



# Eat Well South Australia

## *Public Health Nutrition Action Plan 2004-2008*

### Department of Health

#### ***Purpose***

*Eat Well South Australia* aims to improve the health and wellbeing of all South Australians through improving nutrition and reducing the burden of preventable diet-related disease. It provides a framework and plan that:

- identifies priorities for action, both new work and further investment in existing work
- provides a basis for developing a state-wide coordinated approach to nutrition promotion that involves government and non-government health and other sectors in collaborative action
- guides health and other sector organisations in planning food and nutrition activities
- supports consistency and links between national and state public health nutrition agendas and action at state, regional and local levels.

#### ***Guiding principles***

*Eat Well South Australia* aims to:

- take a population health focus that embraces a public health approach and systematic planning of activities
- contribute to reducing health inequalities by focusing on the nutrition-related health needs of disadvantaged groups, including Aboriginal South Australians
- foster partnerships within the health sector and with other sectors and the community
- acknowledge the social determinants of health as well as the relationship between nutrition, physical activity, smoking and alcohol consumption on health
- base initiatives on scientific evidence where it exists and contribute to building evidence where it is needed
- recognise that food is more than a source of fuel and nutrients, that it also plays a central role in the community's social and cultural life
- acknowledge the importance of ecologically sustainable development so that resources are managed to ensure good health for future generations.

## **Eat Well South Australia: action areas and objectives**

### **Action area 1: Improving nutrition for mothers, infants and children**

#### **Promoting healthy pregnancy and breastfeeding**

1. Increase the proportion of babies born within the healthy weight range.
2. Increase the proportion of pregnant women who consume a diet consistent with recommendations.
3. Increase the proportion of infants who are predominantly or exclusively breastfed for 6 months and continue to be breastfed for 12 months or longer.

#### **Promoting healthy children**

4. Increase the proportion of babies not fed complementary foods until about 6 months of age.
5. Increase the proportion of children consuming recommended amounts of fruit and vegetables, bread and cereals and milk products every day.
6. Improve parents' knowledge, skills and confidence in supporting their children to develop healthy eating habits.

### **Action area 2: Increasing consumption of fruit and vegetables**

7. Increase the proportion of South Australians who consume fruit and vegetables every day.
8. Increase the average daily fruit and vegetable consumption of the South Australian population and of those consuming low amounts.

### **Action area 3: Promoting healthy weight in children and young people and preventing weight gain in adults**

9. Reduce the current trend of increasing prevalence of overweight and obesity in South Australia through increasing the prevalence of:
  - a. eating and physical activity patterns consistent with preventing overweight and obesity
  - b. environments that support healthy eating and physical activity.

### **Action area 4: Improving nutrition for older people**

10. Increase the proportion of older people who consume a diet consistent with recommendations and that meets their special food-related needs.

### **Action area 5: Improving food supply and food security**

#### **Improving food supply**

11. Encourage and support institutional, community and other relevant food services to offer a variety of foods consistent with dietary recommendations for good health.

#### **Improving food security for key vulnerable groups**

12. Advocate and support improved food security for vulnerable groups in South Australia.

### **Action area 6: Building capacity to promote healthy eating and good nutrition for all South Australians**

13. Build the health system's capacity to achieve effective sustainable effort in public health nutrition.

## **Eat Well South Australia: strategies**

The strategy areas below apply to each of Eat Well South Australia's six action areas. Strategies need to be tailored for specific population groups, workforces and settings. There are links between the strategies and actions planned will in many cases address more than one strategy area.

### **1. Improve knowledge and awareness of healthy eating**

Community and service providers need to be aware of relevant recommendations for healthy eating, including:

- the National Health and Medical Research Council's dietary guidelines ie Infant Feeding Guidelines for Health Workers, Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia, Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults, Dietary Guidelines for Older Australians
- the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating
- fruit and vegetable consumption guidelines (Strategic Intergovernmental Nutrition Alliance) and strategies to foster children's development of healthy eating habits.

### **2. Develop partnerships and coalitions**

Effective action often requires engaging partners in collaborative and coordinated action at state, regional and local levels. Depending on the issue, this may involve organisations from the health, education, community services, primary industries, transport, business, urban planning and environment sectors. Such organisations are likely to include government, non-government, professional, private and community organisations.

### **3. Promote effective practice**

Public health nutrition action should be based on the best available evidence of effectiveness and should continue to build the evidence. Evaluation of interventions is important. Policy makers, organisations and service providers need to be aware of effective approaches and committed to evaluation.

### **4. Foster strategic activities which address healthy eating and improved nutrition**

This includes integrating nutrition and healthy eating into Department of Health policies and programs; contributing to policy development; developing pilot programs, particularly those reaching disadvantaged groups; undertaking evaluation and monitoring activities; and developing the workforce.

### **5. Support workforce development**

To implement *Eat Well South Australia* an adequate number of appropriately skilled specialist nutritionists, as well as other primary health care and non-health sector workforces (eg Aboriginal health workers and health promotion workers) with nutrition knowledge and related skills is required. Workforce development will only be effective if it takes place in a supportive policy and organisational environment.

### **6. Food and nutrition monitoring**

Monitoring the implementation and achievement of *Eat Well South Australia* will involve the collection, reporting on and dissemination of data to identified users and using the data to inform public health nutrition planning.

## **Implementation**

The Department of Health is responsible for state level implementation of *Eat Well South Australia* and will work within key government priorities, including health reform, to encourage and support state-wide, regional and community-based health services that are also responsible for implementation in their areas. Implementation at all levels will require partnerships with other government and non-government organisations and the community. A coordinated state-wide approach to implementation will be fostered.

## **Eat Well South Australia: outcomes and indicators**

### **Action area 1. Improving nutrition for mothers, infants and children**

#### ***1a. Promoting healthy pregnancy and breastfeeding***

Outcome: Improved birth outcomes and breastfeeding rates

Indicators: ✦ Proportion of low birth weight babies.  
✦ Breastfeeding rates: initiation, 3 months, 6 months and 12 months of age.

#### ***1b. Promoting healthy children***

Outcome: Improved nutritional status of children.

Indicators: ✦ Age of introduction of complementary foods and cow's milk  
✦ Consumption of 'core' foods (eg fruit, vegetables, cereals, milk), water and 'non-core' foods, foods of poor nutritional value and of high energy density eg soft drinks, confectionery and savoury snack foods)

### **Action area 2. Increasing consumption of fruit and vegetables**

Outcome: Increased consumption of fruit and vegetables

Indicators: ✦ Proportion of population consuming fruit and vegetables every day  
✦ Average daily intake of fruit and vegetables

### **Action area 3. Promoting healthy weight in children and young people and preventing weight gain in adults**

Outcome: Increased proportion of the adult population in the healthy weight range

Indicators: ✦ Proportion of population who are overweight, obese and underweight.

### **Action area 4. Improving nutrition for older people**

Outcome: Improved nutritional status of older South Australians.

Indicators: ✦ Proportion of population consuming fruit and vegetables every day  
✦ Average daily intake of fruit and vegetables  
✦ Proportion of population who are overweight, obese and underweight.

### **Action area 5. Improving food supply and food security**

#### ***5a. Improving food supply***

Outcomes Food services provide and promote nutritious, safe food.

Increased commitment to ensuring a nutritious food supply for all South Australians.

Indicator ✦ Number of sectors with food and nutrition policies/ guidelines.

#### ***5b. Improving food security for key vulnerable groups***

Outcomes: Increased commitment to preventing food insecurity.

Increased commitment to reducing the impact of food insecurity for those who are currently experiencing it.

Indicator: ✦ Proportion of the population experiencing food insecurity.

### **Action area 6. Building capacity to promote healthy eating and good nutrition for all South Australians**

Outcome: Department of Health commitment at central, regional and local levels to implementing Eat Well South Australia

Indicators: ✦ FTE specialist dietitians and nutritionists, and Aboriginal nutrition workers in community and public health positions  
✦ *Eat Well South Australia* priorities incorporated into regional and local plans  
✦ Monitoring data collected and disseminated

## Key references

- Eat Well Australia, including the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nutrition Strategy and Action Plan, 2001. <http://www.nphp.gov.au/workprog/signal/nutstrat.htm>
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