

Healthy Choices is about offering customers choice whilst promoting healthier options and making these more available at the same time.



When it comes to providing healthy foods and drinks, there may be some perceived barriers which stand in the way. However, there are some simple solutions you can use to help you make healthy changes in your organisation.

Cost

Food service providers may assume that healthy foods and drinks are more expensive to purchase and prepare and that typical **RED (limit)** choices (e.g. chocolate bars and sugary drinks) are more popular and profitable. However, this is not necessarily the case.

Both Alf's Café at Alfred Health and Lara Pool kiosk in Geelong are excellent examples of outlets that have implemented the Healthy Choices guidelines without a negative impact on sales. At Alf's café, food and drink sales continued to be strong and feedback from staff was positive after healthy changes were made. At Lara Pool, the menu was altered so that only **GREEN (best choices)** and **AMBER (choose carefully)** options were available. Turnover and sales in the kiosk were similar to that of the original unhealthy menu which included mostly **RED** choices. To learn more about these case studies visit www.heas.health.vic.gov.au.

Replacing high selling **RED** options

The Healthy Choices guidelines are about offering customers choice, whilst promoting healthier options and making **GREEN** and **AMBER** choices more available. The guidelines do not require any foods or drinks (even those in the **RED** category) to be removed entirely.

You may not need to significantly reduce the range or amount of some of the foods and drinks you sell, but instead stock healthier varieties. For example, if you currently sell 600ml bottles of flavoured milk, you can replace at least some of these with 300ml options that are reduced fat, as this is a healthier choice. Similarly, if you stock 600ml bottles of sugar sweetened soft drinks, you can replace some of these with 250ml bottles that are artificially sweetened.

Staff time and skills

There is no 'one size fits all' approach to putting Healthy Choices into practice, and a tailored approach that meets the needs of each individual organisation is recommended.

Listing the changes you intend to make in an action plan, within an allocated time frame, will help you roll out changes in the most efficient way. Allocating different people to be responsible for changes in areas according to their skill set is also important.

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