now includes an interactive online flip book.

 Follow us on twitter@VicHealth

Publications and digital media

VicHealth's flagship publication – the *VicHealth Letter* – has been revamped into a refreshed magazine-style format and includes a new interactive online flip book, with extended video interviews and links to further reading. The new edition was launched in May 2013 with a theme on creating healthy environments.

This year VicHealth has produced 22 videos including a number of motion graphic videos, which have proven an effective way of communicating health messages to a broad audience. These included a series of short animated films on workplace health promotion (stress, alcohol-use, prolonged sitting) and those to accompany media events, such as the preventing race-based discrimination launch. They are very well liked by members of the public (comprising 56% of 28,000 views on YouTube) and often shared on social media.

VicHealth has nearly 5,000 followers on Twitter, including journalists, politicians, health experts, NGOs and members of the public. Twitter has become an

important vehicle for information sharing for VicHealth with 298 tweets during the year, 711 retweets and 1121 mentions. This sharing reached an estimated 1.5 million other Twitter users.

The VicHealth website continues to be the major channel for updating our stakeholders and communities. This year the website posted favourable growth rates in visits and new visitors, fuelled by regular e-bulletins, tweets and retweets, campaigns and visits by students.

Changes to make sections of the website more accessible to people with disabilities were implemented during the year.

Other key publications for the year included the suite of VicHealth Indicators Survey publications, research findings on bystander behaviour in preventing violence against women, and racism in Indigenous and CALD communities, VicHealth's Disability Action Plan, and the Participation in Community Sport and Active Recreation (PIC SAR) program evaluation summary.

Health Promotion Awards 2012

Eight extraordinary Victorian organisations were formally recognised as the state's champions of promoting good health and wellbeing for Victorians. Winners of the 2012 Victorian Health Promotion Awards were announced at a ceremony in Melbourne on 5 December 2012 by His Excellency The Hon. Alex Chernov AC QC, Governor of Victoria. The Victorian Minister for Health, The Hon. David Davis MLC, and Gavin Jennings, Victorian Shadow Minister for Health and Mental Health, also spoke.

To acknowledge the growth in the state's health promotion activities, applications were extended beyond VicHealth funded projects.

The last few years have been important for health promotion with attention focused on the prevention agenda by both the State and Commonwealth governments. This is in response to significant changes causing an increase in chronic disease. These include both demographic changes (growth and ageing of the population)



VicHealth's 25th Anniversary celebration and Health Promotion Awards at Government House: (L-R) VicHealth Chair Mark Birrell; Minister for Health The Hon. David Davis MLC; Governor of Victoria, His Excellency The Hon. Alex Chernov AC QC; Mrs Elizabeth Chernov; VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter; and Shadow Minister for Health Mr Gavin Jennings.

and changes to lifestyles. The increase chronic disease is having, and will continue to have, impacts on our health care system. Prevention is seen by all levels of government as key.

Eminent anti-cancer campaigner, Dr Nigel Gray, one of the architects and champions of VicHealth, was also honoured with a special award recognising leadership in health promotion over several decades. The 'VicHealth Award for Outstanding Contribution to Health Promotion' was presented to Dr Gray for leading the effort for the benchmark 1987 legislation that banned tobacco ads and promotion, and designing an approach to tax tobacco sponsorship of athletic and cultural events. This innovative proposal was groundbreaking for its time and opened the door for a program of wide-ranging reform in health promotion.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/awards



Eminent anti-cancer campaigner Dr Nigel Gray AO (pictured left with His Excellency The Hon. Alex Chernov AC QC, Governor of Victoria) was honoured with a special award recognising leadership in health promotion over several decades.

PROMOTING HEALTHY EATING



Healthy 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.

VicHealth's Seed Challenge is about cultivating innovative ways to improve local fresh food production.

{ HIGHLIGHTS + SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS }

The VicHealth Seed Challenge

Improving fruit and vegetable supply and access, as well as developing and promoting a culture of healthy eating in Victoria, is at the heart of VicHealth's innovative Seed Challenge. Current research shows that Victorians are not eating anywhere near the amount of fruit and vegetables required for good health. The Seed Challenge is about cultivating innovative ways to improve local fresh food production and distribution so that nutritious food is sustainable, available, and affordable for all Victorians.

With support from The Australian Centre for Social Innovation, VicHealth selected and funded a range of promising ideas with a one-off \$1,000 grant for the purposes of refining a business case. Two online projects have won the Seed Challenge and will receive ongoing mentoring, coaching, business development and \$100,000 to roll out their initiatives over the next 12 months, which will connect community members,

farmers and fresh food distributors in an approach never tried in Victoria before. The Seed Challenge required entrants to be creative, to think big, and to take advantage of new technology to solve a very complex problem Victoria faces.

WWW. vichealth.vic.gov.au/seedchallenge

Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

This year, VicHealth continued to work 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. All project sites have had their policies developed and staff are using site-specific resources to support policy implementation.

The Parents' Jury

Online advocacy group 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. In 2012-13, The Parent's Jury concluded an investigation of the nutritional composition of online government school canteen menus across Australia. With support from Monash University and VicHealth, the review of 263 school menus identified that 30% of surveyed primary schools and less than 19% of surveyed secondary schools are compliant with nutrition guidelines.

The Parent's Jury annual Fame and Shame Awards continue to showcase the worst and best of food advertising directed at children.

The Obesity Policy Coalition (OPC)

The Obesity Policy Coalition is a group of leading public health agencies concerned about the escalating levels of overweight and obesity, particularly in children. OPC partners include Diabetes Australia - Vic, Cancer Council Victoria, and the WHO Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention at Deakin University, supported by funding from VicHealth. In 2012-13, the OPC continued to raise important issues about the health consequences of junk food marketing to children and food labelling, including releasing research into Australia's self-regulatory system for food marketing.

The Food Alliance

This VicHealth-funded initiative, hosted by Deakin University's Food Policy Unit, engages in advocacy and research into food systems and related policy recommendations. In 2012-13, the Food Alliance's activity included advocacy for a National Food Plan that puts public health, environmental sustainability, social equity and economic prosperity at the heart of the nation's food policy.

The Infant Program

In the lead up to Mother's Day 2013, VicHealth produced two videos about important research VicHealth Research Fellow Dr Karen Campbell conducted with new mothers in Victoria to establish healthy eating patterns in babies that will lead to a lifetime of good nutrition.

It is well established that poor diet in childhood may lead to higher body weight, higher risks for cardiovascular disease and diet-related cancers, but recent research revealed child and adult diets are more closely connected than we might think.

Central to Dr Campbell's research is how parents' social networks can improve child and adult health as they share information and support each other to stay on track. VicHealth support has enabled Dr Campbell to rapidly build the evidence base in this area.

Following the success of the Infant Program, Dr Campbell is working to expand the program to include toddlers.

WWW. vichealth.vic.gov.au/infant-feeding

Other research

VicHealth also 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 on future food supply
- » mapping arable land in peri-urban Melbourne
- » regulatory approaches to obesity prevention
- » the impacts of localised food supply.

INCREASING PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

VicHealth's free TeamUp app links people of all sporting abilities with opportunities across hundreds of sports and activities.



The benefits of physical activity are clear. Physical activity prevents disease, promotes wellbeing and physical and mental health, and improves social connectedness and quality of life.

For these reasons, VicHealth collaborates with a diverse range of government, health, community, academic and sporting organisations to reduce barriers to participation and

expand opportunities in organised sport, active recreation and walking.

Sport in particular is increasingly being incorporated into local, state and federal government policies to tackle a range of social issues, such as adult and childhood obesity and community wellbeing, through the creation of welcoming and inclusive clubs, access for all abilities and injury prevention. The future is likely to see an increased focus on the broader benefits of sport, as well as the use of smartphone communication technology to increase opportunities for participation.

{HIGHLIGHTS + SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS}

Participation and skill development

TeamUp

In March this year, VicHealth launched its free TeamUp app to help Victorians find people in their local area who are looking to get out, get active and have fun. TeamUp links people of all sporting abilities with opportunities across hundreds of sports and activities so that they can choose what suits them best: from formal club membership and competition based activity, to a completely casual kick in the park. It offers all Victorians an easy way to find sport and physical activities or create their own and join in with others, whether they want to get active one afternoon a month, or turn up to play every week.

TeamUp can be downloaded for iPhone, Android and Facebook from <http://teamup.com.au>. You can like TeamUp on Facebook at www.facebook.com/teamup, and follow TeamUp on Twitter at [@TeamUpVic](https://twitter.com/TeamUpVic) and Instagram at <http://instagram.com/teamupvic>

Walk to School

This year's Walk to School campaign inspired Victorian primary school students to use their feet to travel to and from school every school day in October (not just a single day as in previous years). A total of 14,066 students from 151 schools took part across the state, walking a combined 241,363 km – that's six times around the circumference of the Earth.

To help families and teachers keep track of how far, and how often, kids walked, VicHealth released an iPhone app. There was also some healthy competition, with some great prizes for schools and individual participants from Play for Life, Museums Victoria, Clarks Shoes, YMCA and the National Sports Museum.

Now in its seventh year, Walk to School aims to encourage children to make walking part of their daily routine to improve their health and independence, as well as increase social connection and benefit the environment.

Active Club Grants



VicHealth awarded funding of \$1.1 million to 472 sports clubs in Victoria to purchase sports injury prevention and management equipment, essential sporting equipment, volunteer training and portable sun shade through its annual Active Club Grants program.

The grants, of up to \$2,500 each, were prioritised to assist clubs that cater for Aboriginal Victorians, people with a disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, juniors, older people, and clubs in rural and low socio-economic areas.

These grants recognise the important role local clubs play in increasing physical activity and helping communities stay connected, even when times are tough. This year, the grants strengthen the Victorian Department of Health's Healthy Together Victoria program, which assists in improving health and reducing health disparities. Of the successful applicants, 108 clubs are located within the 14 municipalities involved in Healthy Together Victoria.

Victoria Walks

VicHealth continued to support Victoria Walks as the peak walking promotion body in Victoria. This work is focused on encouraging walking for transport, leisure, recreation and fitness to increase children and young people's physical activity, older people's participation and family engagement. Recently, Victoria Walks released Smart Steps for Families, which provides information on ways for families to enjoy walking more often. A partnership between VicHealth, Victoria Walks and the Department of Health has been established to support walking as part of the Victorian Government's Healthy Together Victoria program.

WWW. victoriawalks.org.au/smartsteps/families



Walk to School encouraged Victorian primary school students to walk to school every school day in October.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE →



Be Active: Older people (as well as families and children) in five local government areas are being inspired to get more physical activity into their day.

MOTION program – making art that moves people



Following the success of seven unique projects funded under VicHealth's original MOTION program in 2010, grants have been awarded to five arts and cultural organisations for projects spanning 14 months. These new MOTION projects are up and running and working in partnership with their local communities to create an exciting range of arts participation opportunities to get people more physically active.

VicHealth created MOTION to promote the health benefits of arts activities that increase physical activity, build social connection and enhance mental wellbeing. MOTION places a strong emphasis on strategic partnerships and creating models of arts participation that can be replicated and sustained into the future.

WWW. vichealth.vic.gov.au/motion

Organisational support

Sports growth plans

VicHealth is working collaboratively with a range of State Sporting Associations, government, vicsport and university organisations to develop sports growth plans for up to eight Victorian sports. Dr Rochelle Eime, joint VicHealth Research Practice Fellow (Physical Activity, 2011–15) at the University of Ballarat and Victoria University is playing a lead role. Data from almost two million participants, coaches and officials has already been entered into a database and will be geographically mapped to better understand participation trends. These plans aim to provide robust analysis of sport and recreation participation, facilities, demographics and population health to assist sports and local governments to increase participation, particularly for under-represented population groups.

Be Active – increasing physical activity in partnership with local government

Victorian residents in five local government areas are benefiting from a VicHealth and Sport & Recreation Victoria program designed to inspire people to get more physical activity into their day.

The City of Greater Bendigo, City of Greater Geelong, Knox City Council, Latrobe City Council and Wodonga City Council are implementing the \$2.7 million Be Active program over three years. It has a particular focus on increasing physical activity participation for children, older people and families, as well as improving civic engagement through volunteering.

This year the program has focused on strengthening Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans to increase physical activity participation, respond to emerging physical activity challenges, and create new partnerships. It is being run in tandem with the State Government's Healthy Together Victoria program.

VicHealth has engaged the Centre of Excellence in Intervention and Prevention Science (CEIPS) to undertake the evaluation of Be Active.

WWW. vichealth.vic.gov.au/beactive

Healthy Sporting Environments



VicHealth recognises that sporting clubs are more than just places that promote physical activity – they have a unique position in the community and great potential to be leaders in health promotion. With this in mind, VicHealth developed the Healthy Sporting Environments initiative, which is helping local clubs to create healthier environments in six key areas, including reducing smoking in and around their clubs and being more welcoming and inclusive for people of all cultures and abilities. See page 43.

State Sporting Association Participation Program (SSAPP) 2011–14



Through this VicHealth pilot program, 30 State Sporting Associations are sharing in almost \$10.2 million over three years. The aim is to create safe, accessible, inclusive and equitable sporting environments to increase participation of particular target communities, including women and girls, Aboriginal Victorians, newly arrived communities, and people with a disability.

With the program now in its second year, progress has been encouraging with the implementation of VicHealth's Everyone Wins framework delivering ongoing changes and improvements to Victorian sport, such as creating and supporting champions of change to promote inclusive sport; embedding a commitment to inclusion into strategic and operational plans; and establishing ongoing policy review processes to establish standards and expectations about behaviour.

Active for Life – increasing children's physical activity

Children's lifestyles are becoming less active due to a range of built, social, technological and economic pressures. To help shape the thinking around this issue, VicHealth has begun work on Active for Life to bring together international evidence and best practice examples, with a focus on 4 to 12 year olds. VicHealth will engage key industry experts and stakeholders, including the Department of Health, to

communicate the importance of children's physical activity and provide practical tools and resources for practitioners to increase children's physical activity.

Fair go, sport! Promoting sexual and gender diversity



VicHealth is working with the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission and the Victorian sports sector on a program to increase awareness of sexual and gender diversity and to promote safe and inclusive environments in sporting organisations. See page 42.

Research and evaluation

Parental fear research

Many of us have fond memories of walking to school with friends. Today, two-thirds of children in Victoria are driven to school even though they live less than 2km away. Parents are restricting their children's ability to independently navigate their journey to and from school and their neighbourhood for various reasons, including a perceived risk of strangers. VicHealth wants to know what is causing this phenomenon, which is why we are working with the Parenting Research Centre to produce the first large-scale study into parental fear. It will involve one-on-one interviews with children and their families about their children's independence, a large statewide survey of parents, the formation of an expert advisory group, and initiatives to help parents overcome fears about children walking and riding to and from school and within their neighbourhood.

'More than just sport' – PICSAR evaluation



This year we published the evaluation of VicHealth's Participation in Community Sport and Active Recreation (PICSAR) State and Regional Grants program, which funded 61 Victorian projects from 2007 to 2011. The report, 'More than just sport', captures the lessons and challenges learnt in increasing participation of Victorians in community sport and recreation.

PICSAR had a particular focus on improving social connection and reducing health inequalities to improve community health and wellbeing by targeting those who are unrepresented in sport – people with disabilities, Aboriginal Victorians, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and people from low socio-economic backgrounds.

The PICSAR program demonstrated the benefits of multi-pronged approaches underpinned by strong partnerships in encouraging more people to play sport. It has shaped VicHealth's priorities in recent years as well as future sports funding.

WWW. vichealth.vic.gov.au/morethanjustsport

REDUCING SMOKING

Fewer young people are taking up the smoking habit than ever before.



Reducing smoking is a high priority for VicHealth and we have been investing to reduce tobacco harm since our inception. The reason is simple: smoking remains the leading preventable cause of many cancers and respiratory, cardiovascular and other

diseases. Over the past four years, VicHealth has been a key partner of the Victorian Government in the implementation of its *Tobacco Control Strategy 2008–2013* and has continued to be a major funder of Quit Victoria.



©Professor Laurence J Walsh, The University of Queensland.

Health warning images used with the permission of the Australian Government.

The most significant reform in tobacco control in recent years occurred on 1 December 2012 with the full introduction of plain packaging of tobacco with enlarged graphic health warnings.

{ HIGHLIGHTS + SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS }

Reduced Victorian smoking rates

The most recent data shows that in 2012, 13.3% of Victorian adults regularly smoked, down from 18.3% in 2005¹, surpassing the 13.8% target set for 2013 by the Victorian Government. There is a downward trend of all age groups and socio-economic groups. Teen smoking rates were at the lowest ever in 2011, and fewer young people are taking up the habit than ever before. More Victorian smokers want to quit and more are quitting successfully. These increases likely reflect a high level of tobacco control activity in recent years.

Reducing tobacco related health disparities

Despite the achievements in reducing overall smoking prevalence in the general Victorian population, smoking rates are higher amongst the most socially and economically disadvantaged groups. As such, a key focus of VicHealth's current investment in Quit Victoria is to engage with partners to increase the reach and impact of smoking cessation within high smoking rate populations.

VicHealth provided policy input to Quit's position statement *Reducing tobacco related health social, and economic*

disparities in Victoria, which has been endorsed by the Victorian Council of Social Service among others. During 2012–13 Quit has formed a number of program and research partnerships with social, community and Aboriginal organisations with the aim of piloting new programs with robust evaluation for further program expansion.

VicHealth is a member of the National Network on Smoking and Disadvantage, co-chaired by Quit Victoria and the Australian National Preventive Health Agency. This network draws together partnership around Australia and in New Zealand to share experiences and look for collaboration opportunities to further support high prevalence populations in reducing their smoking.

Plain packaging for cigarettes

Without doubt, the most significant reform in tobacco control in recent years occurred on 1 December 2012 with the full introduction of plain packaging of tobacco with enlarged graphic health warnings taking up 75% of the front of the packet. Quit reported an increased number of callers to Quitline disturbed enough by the packs to make a quit attempt. Centre for Behavioural Research in Cancer (CBRC) research funded by Quit via VicHealth

shows that plain packaging is associated with lower smoking appeal, more support for the policy, and more urgency to quit among adult smokers.² Additional CBRC research, partially funded by Quit via VicHealth, shows that plain packaging has no significant effect on the amount of time it takes to purchase tobacco products in small tobacco outlets in Victoria.³ This suggests that the long transaction times and consequent associated costs predicted by the tobacco industry are unlikely to eventuate.

Healthy Sporting Environments

Through this program, VicHealth is supporting initiatives to reduce tobacco use in sporting environments. For a full description see page 43.

References

¹ Bain E, Durkin S & Wakefield M 2013, *Smoking prevalence and consumption in Victoria: key findings from the 1988–2012 population surveys*, CBRC Research Paper Series, No. 45, Centre for Behavioural Research in Cancer, Cancer Council Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.

² Wakefield M, Hayes L, Durkin S, et al., 'Introduction effects of the Australian plain packaging policy on adult smokers: a cross-sectional study', *BMJ*, 2013;3:e003175, doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2013-003175.

³ Wakefield M, Bayly M, Scollo M 2013, 'Product retrieval time in small tobacco retail outlets before and after the Australian plain packaging policy: real-world study', *Tob Control*, doi:10.1136/tobaccocontrol-2013-050987.

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 cancer¹. It also causes a range of social problems that affect the drinker and those around them.

This year we have strengthened our efforts to reduce alcohol-related harm through existing and new partnerships. We have also gathered evidence on effective strategies to reduce harm from alcohol, including trialling methods to reduce alcohol-related harm in workplaces and in sport.

For publications related to many of these projects go to:

WWW. vichealth.vic.gov.au/alcohol-publications

{ HIGHLIGHTS + SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS }

Melbourne Cup worst event for bingeing: sports and alcohol report

This year we released new research revealing that the 'race that stops a nation' is also the state's most notorious event associated with acute alcohol intoxication, assaults and accidents. The VicHealth and Eastern Health Turning Point *Drinking cultures and sporting occasions* research shows that of Melbourne's major sporting events, the Melbourne Cup tops the list as the booziest sporting event of the year. The report records ambulance attendances, hospital emergency presentations and admissions and police data on assaults and traffic incidents in Melbourne from 2000 to 2009. It is the first time research has made a direct link between sports and alcohol-related harm in Victoria.

Social harms associated with the sale and supply of packaged liquor

International and Australian research indicates that the presence of a packaged liquor outlet in a neighbourhood may be associated with increased numbers of assaults and health problems, such as alcohol-related chronic disease. With this

in mind, VicHealth led a study to examine the harms associated with packaged liquor. The final report, commissioned by the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing (Victorian Department of Justice) through the Victorian Law Enforcement Drug Fund, presents a state-wide overview of packaged liquor supply, utilisation and associated short-term alcohol-related harms in Victoria.

Alcohol cultural change program announced

In January 2013, the Victorian Government released Victoria's first whole-of-government strategy to reduce the impact of alcohol and drug abuse in the Victorian community. *Reducing the alcohol and drug toll: Victoria's plan 2013-2017* provides a new agenda to improve the way police, courts, schools, hospitals, health and community services and the broader community work together to bring down the alcohol and drug toll. The plan includes a new partnership with VicHealth to develop and deliver a cultural change program to promote healthier attitudes to excessive drinking and drunk behaviour in our community.

Geo-coding liquor licenses



The Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation (VCGLR) and VicHealth have entered into a partnership to support the development of a website displaying geographical referencing (geo-coding) of all Victorian liquor licences. This shared data will support local councils, Victoria Police, Department of Health, Department of Justice and other government agencies in developing, implementing and evaluating measures to address alcohol consumption and related harm.

Creating Healthy Workplaces: reducing alcohol-related harm

As a part of VicHealth's Creating Healthy Workplaces program (see page 40), LeeJenn Health Consultants, the National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA) and South East Business Networks (SEBN) are trialling a three year intervention to reduce the harm from alcohol in the workplace. Four manufacturing sites have been recruited, three in Dandenong, Victoria, and one in Wacol, Queensland. Two of these sites will receive a tailored program addressing the factors that contribute to alcohol-related harm, while the others will be used as comparisons to assess the effectiveness of the program.

Healthy Sporting Environments

Through this program, VicHealth is supporting initiatives to reduce alcohol harm in sporting environments. For a full description see page 43.

Local footy leagues promote responsible drinking message

This year, senior Victorian community football leagues joined together to sign an AFL Victoria Alcohol Charter to encourage responsible consumption of alcohol across metropolitan leagues. Developed as part of the VicHealth AFL Victoria cultural change program, the Charter aims to develop a consistent framework for leagues to use to help minimise the harm from alcohol through education and awareness programs to encourage responsible consumption.

Research of community football spectators

As part of the VicHealth AFL Victoria cultural change program, La Trobe University undertook an evaluation of the 2012 final series alcohol policy trial at community football games. Surveys of spectators found that, on average, it was perceived that half of all people at games were drinking alcohol when in fact only a

third of spectators consumed alcohol while watching the football. However, of those spectators who consumed alcohol at the game, 44% drank above the Australian guidelines for low risk drinking on a single occasion.

Good Sports

Good Sports is an initiative of the Australian Drug Foundation. VicHealth has been funding this program for over a decade to support sporting clubs to manage alcohol responsibly and reduce alcohol-related problems. In 2012-13, three VicHealth-initiated innovative pilot projects were completed: examining the linkages between Good Sports clubs and the Healthy Sporting Environments Demonstration Project; exploring flexible accreditation timelines and more stringent alcohol pricing strategies in clubs in Moreland City Council area; and options for program sustainability for those clubs at level 3. The findings from these pilot projects have helped shape the program and will inform its future directions.

Alcohol sponsorship in sporting clubs

In response to the Australian Government's proposed 'buyout' of alcohol sponsorship from community sporting clubs, the Australian Drug Foundation,

with support from VicHealth, explored the nature and extent of alcohol sponsorship in community sport and the possible effects of removing such sponsorship from community sporting clubs. The findings show that there are complexities in the nature of these sponsorships, and clubs have concerns over the long-term financial sustainability of its removal.

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, Turning Point Alcohol & Drug Centre and VicHealth, continued to provide expert advocacy and policy advice at a state level.

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.

INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL CONNECTION

The powerful impact that our social connections have on our health is often not understood until these relationships break down or a crisis hits. Social isolation is associated with stress, anxiety, depression and increased death rates, particularly from heart disease and stroke.^{1,2}

VicHealth acknowledges that people's participation in group activities can improve their mental and physical health and supported initiatives that increased opportunities for participation, social connection and meaningful expression on important issues. Arts projects funded by VicHealth created engaging methods of increasing physical activity, connecting people to their cultural heritage, challenging racism, revitalising their community spirit and generating local employment.

The Koorie Heritage Trust is one of many organisations supported by VicHealth to strengthen Indigenous arts and activity.



{ HIGHLIGHTS + SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS }

Localities Enhancing Arts Participation (LEAP) program

VicHealth successfully completed its three year LEAP program in 2013 with the three councils involved saying that their communities will never be the same again.

The City of Casey built a huge network of local artists for the first time and led to the development of the Casey civic and cultural precinct. The Council recognises that cultural infrastructure is as important to community life as sports infrastructure.

Ballarat City Council and the six local government area-wide Central Highlands Arts Network (CHAN) focused on building the local skills, connections and employment opportunities of more than 100 local artists. CHAN produced several powerful projects, including the long-term legacies of their Arts Atlas and large cultural planning network across the regions.

Mildura Rural City Council developed an extensive series of community-based arts programs and new opportunities to create and exhibit local art to help locals overcome the barriers of distance and travel costs and become more involved in arts activities.

The LEAP projects encouraged thousands of people to try something new and dispelled the common myth that the arts was only for a very select group. The projects involved broad sections of the community, including local businesses, and transformed their communities' understanding of the value of art and local artists.

MOTION program: Making art that moves people

Following the success of seven unique projects funded under VicHealth's original MOTION program in 2010, grants have been awarded to five arts and cultural organisations. See page 22.

Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre (CRC)



VicHealth continued its support for this Australian-based international research centre, which 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.

WWW. yawcrc.org.au

Indigenous Arts Program



Indigenous people in Victoria have a long history of using arts methods to bring their communities together and build a strong collective sense of cultural identity. These activities are an intrinsic part of their lives, their health and wellbeing. The Indigenous Arts Program supports local Indigenous organisations to build deep connections with Indigenous Victorians and provide them with opportunities to learn the skills of contemporary performance arts. Highlights this year include the Koorie Heritage Trust's Blaktraks program, which supported a group of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to explore their identity through various art forms, such as music, film and photography and produce a series of short films; the Ilbjerri Theatre Company's Black Writers Lab, which assists aspiring Indigenous writers develop the skills they need to complete scripts for theatre and performance; and The Black Arm Band's Community Engagement Program, which undertakes workshops and performance development activities in local communities.

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Performing arts



This year we concluded 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. Participants used music, dance and song to improve their English language skills, make new friends, build their confidence and make stronger connections to their community.

Heartlands Refugee Art Prize



A Melbourne doctor who came to Australia as a child refugee from Vietnam and a father of four who escaped civil war in Ethiopia were co-winners of this year's prestigious art prize celebrating the creative contribution refugees bring to the Victorian community. Minh Phan's oil paint on copper piece *Two Views* and Sutueal Bekele's painting *Fall of Destructive Energy* shared the major prize. Now in its fourth 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.

WWW. multiculturalarts.com.au/heartlands

Making Art with Communities: A Work Guide

VicHealth, Arts Victoria and the Castanet network of Victorian arts organisations, artists and government agencies worked together to produce *Making Art with Communities: A Work Guide*. The guide aims to equip thousands of Victorians involved in community-based arts with practical tips, philosophical understandings of the work, links to resources and fresh ideas.

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¹ Bunker SJ, Colquhoun DM, Esler MD, et al. Position statement 'Stress' and heart disease: psychosocial risk factors. *MJA* 2003 178(6): 272-276.

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): 960-67.



Mildura Rural City Council, funded through VicHealth's Localities Enhancing Arts Participation (LEAP) program, assisted Koorie youth from SuniTAFE to work side-by-side with The Snuff Puppets Company to design, build and perform with their own puppets.

REDUCING RACE-BASED DISCRIMINATION AND SUPPORTING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

A survey published by VicHealth this year found that the overwhelming majority of Victorians want more to be done to address racism¹. This is probably not surprising given that Victoria is more culturally diverse than ever before and, sadly, racist incidents make the news on a weekly basis.

VicHealth's Reducing Race-based Discrimination program continued to build a strong platform of innovative research that has helped Victorians realise that racism leads to serious, but preventable, health impacts. This research has inspired a series of practical programs with many partners that trial potential solutions in workplaces, sports clubs, local governments and arts organisations.

This year VicHealth released research that provided valuable insights into:

- » how the accumulation of racist incidents damages mental wellbeing

- » the range and prevalence of racist abuse that many culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and Indigenous Victorians experience
- » how racism impacts people who are not directly targeted, such as the family and friends of people from different cultural backgrounds
- » why people do or do not take action when they witness racist incidents
- » how many Victorians were willing to take action when they saw racism
- » how many took action the last time they saw racism.

Our work complements anti-discrimination legislation and other programs across Victoria that directly support those affected by discrimination and disadvantage. It also complements other VicHealth programs: increasing participation in physical activity (p20), increasing opportunities for social connection (p28), improving workplace health (p40) and reducing health inequalities (p50).

Prince Rukundo, a Talking Difference Portable Studio Champion, using the studio. Museum Victoria's Talking Difference project has travelled to many Victorian communities as part of VicHealth's Arts About Us program.

{ HIGHLIGHTS + SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS }

Supporting bystander action in the community



There is great potential to prevent the harmful consequences of race-based discrimination by harnessing the support of people who witness discrimination and helping them take positive action when it matters.

VicHealth pioneered research on why people chose to 'take a stand' or not when they witnessed race-based discrimination. The results showed that at least 30% would always be willing to act and more than 80% would act in at least some of the occasions when they witnessed racism. They also provided some fascinating insights into the motives behind why some people acted and others did not. These 'bystander' research findings provide a framework for the development of our future programs and activities, including a new program with Football Federation Victoria.

WWW. vichealth.vic.gov.au/bystander-discrimination

Local government programs

Mental health impacts of racial discrimination surveys

The mental health impacts of racial discrimination surveys of 755 Aboriginal Victorians and 1139 Victorians from CALD backgrounds was conducted in partnership with the Lowitja Institute, The University of Melbourne, *beyondblue*, the Australian Government's Department of Immigration and Citizenship and four local governments. The survey results have implications for how we deal with racism in the future, as they found that the accumulation of racist incidents can have a powerful impact on mental health. People who experienced the highest number of racist incidents also recorded the most severe scores of psychological distress.

This research also found that: racism occurred in every setting explored; most people avoided places where they predicted that racism would occur; and large numbers of people frequently worried that their friends or family members would experience racism. It also highlighted the importance of anti-racist organisational and community interventions, as individual coping strategies did not appear to provide people with sufficient protection from harm.



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The Square of Light at Fed Square (featuring The Helix Tree light sculpture by designer Bruce Ramos) was one of many thought-provoking projects designed to inspire the community to embrace cultural diversity. It was funded by VicHealth through Arts About Us.



Localities Embracing and Accepting Diversity (LEAD) program

VicHealth's LEAD program demonstrated how local governments can prevent discrimination and support cultural diversity within their 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 have developed a series of interventions 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.

Even though the LEAD program will conclude in 2014, some aspects have already attracted interest across the nation. For example, the Australian Human Rights Commission and Diversity Council Australia are trialling LEAD resources to prevent racial discrimination in workplaces.

See Beyond Race campaign – national excellence award



Created to support the LEAD program, *See Beyond Race* was a community-based social marketing campaign that tackled race-based discrimination by featuring local people from diverse cultural backgrounds and their real-life interests. This year, the campaign won a National Golden Target Award from the Public

Relations Institute of Australia, and was a finalist in the 2013 Government Communications Australia Awards for Communications Excellence in the Best Social Marketing Campaign category. The campaign was a partnership between VicHealth, the Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission, the City of Whittlesea and the City of Greater Shepparton.



Sharing knowledge with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)

VicHealth funds the MAV to support local governments 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.

Arts programs

New arts projects to celebrate cultural diversity

VicHealth has funded seven Victorian arts and cultural organisations to 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. Building on the energy and the powerful community response to the first round of Arts About Us projects, VicHealth has bolstered its investment for a second round of performances and art installations until June 2015. This work complements VicHealth's larger program of anti-discrimination research and pilot projects.

[WWW. artsaboutus.com.au](http://www.artsaboutus.com.au)

Research projects

Victorian attitudes to race and cultural diversity survey

We are building on our understanding of community attitudes to cultural diversity through a follow-up of the More Than Tolerance survey, which focused on community attitudes towards race and cultural diversity in Victoria. The survey has been designed and will be conducted later in 2013.

McCaughey VicHealth Centre for Community Wellbeing (The University of Melbourne)

We continued 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 cultural diversity.

Action in workplaces



Workplaces can influence employee health and wellbeing and promote respectful cultures. As part of our Creating Healthy Workplaces program (see page 40) 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 race-based discrimination.

Other research projects



We are supporting a range of Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Projects that are exploring the following topics:

- » means of preventing cyber-racism
- » the role of parental socialisation in children's response to racism
- » the economic costs of racism
- » the use of museums as a site to counter racism.

References

¹ VicHealth 2013, *Choosing to act: How Victorians can prevent race-based discrimination and support cultural diversity*, Research highlights, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne.



Abrar Hussain, Tina Hosseini, Jazeer Nijamudeen and Senadhi Jayaweera participate in a Talking Difference camera workshop.

Talking Difference: The talking cure for racism

One in 10 Victorians believes some races are superior to others, while one in three believes there are ethnic groups that do not 'fit' in Australia. These findings have inspired Museum Victoria's *Talking Difference* project, which encourages people to talk about racism and difference through video. While videos of racist rants on public

transport have peppered the news lately, the videos displayed on the *Talking Difference* website illuminate a more thoughtful discussion occurring within our community. The project has travelled to many Victorian communities as part of VicHealth's Arts About Us program over the past three years.

PROMOTING RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



Intimate partner violence is the leading preventable contributor to death, disability and illness in Victorian women aged 15–44 years, with depression and anxiety making up the majority of the health burden imposed.¹

Just as it is possible to reduce levels of heart disease and to reduce smoking by addressing their causes, so it is within our reach to prevent violence against women before it occurs.

Research shows that the closer we get to a fairer and more equitable society, the nearer we will be to ending violence against women.

For these reasons, VicHealth's focus has been on research to better understand the nature of violence against women and make the barriers to gender equality more visible. We have also focused on programs to bring gender equality to life, by giving individuals and organisations the skills and resources to strengthen gender equality in everyday life.

{HIGHLIGHTS + SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS}

Understanding the nature of violence against women

Surveying community attitudes to violence against women

VicHealth is leading the second *National Survey of Community Attitudes to Violence Against Women* (or NCAS) in partnership with the Commonwealth Government as part of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010–22*. VicHealth conducted the Victorian Survey in 2006 and in 2009 we worked with the Commonwealth Government to expand the scale of the Survey across Australia. This next iteration of the Survey will provide a world-first snapshot of changes in community attitudes over time.

The Survey is being implemented in collaboration with the Social Research Centre, the University of Melbourne and a team of national experts on violence against women. It is anticipated that the results will be reported in 2014.

Taking action on sexism and discrimination: bystander program

In 2012 we undertook research to strengthen our bystander program and better understand what motivates Victorians to intervene to prevent violence against women. We are currently working on a pilot program with the City of Melbourne to understand the ways in which workplaces can encourage employees to take positive bystander action, and also the ways that organisations can take positive bystander action in the primary prevention of



violence against women. Through training and organisational change activities, the pilot program will increase staff skills in taking bystander action in response to incidents of sexism, harassment and discrimination.

Violence against women in Victorian print media

The reporting of violence in print media can strongly influence community attitudes to violence against women. In 2012 our study of trends in the portrayal and reporting of violence against women in Victorian print media provided valuable insight into the ways that media reporting can be strengthened. This year we supported researchers at the University of Melbourne to disseminate the findings of this study through publishing articles in mainstream media, speaking to journalism students, and collaborating on a resource for journalists. The 'Guide to reporting on violence against women' card contains information on responsible, accurate reporting of violence against women based on the research findings.

Bringing gender equality to life

Generating Equality and Respect project



In an Australian first, VicHealth is working in partnership with Monash City Council and MonashLink Community Health Service to deliver a three-year \$1 million project which will establish a 'demonstration site' in Clayton. Launched by the Minister for Women's Affairs, The Hon. Heidi Victoria MLA, this project will see a number of tried and tested primary prevention programs being implemented with a range of groups and organisations in one site as a saturation model.

This project is the culmination of many years of VicHealth trials to find out what works to prevent violence against women. By 'saturating' one location and its associated settings and population groups with proven initiatives to address the underlying causes of violence against women, the project will aim to stop violence before it occurs.

The project is built on the rationale that when a number of evidence-based prevention activities are initiated in one geographic location, there is strong potential to increase the *reach* of prevention work and also increase the *depth* of prevention work. The Generating Equality and Respect project is testing a new model to promote equal and respectful relationships between men and women in the one community, which may be implemented in other municipalities in the future.

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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. We have highlighted the importance of respectful relationships to 100,000 Victorians in football clubs through training, information sessions and written resources.

To ensure Fair Game: Respect Matters has a legacy when it ends next year, and to make sure that Victorian football clubs continue to encourage respectful relationships into the future, AFL Victoria is now delivering a Train the Trainer program. Community Development Managers and league staff are participating in workshops to enhance their ability to deliver messages of inclusion and respect.

We are expanding on the learnings from Fair Game: Respect Matters to assist other sports codes to build more safe, inclusive and welcoming environments for girls and women. For more, see page 23.

Y Respect Gender – Creating Healthy Workplaces



As part of our Creating Healthy Workplaces program (see page 40), the Y Respect Gender pilot project at YMCA Victoria is working towards building equal and respectful relationships in the workplace, and creating an equitable and respectful organisational culture and working conditions. Staff at YMCA Victoria have shown a high level of support for this pilot project, and alongside the Y State Office three YMCA centres are involved in piloting actions to increase gender equality in their workplaces and local community.

Working with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)

Victorian local councils have been actively working to prevent violence against women for over a decade. The Municipal Association of Victoria, with support from VicHealth, recently published a report that captures some of the outstanding achievements of Victorian councils working in the area of preventing violence against women and gender equity more broadly. VicHealth continues to support the ongoing role that the MAV, as the peak body for local government in Victoria, is taking in providing leadership, supporting and building the capacity of councils to create safer and more respectful communities for women. This ground-breaking work has a growing interest nationally and the report is being distributed Australia-wide.

Community partnerships forums

As part of VicHealth's commitment to transferring knowledge and building partnerships, we convened a series of forums for practitioners and project workers in the primary prevention of violence against women. The focus of the forums was on exploring common themes in prevention work across a variety of settings, sharing VicHealth research and providing skill exchange to support and improve everyday practice.

References

¹ Victorian Health Promotion Foundation 2004. *The health costs of violence. Measuring the burden of disease caused by intimate partner violence. A summary of findings.* VicHealth. Melbourne.



VicHealth has initiated a number of programs in the sport sector to promote equal and respectful relationships between men and women and to build environments that are safe, accessible, inclusive and equitable for women and girls.

IMPROVING HEALTH IN WORKPLACES AND WORKFORCES



Workplace health promotion is now recognised internationally as a prime arena in which to promote and encourage health.

Workplaces are an important foundation of the economy and, now more than ever, play a critical role in determining the health of society. Workplaces influence the physical, mental, economic and social wellbeing of employees and, in turn, the health of their families, communities and society. With 11.4 million Australians in workplaces and many people spending a sizeable proportion of their day at work, it's important to create workplaces that protect and promote health, rather than harm it.

VicHealth and public health practitioners have long acknowledged the significance of workplace health, as have many progressive employers who connect a healthy workforce with increased productivity.

Working in partnership with many organisations, including WorkSafe, the Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI), the Australian Industry Group, the Department of Health, researchers, industry groups

and unions, and underpinned by a rich base of international workplace health research, VicHealth has established five large-scale pilot projects – involving thousands of Victorian employees – to find solutions to areas linked to addressing the following health issues: stress, prolonged sitting, alcohol-related harm, race-based discrimination and violence against women.

This program puts VicHealth in a leadership role, driving new partnerships with researchers, corporate organisations and not for profits to translate health knowledge into suitable actions in workplaces.

In particular, VicHealth wants workplace health promotion program interventions to address the working conditions and needs of all employees, regardless of job type, socioeconomic status, sex, age, ethnicity and physical or intellectual capacity.

After just one year, practical insights are emerging from this program and the pilot projects. Our initial reflections on workplace health promotion in terms of engaging workplaces and setting up interventions include the following.

» No two workplaces are the same, so there is no 'one-size-fits-all' formula for a successful workplace

intervention. However, there are some underlying principles that will raise the likelihood of success, including leadership support, participation, integration and a tailored approach.

- » Leadership engagement is critical to the success of workplace health interventions, and it is often the first key challenge facing workplace health practitioners. Gaining the commitment and support of senior personnel helps, in particular, to mobilise key stakeholders and decision-makers and integrate the intervention into the organisation's business goals, values and strategy.
- » Improving workplace health requires a broad knowledge of policy and regulations, confidence in leading or guiding organisational change, partnership skills and the capacity to work with a range of often foreign disciplines, professions and conventions to build workplace conditions that are health-promoting. Frameworks guide us through this complexity by providing the principles and logic to underpin workplace health promotion efforts.
- » Workplace health promotion programs are said to be more effective when they integrate intervention on 'lifestyle' health

behaviours and working conditions, attending to both individual and environmental influences. A comprehensive approach simultaneously aims to create working environments that are safer, fairer and more satisfying while also equipping employees with the knowledge and skills for better managing increasingly complex working and non-working lives.

- » People who are consulted with, and involved in, planning and implementing a program will be much more likely to be committed to the program's aims. Genuine participation and involvement in the decision-making process can serve the dual purpose of gaining an accurate understanding of the needs of employees and the organisation, which also enhancing commitment to the interventions.

WWW. vichealth.vic.gov.au/workplace

Pilot projects in brief

Reducing workplace stress

Researchers Anthony LaMontagne (The University of Melbourne) and Andrew Noblet (Deakin University) are working closely with probationary constables in Victoria Police (16,000+ 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 (750+ 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 leading the research team working with the Australian Government Department of Human Services to design, implement and evaluate organisational and systems strategies for reducing prolonged sitting in office workers in 16 Smart Centres in metropolitan Melbourne and Geelong.

Preventing violence against women

Researcher Sue Dyson from La Trobe University is working with the YMCA (5000+ employees and volunteers) 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



The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) is working with AMES (Adult Multicultural Education Services) and Insight SRC to support a refrigerated distribution company and an aged care provider 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 (NCETA) and South East Business Networks (SEBN) are trialling a three year intervention to reduce the harm from alcohol in the workplace. Four manufacturing sites have been recruited: three in Dandenong, Victoria, and one in Wacol, Queensland.

CREATING ENVIRONMENTS THAT IMPROVE HEALTH



Every day, our health is influenced by places in which we live, learn, work and play. We know that risk factors for chronic disease are shaped not only by individual behaviours but by the built, social, natural and economic environments around us.

That's why creating healthy environments underpins much of VicHealth's work and has the capacity to impact at a population or community level.

This year, our work to create environments that cultivate and improve health has again focused on healthy built environments, particularly new suburbs, supporting sports clubs to make their clubs healthier places to be, and investigating the importance of natural/open spaces for health.

{ HIGHLIGHTS + SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS }

Participating as a partner in planning

Selandra Rise (City of Casey)

Evidence of the importance of the urban environment to human health is growing and we know that where we live is a crucial part of this.

In a unique collaboration between developer Stockland, the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA), the City of Casey and the Growth Areas Authority, VicHealth has supported work to embed healthy urban design in Selandra Rise, a residential property development in Melbourne's south-eastern Local Government Area of Casey. It's a first for Australia in terms of embedding preventive health planning and health promotion solutions from conception to construction.

VicHealth has supported government planners to make health the first consideration in new housing developments and we hope Selandra Rise will set the benchmark.

With expert advice from the Planning Institute of Australia (Victoria), the master plan for Selandra Rise has a particular focus on creating a healthy and engaged community by promoting physical activity and active transport, and encouraging social interaction. The development includes diverse and affordable housing, with options for retirement living and aged-care facilities; interconnected walking tracks, bike paths and streets; and a neighbourhood centre and community garden. It also aims to deliver local employment opportunities so people can work close to where they live, supporting lesser commuting times and creating a better work/life balance.

Dr Cecily Maller, a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Design (RMIT University) and the recipient of a VicHealth Research Practice Fellowship in Community Development and Residential Planning (2010–15), is studying the progress of Selandra Rise over 5 years to find out whether incorporating health into urban planning makes a difference for its residents, and also what this means for urban design and planning policy.

Exploring models of good practice

Fair go, sport! Promoting sexual and gender diversity



Research shows that sport is a significant site of homophobic harassment, discrimination and exclusion. These issues can limit participation in sporting activities and also impact on the mental health and wellbeing of community members. VicHealth has been working with the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) and the Victorian sports sector on *Fair go, sport!*, a program to increase awareness of sexual and gender diversity and to promote safe and inclusive environments in sporting organisations. In particular, VEOHRC has been working with Hockey Victoria to increase awareness of sexual and gender diversity in hockey and promote safe and inclusive environments, as well as develop a flexible model of engagement that can be adapted for other sporting codes and their governing bodies.

VicHealth will continue to work with VEOHRC to support this project while broadening the focus on the recruitment of additional sports including Cycling Victoria, Football Federation Victoria and Skate Victoria.

Supporting the development of sustainable policies in sporting organisations

Healthy Sporting Environments program



Rural and regional rollout

Rural and regional sporting clubs are places where the community comes together to participate, socialise and enjoy their leisure time. VicHealth's Healthy Sporting Environments program supports clubs to make changes to their club facilities, policies and culture so that people have a healthy, fun and welcoming experience on and off the field. The two-year program provides 250 rural and regional clubs tailored support from a Regional Sports Assembly to look at what can be improved in their club across six areas: responsible use of alcohol; healthy eating; reduced tobacco use; UV protection; injury prevention and management; and fostering an inclusive, safe and supportive environment for women and girls, Aboriginal Victorians, and people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Over time, clubs will develop and implement policies and procedures that

will improve their reputation and build membership, with the ongoing support of their Regional Sports Assembly. The evaluation of this program by Ernst & Young will provide VicHealth with evidence of how club development programs can best enhance the health and wellbeing of people involved in community sport by influencing the club environment.

Demonstration project

The Healthy Sporting Environments Demonstration Project managed by Leisure Networks in the Barwon region concluded in March 2013 with 73 community sporting clubs participating in the program across five local government areas.

The project was the first of its kind in Australia and sought to put in place minimum standards in community sporting clubs and also to build the evidence base for health promotion initiatives in the sporting club setting.

Learnings from this investment have significantly informed the Healthy Sporting Environments rural and regional rollout (see above), and demonstrated how sport can be used as a setting for health promotion in relation to socio-cultural and environmental change.

Armstrong Creek Growth Area – Sports Development Plan

How do you establish and grow sports participation in new residential developments while simultaneously creating viable clubs, programs and facilities?

The City of Greater Geelong has embarked upon a new approach to developing sport in the Armstrong Creek growth area by working with insideEDGE Sport and Leisure Planning to create a Sports Development Plan. This plan identifies the best way to make sport work and function within Armstrong Creek – a suburb that is expected to have 30,000 residents by 2031 and a wide range of sport and recreation facilities.

Given VicHealth's crucial role in facilitating sports participation and developing sporting environments that foster good health, we have provided advice, support and information to insideEDGE over recent years. In particular, we have been sharing our knowledge about creating sporting environments that are safe, accessible, inclusive and equitable. This project provides significant evidence of how sport can be developed in new residential developments, and how facilities can be best utilised.



REDUCING HARMFUL UV EXPOSURE

Victoria is a world leader in sun protection. While melanoma incidence in Victoria continues to rise, there are now falling incidence rates in men and women younger than 40 years of age and a decrease (relative to population growth) in the number of non-melanoma skin cancer treatments among those aged under 45 years. This is consistent with a positive effect of the SunSmart program on behaviour change.

An entry from SunSmart's Student Edge competition, which engaged students by inviting them to get creative with sunscreen.

{ HIGHLIGHTS + SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS }

Victoria to ban solariums

In December 2012 the Victorian Government announced that commercial solariums will be banned in Victoria from 1 January 2015, as part of its new skin cancer prevention framework. It has been estimated that each year, 281 new melanoma cases and 43 melanoma-related deaths are attributable to solarium use.

VicHealth was a leading agency that, along with others, called on the Victorian Parliament to introduce the ban.

Victorian school students best in the country at sun protection

The latest survey revealed that school children in Victoria have the best sun protection in Australia, with 90% of

Victorian primary schools now participating in the SunSmart program, which is higher than any of the other states. Encouragingly, schools are aware of the importance of shade, with approximately three in four Victorian schools indicating they had increased their level of shade in the last three years. Schools play an integral role in the reduction of future skin cancer rates, and incredible progress has been made in Victoria since the SunSmart schools program first began over 18 years ago.

2012–13 integrated summer campaign

A \$1 million grant from the State Government allowed the Cancer Council Victoria's SunSmart program to run a campaign for the 2012–13 summer in partnership with the Victorian Department of Health and VicHealth. Two existing mass media skin cancer prevention campaigns – Dark Side of Tanning and Wes Bonny's story – were continued and complemented by an innovative digital and new media component focusing on improving sunscreen application and reapplication

behaviours amongst adolescents and young adults. This included a partnership with Student Edge, an online site offering the student community information and discounts. Student Edge promoted a competition encouraging students to bring sunscreen with them and send in photos of themselves getting creative with their sunscreen outdoors. They asked the community to vote on the best photo. The partnership successfully engaged over 40,000 Victorian youth.

A new-look SunSmart app, which has been downloaded by over 80,000 unique users to date, was released in February 2013. The new design improved the visibility of the sunscreen application reminder alert providing a practical reminder for people to apply sunscreen during the sun protection times.

Healthy Sporting Environments

Through this program, VicHealth is supporting initiatives to reduce UV harm in sporting environments. See page 43.

INVESTING IN RESEARCH, EVALUATION AND KNOWLEDGE FOR HEALTH

VicHealth is funding research into the development of a food hub in the City of Casey, which will make it easier for people to access fresh, seasonal foods.

VicHealth has a proud history and tradition of investment in public health research and the promotion of evidence-based interventions. Research complements all of our health promotion investments and is closely linked to policy and practice.

Historically, we have used a combination of investigator-initiated research as well as priority driven research. Research funding provided by VicHealth has helped build health promotion and public health research capacity in Victoria. Translating research into practical health promotion practice and knowledge has been a cornerstone of our work.

By building evidence and supporting innovation we increase the impact of health promotion and public health programs for all Victorians.

The last three years have seen some significant and innovative research from VicHealth Research Fellows, research funding rounds and commissioned research and evaluation. The latter is integrated into all our work to determine if our investments have been worthwhile. Some of this work is listed in this section. See also individual program area highlights (p18 to 52).



{ HIGHLIGHTS + SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS }

VicHealth Indicators Survey

The VicHealth Indicators Survey is a Victorian community wellbeing survey that focuses on the social determinants of health. The survey is based on core questions related to individual and community health and wellbeing, critical to inform decisions about public health priorities. The survey complements other Victorian population health surveys such as the Victorian Government's Victorian Population Health Survey (VPHS) and, when combined, these two data sets enable local government planners to gain a comprehensive picture of health and wellbeing in Victoria.

In November 2012 a suite of products and resources was released. The official launch was attended by delegates from 68 of Victoria's 79 councils, and included presentations from Community Indicators Victoria and the Department of Health.

VicHealth Indicators resources are available from the VicHealth website and include:

- » **The VicHealth Indicators Survey 2011: Selected findings:** A detailed report available on the survey findings.
- » **LGA Profiles:** Major findings on all the indicators in comparison to the state data.
- » **Indicator Overview Sheets:** Explanation of the 16 indicators (or topic areas) in the survey.
- » **Instant Atlas:** An interactive website that provides maps containing high level information about VicHealth Indicators. (This product is available for viewing and downloading age-standardised data, subject to signing a license agreement.)

- » **Questions, response options and derived variables in the VicHealth Indicators Survey 2011:** This document contains information about the survey questions and analysis for each of the indicators in the survey.
- » **Local government action guides:** Ideas for local action on 10 public health topics: Reducing health inequalities, Improving Aboriginal health and wellbeing, Increasing participation in physical activity, Increasing social connections, Reducing race-based discrimination, Preventing violence against women, Supporting healthy eating, Reducing tobacco use, Reducing harm from alcohol, Protecting Victorians from skin cancer.

WWW. vichealth.vic.gov.au/indicators

Research

The last three years have seen VicHealth firmly establish itself as the leader in innovative public health research in terms of both funded research and commissioned research. The following projects continued this year.

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. The successful applicants demonstrate an understanding of the social determinants of health, and the capacity to generate research findings that are immediately useful for health promotion practice. Projects have the potential to generate large health gains for Victorian population groups.

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By building evidence and supporting innovation, VicHealth increases the impact of health promotion and public health programs for all Victorians.

Summary of successful projects:

Dr Gillian Fletcher, La Trobe University

Beyond the glass box of silence and invisibility: Examining inclusion and participation programs from a GLBT perspective

Dr Patsie Frawley, La Trobe University

Adopting a mainstream approach: Effective violence and abuse prevention strategies for people with an intellectual disability

Associate Professor Margaret Kelaher, The University of Melbourne

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

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?

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

Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Projects

This 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:

Professor Andrew Jakubowicz, University of Technology, Sydney

Cyber racism and community resilience

Dr Mark Lawrence, Deakin University

Modelling policy interventions to protect Australia's food security in the face of environmental sustainability challenges


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 Kerry O'Brien, Monash University

Exposure to alcohol advertising and sponsorship in Australian televised sport: association with explicit and implicit alcohol cognitions and drinking

Dr Anna Peeters, Deakin University

What will it take to decrease socio-economic inequalities in obesity? 

Dr Naomi Priest, Deakin University

Using museums to counter racism and increase acceptance of diversity among young people

Dr Jenny Veitch, Deakin University

The impact of park renewal on park usage and physical activity

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, one research project was successful in receiving NHMRC funding:

Associate Professor Anthony LaMontagne, The University of Melbourne

Integrated workplace mental health promotion for the prevention and management of mental illness in the workplace

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 Fellows is aligned to VicHealth's strategic directions. Eight fellowships finished this year.

WWW. vichealth.vic.gov.au/researchfellows

The Cochrane Collaboration

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

WWW. cochrane.org

REDUCING HEALTH INEQUALITIES



VicHealth has taken an organisation-wide approach to health inequalities. Each of our program areas aims to reduce health inequalities by focusing on determinants such as social connection or race-based discrimination, or risk factors such as smoking or alcohol consumption.

Our approach recognises that the social and economic conditions in which people live have a significant influence on their

health. Our focus is on making changes in society to provide all people with the opportunity to live a healthy life. Sometimes this involves working directly with priority populations, and other times focusing on the broader conditions in which people grow, live, work and age.

We are proud of our work in recent years to reduce health inequalities. Our relatively new **Housing** investment was created in recognition of the significant impact that housing has on health and wellbeing. Adequate housing or the prevention of precarious housing must be considered a key component of health promotion and

disease prevention. Our **Disability** resource is promoting the inclusion and participation in all areas of everyday life of people with a disability, and drawing attention to the urgent need for action to improve the poorer health that people with disabilities experience. And we continue to focus on **Indigenous health** because Aboriginal Victorians have poorer health outcomes than non-Aboriginal Victorians on almost every measure of health.

Look for this icon on pages 18 to 49 – it identifies other investments that have a health inequalities focus.



{ HIGHLIGHTS + SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS }

Improving the physical and mental health of those experiencing social, economic or geographic disadvantage

Disability resources

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. This year, after scoping the issue of disability and health inequalities, we published a research summary describing the significant inequalities in health that currently exist for Victorians with a disability. Work is underway to produce resources designed to support policy-makers and cross-sector practitioners in developing and implementing activities to reduce health inequalities experienced by people with a disability.

VicHealth's Disability Action Plan

In March this year we released our *Disability Action Plan 2013–15*. VicHealth has a long history of fostering inclusion and engagement across Victorian communities and this plan continues to build on our earlier achievements. We have already made a series of policy changes, communications modifications and building amendments to ensure we are truly 'walking the talk'. This plan provides an overview of the remaining actions VicHealth will undertake over the coming months and years to ensure our organisation and culture is inclusive to all staff, visitors and stakeholders.

Cycling to improve mental health of homeless people

Now in its third year, the Hanover Welfare Services *Hanover ConnectEast Ride for Home* provided a mass participatory event for 6,500 cyclists, community groups and individuals to raise awareness and funding of almost \$240,000 to address homelessness. Through the Client Participation Project, VicHealth supported Hanover to provide bikes, physical activity training and nutrition skills for 20 homeless Victorians. The majority of past participants have reported an improvement in their mental health and knowledge of health and fitness. The event also highlights the many health, social, environmental and financial benefits of cycling for active transport.

[WWW. rideforhome.com.au](http://www.rideforhome.com.au)

McCaughey VicHealth Centre for Community Wellbeing (The 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.

VicHealth Public Health Research Fellow Dr Elise Davis is based at the Centre, where she is developing cutting edge research in the field of mental health promotion, with a focus on child health inequalities. Also based at the Centre is VicHealth Senior Research Fellow Dr Deborah Warr, whose research is developing a clearer understanding of the associations between place-based disadvantage, social connectedness and health.

United Through Football

This year we explored models of good practice in creating environments that benefit the health of priority populations, such as Football Federation Victoria's (FFV) *United Through Football* program. The program aims to increase the capacity of local level football (soccer) clubs to promote diversity through their operations, systems and culture, thereby addressing participation barriers for players, officials and volunteers. Through the provision of FFV's small grants scheme and free training opportunities, local level clubs

have reduced participation costs and engage newly arrived community groups. FFV has also contributed to the wider sports sector by disseminating key research findings and attending VicHealth coordinated learning circles.

Guidelines for health care providers working with same-sex parented families

Launched in March 2013 by VicHealth, the Victorian Shadow Minister for Health, The Hon. Gavin Jennings, and the Shadow Minister for Health Promotion, Child Safety, Disability Services and Women, The Hon. Danielle Green, these guidelines are in part educative, providing some information about terminologies, myths and facts about same-sex couples and parenting. But they are also designed to illustrate how service providers and organisations can ensure their everyday processes are inclusive of same-sex couples and their children. The guidelines are part of a broader La Trobe University research project, *Work, Love, Play: Understanding Resilience in Same-Sex Parented Families*, which is funded by an Australian Research Council Linkage Grant in partnership with VicHealth and others.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE →

Closing the health gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Victorians

Senior Research Fellow in Social Health Determinants

This year 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.

Dr Sarah MacLean commenced in this role in June 2013. Sarah is a sociologist with a sustained interest in conducting research that supports health and welfare policy development, particularly as it affects people experiencing social and economic forms of marginalisation. Her past work in Indigenous health research has included co-authoring two reviews of interventions into petrol sniffing in Indigenous communities with Professor Peter d'Abbs. Since 2010 Sarah has been employed on an Australian Research Council postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Melbourne to explore alcohol consumption and associated harms for young people within an urban and a peri-urban (outer-government area) of Melbourne.

"I am looking forward to meeting people involved in Indigenous health research in Victoria and to working collaboratively to develop new studies which will deepen our understanding of social health determinants for Indigenous people"

– Dr Sarah MacLean



Indigenous Sport Development Leader

In an exciting partnership between VicHealth and Surfing Victoria, a new Indigenous Sport Development Leader has been appointed for 12 months from May 2013 to provide advice and support to a range of sports aiming to increase Indigenous participation. Surfing Victoria's Indigenous Aquatics Manager, Steve Parker, has taken on the role. Steve was drawn to surfing 20 years ago and manages Indigenous surfing programs across the State.

As part of its extensive Indigenous programs, Surfing Victoria this year has also placed AFL Sports Ready Indigenous Trainees at Swimming Victoria and at the YMCA Anglesea Recreation Camp.

This year, VicHealth also continued to support Surfing Victoria to expand its Indigenous Surfing Program, which aims to create training and employment opportunities in the surfing industry for Indigenous young people.

"To work with Indigenous communities you need to be committed, flexible and supportive, and have open communication and community ownership. Start off small and build from there into whatever vision the community and key Indigenous leaders/groups have."

– Steve Parker



Life is health is life

Written in 2011 by VicHealth for the Victorian Government's Department of Health, *Life is health is life* is an Aboriginal evidence-based health promotion resource that brings together stories of promising health promotion practice from across Victoria and a review of the scientific literature. It is now being used for planning, advocacy and on the ground action, so this year we developed resources that will provide workforce development and training to ensure its continued use across Indigenous and mainstream agencies to improve Indigenous health.

Fellowship for Indigenous Leadership

Supported by VicHealth, the Fellowship for Indigenous Leadership supports Indigenous leaders strive to achieve positive change for Indigenous Victorians and strengthen Indigenous and mainstream Australia. Building Indigenous leadership is a vital way of improving the social and emotional wellbeing of communities. The Fellowship helps Indigenous communities to develop innovative responses to current issues and future challenges. In 2013, the Fellowship celebrates 10 years. To mark the occasion, the Fellowship is documenting and showcasing achievements of past and present emerging leaders through a video and publication, which will be available later this year.

Reconciliation Action Plan

Work is complete on the VicHealth *Reconciliation Action Plan*. It outlines the way in which VicHealth will address Aboriginal health inequalities and support self-determination and reconciliation and builds on our earlier work in this area. VicHealth is committed to reducing health inequalities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Victorians, and demonstrated this by signing the Close the Gap, Statement of Intent, in 2008, which aims to achieve equality in health status and life expectancy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by the year 2030.



Daphne Yarram, former Indigenous Leadership Emerging Leader.



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October 2013
Publication Number: C-078-CO

VicHealth acknowledges the support
of the Victorian Government

