

## Purpose

Hesse Rural Health (HRH) recognises the importance of healthy eating and access to water in promoting people’s health and wellbeing and is committed to supporting staff and volunteers to make healthy food and drink choices. This policy is an integral part of HRH’s ‘Staff Health and Wellbeing’ policy and is in place to promote and encourage employees and volunteers to make healthy eating choices by creating an environment which:

- Provides a healthy eating culture
- Actively promotes healthy food choices
- Increases availability of healthy food and drink
- Decreases the availability and promotion of unhealthy food and drink
- Increases employee knowledge in nutrition and healthy eating

**This policy does not apply to consumer/resident food services - these are guided by the [Nutrition standards for menu items in Victorian hospitals and residential aged care facilities](#).**

**It also does not apply to food brought in from home by staff.** However, staff are encouraged to consider providing healthy options. Unhealthy fundraising activities (e.g. chocolate or confectionary drives) shall not be permitted.

## Target Audience

All HRH Staff and Volunteers  
 Staff catering (meals and morning/afternoon tea)  
 All catering provided to HRH by external providers  
 All organisational fundraising  
 All staff and community events e.g. health days, awareness days  
 External providers who hire HRH venues

## Definition

Term	Definition
Classification of foods according to the <i>Healthy Choices: food and drink classification guide</i>	
<b>GREEN</b>	Food and drinks in the <b>GREEN</b> category are the healthiest choice, they are usually: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good sources of nutrients</li> <li>• Lower in saturated fat (unhealthy fat), added sugar and/or salt</li> <li>• Lower in energy (kilojoules)</li> <li>• High in fibre</li> </ul>
<b>AMBER</b>	Food and drinks in the <b>AMBER</b> category should be selected carefully and consumed in moderation. They provide some valuable nutrients but can also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to excess energy (kilojoule) intake</li> <li>• Contain higher amounts of saturated fat, added sugar and/or salt</li> </ul>
<b>RED</b>	Food and drinks in the <b>RED</b> category are based on the ‘discretionary’ (sometimes food) choices, these should be consumed in small amounts occasionally: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High in saturated fats, added sugar and/or salt</li> <li>• High in energy (kilojoules)</li> <li>• Lacking in important nutrients such as fibre</li> </ul>

## Policy

HRH will ensure the availability and promotion of healthy and nutritious food and limit the availability of less nutritious options. This is in line with the Victorian Governments *Healthy Food Charter* and *Healthy Choices: policy directive for Victorian public health services* and the *Healthy Choices: food and drink classification guide*.

HRH will use the 'traffic light' system of food classification (**GREEN**, **AMBER**, **RED**) to clearly identify the nutritional value of the food and drinks, and support staff in making healthy food choices. All food and drinks provided by HRH will be assessed and visibly classified according to this system.

Food and drink standards for hospitals and health services
<p><b>Standard 1: Foods and drinks provided in retail outlets and vending machines.</b></p> <p>Hesse Rural Health does not have vending machines providing drinks and food, however staff purchase meals from the HRH kitchen, via the staff menu.</p>
<p><b>Standard 2: Catering provided by the organisation at meetings and events</b></p> <p>Healthy options are offered and encouraged in line with the Healthy Choices: healthy eating policy and catering guide for workplaces:</p> <p>The majority of food and drinks provided are <b>GREEN</b> <b>AMBER</b> food and drinks are provided in small quantities only No <b>RED</b> food and drinks are provided</p> <p>External user groups providing their own catering are strongly encouraged to provide food and drink choices, they will be provided with a copy of this policy and relevant links when they book a room.</p>
<p><b>Standard 3: Food and drink advertising, promotion and display</b></p> <p><b>GREEN</b> food and drinks are actively advertised and promoted, and predominantly displayed <b>AMBER</b> food and drinks may be advertised and promoted, but not at the expense of <b>GREEN</b> choices <b>RED</b> food and drinks are not advertised or promoted, or displayed in prominent areas</p> <p>In addition: The organisation's logo is not used alongside <b>RED</b> food and drink and associated brands <b>RED</b> food and drinks are not included in meal or point of sale promotions, for example meal deal, two-for-one deals, upsizing or supersizing <b>RED</b> food and drinks are provided in the smallest size available</p>
<p><b>Standard 4: Water</b></p> <p>Clean and safe tap water is readily available (for example, from drinking fountains and/or food outlet) in high traffic areas.</p>

<p><b>Catering (meetings, functions, workshops)</b></p>	<p>Catering will align with the Standard 2 of the <i>Food and Drink standards for hospitals and health services</i>, when ordering a meal from Catering staff are able to choose from a selection of <b>GREEN</b> and <b>AMBER</b> options:                      Majority of food and drinks available on the internal catering menu are <b>GREEN</b> choices (at least 50%)                      Majority of food and drinks ordered for catering from external catering menus are <b>GREEN</b> choices (at least 50%)                      No <b>RED</b> food and drinks choices are available for catering</p> <p>Where HRH uses an external company to provide catering for a HRH function, the company will be guided by HRH requests regarding food choices, as per this policy.</p> <p>For external agencies hiring a meeting room, they will be provided with this policy, encouraged to provide healthy catering and comply with the <i>Healthy Choices: food and drink classification guide</i> (Appendix 1).</p> <p><b>Note: all catering requests are required seven working days prior to the meeting/event to ensure all foods ordered are available.</b></p>
<p><b>Staff meals and snacks</b></p>	<p>Staff meals and snacks will align with Standard 1 of the <i>Food and Drink standards for hospitals and health services</i>:                      At least 50% of foods and drinks available are <b>GREEN</b>                      No more than 20% of foods available are <b>RED</b> and there will be no red drinks available</p>
<p><b>Drinks choices</b></p>	<p>Drink choices will align with Standard 4 of the <i>Food and Drink standards for hospitals and health services</i>:                      Water is freely available and promoted as drink of choice</p>
<p><b>Fundraising, prizes, giveaways</b></p>	<p>Fundraising activities promoting unhealthy foods and drinks (eg. chocolate or confectionary drive) shall not be permitted.</p> <p>Healthier options, or fundraising opportunities not related to foods and drinks are encouraged. For ideas the Cancer Council have a <a href="#">Healthy Fundraising</a> booklet that can be provided.</p>
<p><b>Infrastructure to support healthy food and drinks</b></p>	<p>Space is provided for staff to take meal breaks and facilities are available to allow healthy food to be prepared and stored.</p> <p>Onsite food and drink shall achieve at least 50 percent availability of 'green' and no more than 20 percent availability of 'red' food items and no availability of red drink items.</p>
<p><b>Information and education</b></p>	<p>Information and education opportunities are provided to employees through weekly staff newsletter, in-service education and notice boards</p>
<p><b>Communication and community engagement</b></p>	<p>Healthy eating and drinking are promoted to staff and the community via print and digital media.</p>

	This policy does not apply to unofficial social occasions where catering is provided by staff at no cost to the organisation (e.g. birthdays, staff farewells) although provision of healthy choices is encouraged.
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### Evaluation

Healthy Choices Audit using FoodChecker online tool  
 Monitoring of staff and visitor feedback  
 Review catering menu requests against the guideline

### Key Aligned Documents

[Staff Health and Wellbeing policy](#)

HRH Workplace Achievement Program  
 HRH Integrated Health Promotion Plan 2021-2025 (Action plan 2022)

### Key Legislation, Acts & Standards

[Nutrition standards for menu items in Victorian hospitals and residential aged care facilities](#)

Healthy Choices: policy directive for Victorian Public Health Services  
 Healthy Choices: healthy eating policy and catering guide for workplaces  
 Victorian public health and wellbeing plan 2019-2023

### References

Victorian State Government 2018 Healthy Choices: Policy guidelines for hospitals and health services  
 Healthy Choices: food and drink classification guide  
 Healthy Eating Advisory Service – Healthy Choices Guidelines  
 Seymour Health Healthy Eating and Catering Guideline

### Contributors

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### Approval

Committee name	Meeting date
Quality Leadership Committee	8 February 2022