

With help from the Healthy Eating Advisory Service, nearly 70% of foods available at the YarriYak Café are healthier **GREEN** options.



“We have had extremely positive feedback on the salads and curries, it’s great to know the community is embracing healthy choices.” – YarriYak Café Manager

A case study from the YCHANGE (Yarriambiack – Creating Healthy Active Nourished Generations) Initiative at Rural Northwest Health Service.

Summary

The YarriYak Café at Rural Northwest Health Service provides healthier food and drink options to its staff and visitors as part of the YCHANGE initiative.

This change has been led by a working group including the Community Health Manager and dietitian from Rural Northwest Health, the café manager and staff from Woodbine Disability Service, researchers from Deakin University and a coordinator from the Healthy Eating Advisory Service (HEAS).

As a result of this project the YarriYak Café now meets the Healthy Choices guidelines¹. In addition, catering for team member meetings and events in the health service were also changed to meet the Healthy Choices guidelines, and an organisational policy was adopted to embed these changes.

The YCHANGE project is funded through the Ian Potter Foundation, Rural Northwest Health Service, Royal Flying Doctors Service (Victoria) and the Department Health and Human Services (West Division Health).

Why do something?

The Yarriambiack Shire has the highest rate of obese and overweight adults and consumes the most sugar-sweetened beverages of all the Local Government Areas in Victoria². YCHANGE is working with the community to identify the causes of these issues and develop sustainable local solutions.

Food supply was identified as a key focus area, especially foods and drinks provided in places where people spend much of their time, such as child care, schools, sports clubs and the workplace.

The Rural Northwest Health Service is the largest employer and the main health facility in the community. Foods and drinks on offer can have a large impact on the health of team members, visitors and the broader community.

What was done?

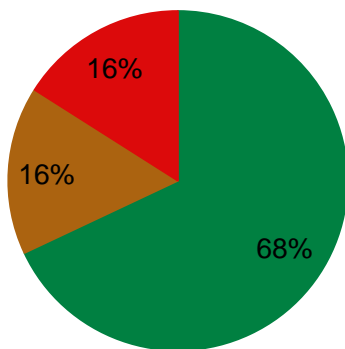
The YCHANGE project team assisted the Rural Northwest Health working group to identify different ways to create a healthy food and drink environment in the workplace. This included having a catering policy for team member meetings and events, and reviewing the foods and drinks sold through the on-site cafe, vending machines and kiosks.

The HEAS, delivered by Nutrition Australia Vic Division, provided training and resources for staff to help them make changes so that their foods and drinks on offer met the state-wide Healthy Choices guidelines.

How did we begin?

The opening of the brand new hospital café – YarriYak – provided an ideal opportunity to implement the Healthy Choices guidelines from the start.

- The HEAS provided training to café staff on the Healthy Choices guidelines and assisted with adapting existing recipes and developing new recipes to meet the guideline targets.
- A draft policy document was developed and presented at Rural Northwest Health's team member training event in May 2016, where team members were also presented with the **GREEN** and **AMBER** catering choices to select as part of their new staff catering menu. The policy changes were implemented in June 2016.
- Product placement was considered to ensure **GREEN** items were more visible, such as placing the fruit bowl near the cash register. All **RED** items were provided in smaller portions, and drinks sold include only water and hot beverages based on reduced fat milk.
- Ongoing adjustments were made to the menu, with café staff and the Rural Northwest Health dietitian meeting regularly to ensure the foods and drinks meet the Healthy Choices guidelines, as well as customer demand.



■ Best choices (GREEN)

■ Choose carefully (AMBER)

■ Limit (RED)

Has it made a difference?

The café menu now meets the Healthy Choices guidelines, providing 68% **GREEN**, 16% **AMBER** and 16% **RED** items. Sales data are reviewed quarterly to track the volume of **RED** and **AMBER** items against the Healthy Choices guidelines and have shown that the healthier products are also more popular, with the majority of items sold being **GREEN** and **AMBER**.



What helped to make this a success?

- Strong engagement from Rural Northwest Health management who were committed to having an on-site café providing healthy food and drink options to staff and visitors.
- Dedicated Rural Northwest Health team members to assist café staff with recipe revision and creation of **GREEN** and **AMBER** options, portion sizes, and the labelling and placement of foods and drinks.
- Champions within Rural Northwest Health to drive the change across the organisation, aligning the catering menu to the guidelines, and ensuring changes were realistic and more likely to be sustainable.
- Capacity building of Rural Northwest Health and café staff to understand, implement and maintain the Healthy Choices guidelines by training through the HEAS.

¹ *Healthy Choices: policy guidelines for hospitals and health services*, Department of Health and Human Services, State Government Victoria. 2016, <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/nutrition>.

² *Victorian Population Health Survey 2014 – Modifiable risk factors contributing to chronic disease in Victoria*. Department of Health and Human Services, State Government Victoria, 2014.

To receive this document in an accessible format phone 1300 22 52 88 or email heas@nutritionaustralia.org

Except where otherwise indicated, the images in this publication show models and illustrative settings only, and do not necessarily depict actual services, facilities or recipients of services. Copyright © State of Victoria 2016