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Case studies of actions from a whole-of-community systems approach to tackle childhood obesity in regional Victoria



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Background: Participatory community-based systems approaches allow a diverse range of community leaders and members to create a shared systems map reflecting their understanding of the drivers of an issue in their community; and consequently developing and resourcing their own strategies and actions to influence these factors in the context of existing systems.

Aim: This community-based systems approach is currently being implemented across the Great South Coast, regional Victoria. We will present case studies regarding some key actions in two communities, GenR8Change and SEA Change Portland.

Methods: Group Model Building (GMB) occurred and the creation of a systems map representing the key drivers of childhood obesity in the area. In the third GMB session, participants were asked to nominate which themed areas they were interested in being involved in. Subsequently, tasks teams met independently and mapped out actions.

Results: Community action includes focusing on changing policy, infrastructure, environmental surroundings, particular settings or community groups, behaviour change, education, events, sponsorship and community engagement activities.

Key case studies and the process of implementation in the community will be discussed including:

the creation of community policies such as a water only policy at the local basketball stadium, and leisure and aquatic centre; promotion of walking to school; healthy catering policies in work-places; healthy school lunch order policies; healthy beverage policy at family day cares. These policies are a sustainable way to improve the health of children and the wider community and have been driven by the community.

Conclusion: Community action that is identified, managed and delivered by community members provides a great model for ownership, empowerment and sustainability. Case studies will provide other communities knowledge about key actions to tackle childhood obesity. Evaluation data collected in 2019 will reveal the effectiveness of these actions on childhood obesity and related health and physical activity-related behaviours.

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Pricing Interventions to Promote Healthy Eating: Perceptions of Managers of Victorian Aquatic and Recreation Centres



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Background: Retailers have the capacity to improve the food and beverage environment by making healthier options more affordable and attractive for their consumers. One barrier to the implementation of effective health-promoting food and beverage pricing strategies is a lack of knowledge on retailers' perceptions of such pricing initiatives.

The aim of this study was to understand retailers' perceptions of factors that are relevant to feasible and acceptable health-promoting food and beverage pricing interventions.

Methods: A convenience sample of 11 aquatic and recreation centre managers in Victoria, Australia was recruited to participate in semi-structured interviews. We took a pragmatic approach with the aim of understanding retailers' perceptions of factors that affect the feasibility and acceptability of developing and implementing health-promoting food and beverage pricing interventions within their facilities. Thematic analysis was used to synthesise retailers' perceptions of pricing interventions.

Results: Key themes identified were: structural and organisational characteristics (both internal and external characteristics of aquatic and recreation centres), drivers of feasible pricing changes (type, magnitude and products targeted by pricing strategies) and business outcomes (profits and customer feedback).

Conclusions: Results suggest that pricing interventions to promote healthy food and beverage choices can be feasible and acceptable to retailers, though contextual considerations are likely to be important. Future studies should use these findings to design interventions most likely to be acceptable to retailers, work with retailers to implement health-promoting food and beverage pricing interventions, evaluate the impact on business outcomes including customer perspectives and profitability, and test transferability to other retail settings.

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