



Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

Health Promotion Annual Report 2021/22

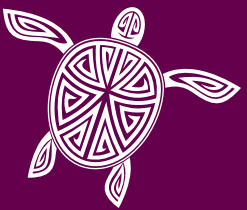




Acknowledgement of Country

We would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands which span across the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District. The Dharawal People to the north and the 13 clans of the Yuin Nation in the south.

We pay our respects to their elders past, present and emerging.



Who are we? and what do we do?

The Health Promotion Service (HPS) implements community initiatives to improve the health and wellbeing of people who live in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

We are an integral part of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) and assist to promote, protect and maintain the health of the community.

During 2021/22, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to bring many challenges but also opportunities for innovation in the delivery of our programs. Virtual delivery methods were adopted for some programs and the team supported the Public Health response to the pandemic with staff working across other services in the District.

While our roles have looked different this year, we are encouraged that building strong partnerships and community engagement remained at the core of our work.

The Health Promotion Service Strategic Plan lists the team's operational priorities and key projects for 2019-2022. It takes into consideration how Health Promotion achieves the goals of the ISLHD's Health Care Services Plan 2020-2030 and other related plans. This Annual Report highlights what the team achieved under our key priority areas of:



Early years



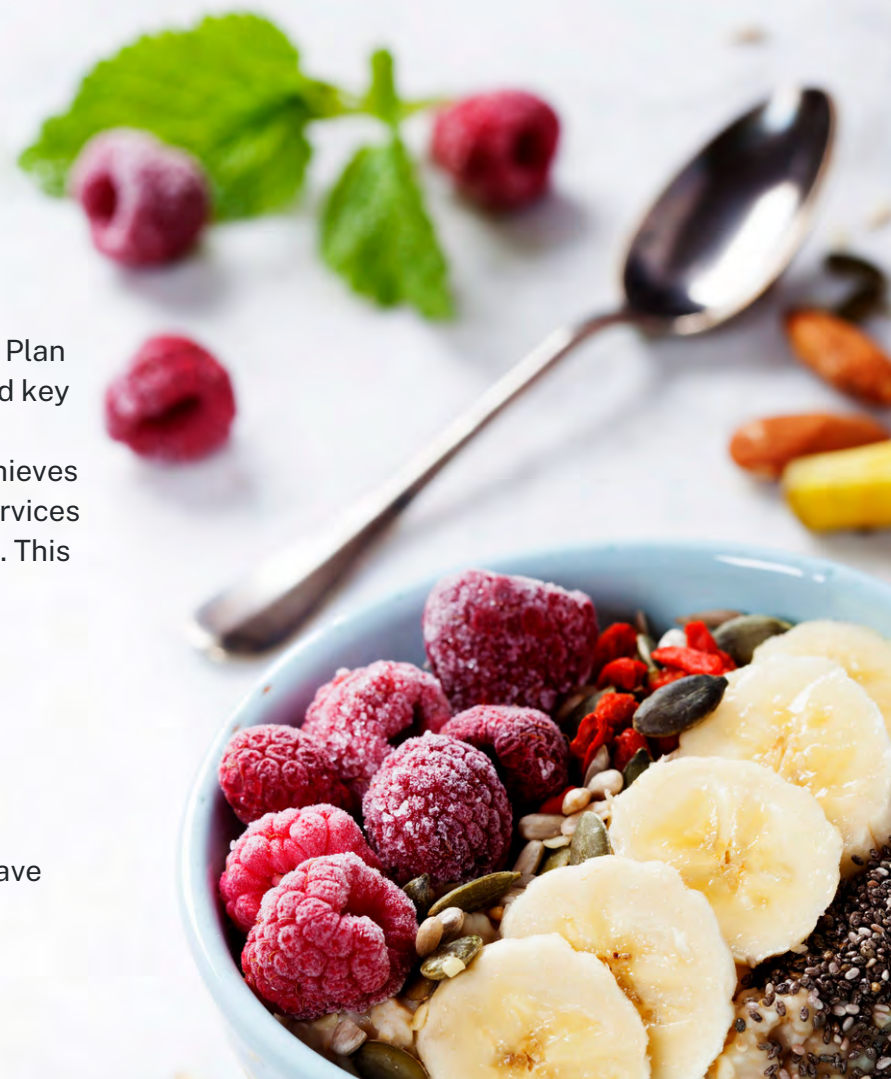
Modifiable risk factors



People who are vulnerable or have complex needs



Places and partnerships.



Roles during COVID

During 2021/2022, the Health Promotion Service had to pause face-to-face programs and support the COVID emergency response. Our team members were redeployed to support:

- Virtual Care Centre
- Wellbeing team
- COVID marketing & communication response
- Emergency food relief response
- Vaccination centres
- Contact tracing
- Public Health activities.



Early & School Years

- Supported the First 2000 Days framework through the development of communication material that supports key messages.
- Implemented state-wide programs that focus on healthy eating and physical activity into the curriculum and daily activities of early childhood services and primary schools across the District.
- Invested in new opportunities to reduce overweight and obesity rates of children in ISLHD.

Early Years

The **First 2000 Days** of a child's life (from conception to age 5) is directly linked to their development, their future health and educational outcomes. The Early Years Team collaborate with other health staff and stakeholders on various projects that support the implementation of the First 2000 Days strategy across Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

The team also leads the implementation of the **Munch & Move** program - a targeted program for the early childhood setting. It encourages and supports healthy choices through a supportive, health-promoting environment.

What did we do?

- Supported the implementation of the **First 2000 Days Framework** by communicating key messages to the community, providing professional development for key staff and stakeholders working with young children and their families, and delivering online education sessions for parents and carers.
- Provided guidance, support and resources to early childhood services to help them to provide a health promoting environment for their children and families through the **COVID pandemic**.
- Continued our work with the early childhood sector on the **Munch & Move** program by providing training and resources to educators and cooks to embed messages about healthy eating, daily physical activity, drinking water, limiting screen time and encouraging and supporting breastfeeding.

What did we achieve?



Our online webinars were attended by **252 staff**

from the Early Childhood, Health, Education and Community Services sectors. This included 32% of early childhood services and five of the seven Family Day Care schemes attending at least one session.



76 families

attended online parent-focused nutrition sessions.



We coordinated three Facebook groups for Early Childhood Educators, cooks and parents/carers reaching **949 members**.

This allowed us to deliver information, practical advice and ideas about healthy eating and physical activity.



"I found the online seminar really helpful...I was always worrying my son wasn't eating enough and compared him to other children but now I won't stress as much and focus more on providing variety rather than how much he eats."

- Growing Healthy Eaters attendee

School Years

The main focus of the School Years Team is to engage with primary schools to promote healthy eating and physical activity as part of a whole-of-school approach. We continue to make progress to engage with secondary schools.

Outside the school setting, the Health Promotion Service continues to implement **Go4Fun**; a program for children aged between 7 and 13 years who are above a healthy weight as well as manage the **Growth Assessment in Children** Initiative in partnership with clinical services.

What did we do?

- Provided virtual network meetings, regular communication and training to schools through the **H&PE Network**.
- Supported canteen managers to meet the **NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy**. This includes phone, email, face-to-face site visits and virtual networking meetings. We offered support through a closed Facebook group where updates, networking and tips were provided.
- Hosted two **Go4Fun** sessions and encouraged participation in Go4Fun online during COVID. We strengthened partnerships with school nurses, asthma educators and oral health staff to increase referrals.
- Delivered the **Can you Raise the Issue? Training** to increase skills and confidence of clinicians to implement brief interventions and referral support for families with children who are above a healthy weight.

What did we achieve?



256 canteen managers

continued to be supported through the pandemic via the Canteen Facebook group.



85% Go4Fun online participants

increased the number of days meeting the national Physical Activity Guidelines and reduced confectionary consumption.



Waist circumference of Go4Fun participants

reduced by 1.8cm.



83% of children

who attended an ISLHD Oral Health facility had a growth check completed. 64% across all District facilities.

A partnership with South Coast Aboriginal Medical Service was developed with plans to deliver Aboriginal Go4Fun in 2022-2023.



Modifiable risk factors

- Supported the key actions within the NSW Healthy Eating and Active Living Strategy.
- Increased the uptake of appropriate physical activity for falls prevention and active ageing for the older population.
- Supported the key health promotion actions within the NSW Tobacco Strategy.
- Creatively communicated health messages and engaged with the community to promote health and wellbeing.

Healthy adults

The Health Promotion Service runs programs for people to help them manage their chronic health conditions and to lessen the risk of them experiencing falls as they age.

Health Moves is a community-based physical activity and healthy living program for people either with, or at risk of developing chronic disease, to help self-manage their condition. It is run in partnership with Wollongong City Council, Kiama Municipal Council and Shoalhaven City Council.

Stepping On is a program for people over 65 designed to increase strength, improve balance, confidence and knowledge to prevent falls.

Healthy and Active for Life Online is an program for people over 60 to help with physical activity instruction and healthy lifestyle tips in their home environment. They receive a weekly phone call from a health coach.

What did we do?

- Face-to-face programs for **Stepping On** and **Health Moves** were not held during the 2021-22 stay-at-home orders. When classes resumed, participant numbers were decreased to align with COVID-safe practices.
- The **Health Moves** program was modified to support participants throughout the stay-at-home orders including at home programs and support phone calls.
- Additional **Healthy and Active Online programs** were run to address the need for online programs while the stay-at-home orders were in place.



73 people

participated in Health Moves programs across the District.



12 online programs

were run for Healthy and Active for Life Online with **193** participants.



10 programs

delivered for Stepping On with **85** participants completing five or more sessions.



The Get Healthy Service and Get Healthy in Pregnancy is a telephone health coaching and information service for adults 16 years and over in NSW. We encourage and promote health professional referrals to the service.



568 referrals
to the Get Healthy Service



454 referrals
to the Get Healthy in Pregnancy Service.

Tobacco and vaping

The Tobacco Team works with schools, community organisations and hospitality venues to address smoking and vaping within the community. Vaping is becoming increasingly problematic among young people so we have begun working with schools to educate and support teachers and school health nurses.

We also work with community service organisations and other ISLHD health services to create environments that protect the health of staff and clients and encourage people to quit smoking.

What did we do?

- **Signage** was developed for licensed pubs and clubs to advise people that vaping is not permitted in smoke-free areas. We worked with the ISLHD Public Health Unit and Liquor Accord to deliver this project.
- Conducted a wellbeing webinar as part of **World No Tobacco Day** to support ISLHD staff to quit.
- Partnered with the ISLHD Department of Anaesthetics on a study of perioperative smoking and quitting to inform ways forward with patients on **smoking cessation prior to surgery**.
- Partnered with the ISLHD Drug and Alcohol Service and Aboriginal Maternal Infant Child Health (AMICH) to reduce the number of **pregnant women who smoke**.
- Ran **Text2Quit** - a text messaging program to help people to quit.

What did we achieve?



102 teachers & youth workers

attended webinars on vaping and young people.



Presentation on vaping to 70 school students.



151 visits to pubs & clubs

to address vaping on premises and find out how signage was being used.



67 smokers

received texts as part of the Text2Quit program.

A pilot project was developed to address vaping among school students and young people. There has been an increase in requests from schools for support and information on the subject.

People who are vulnerable or have complex needs

- Invested in new opportunities to promote health to people living with mental health conditions, in particular physical activity, healthy eating and smoking.
- Promoted healthy lifestyles of people from culturally and linguistically-diverse communities including refugees.
- Collaborated with government and non-government agencies to address the health needs of underserved communities.



Vulnerable populations

The Health Promotion Service continued work in supporting and improving mental health in the community. This work was born out of diminishing mental health among the population following the first COVID wave in 2020.

We also work with community organisations to help address smoking and healthy lifestyle measures through **Stamp Out Smoking**. This project helps services to put systems in place to better monitor, manage, support and refer clients who smoke.

What did we do?

- Delivered webinars for **Protecting Mental Health** with the subjects on Tackling Tobacco, Sleep and Connecting with Nature.
- Worked with community organisations to help them implement physical activity, healthy eating and **smoking cessation support** programs within their service.
- Online sessions were delivered with **Mental Health inpatients** on smoking and vaping.
- Developed new partnerships with community service organisations through the **Stamp Out Smoking** project to help staff and clients quit.
- Regular **capacity building** and tobacco support were provided to: Hope Street Centre, Illawarra Koori Men's Group, CHAIN and Wollongong Youth Services.



What did we achieve?

3 webinars

from the Protecting Mental Health series were delivered to over **240** participants.



14 community

organisations implemented physical health and mental wellbeing initiatives supported by seed funding.



6 new partnerships

formed with Work Skills, Alesco, Flametree, Shellharbour Youth Network and Homelessness service in Nowra as part of the Stamp Out Smoking Project.



Coordination of the Stir it Up! program was handed over to Healthy Cities Illawarra after

12 years

with Health Promotion Service.



The team prepared detailed submissions to the four Councils in our District on a wide range of healthy built environment issues including climate change, Community Strategic Plans and Council policies impacting the health of the community.



9 submissions

on healthy built environment issues.

Research and evaluation

Over the past few years, the Health Promotion Service has worked closely with the University of Wollongong and the University of Sydney on a range of projects addressing childhood obesity, chronic disease and falls prevention.

Our Service is committed to ensuring our projects are evaluated and the findings are disseminated in peer-reviewed journals. We also explore opportunities for translating our findings into policy and practice.

We are a key partner on the Prevention Research Support Program (PRSP), a grant that was awarded in 2017 to Early Start at the University of Wollongong. We are involved in planning, implementation and evaluation of research activities under the PRSP project areas.

Current research

- **Prevention Research Support Program (PRSP).** A grant for this program was awarded in 2017 to Early Start at the University of Wollongong. We are a key partner and are involved in planning, implementation and evaluation of research activities under the PRSP project areas.
- **Evaluation of the Department of Education School-Based Physical Activity Intervention: Race Around Australia.** This project is being conducted under the PRSP grant.
- **Adventure & Veg text message and social media research study for families of primary-school aged children.** Funded by an IHMRI Clinical Translation Grant, in partnership with Early Start at University of Wollongong and the University of Sydney.
- **Effectiveness and acceptability of a text message intervention (DTEXT) on the health of people with type 2 diabetes.** Conducted with University of Sydney and funded under the Translational Research Grants Scheme (NSW Health).
- **Effectiveness of workshops to teach a home-based exercise program (BEST at Home) for preventing falls in older people.** Conducted with the University of Sydney and funded by a NH&MRC partnership grant.

Research & evaluation cont.

Conference presentations

- Woods A J, Probst Y C, Wardle K, **Norman J**, Ryan S T, Sutherland R, **Leedham M**, **Furber S**, Okely A D. (2022), 'Physical activity, sedentary behaviour and healthy eating environments in before-school services – an observational study', paper presented at the International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity, Phoenix, Arizona, USA, 18-21 May.
- **Bates A**, **Furber S**, Sherrington C, van den Dolder P, Ginn K, Bauman A, Howard K, **Kershaw M**, **Franco L**, Chittenden C, Tiedemann A. Effectiveness of workshops to teach a home-based exercise program for preventing falls in community dwelling people aged 65+: RCT. 22nd World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics IAGG June 2022.
- **Bates A**, **Furber S**, Sherrington C, Ginn K, van den Dolder P, Howard K, Bauman A, Chittenden C, **Franco L**, **Kershaw M**, Tiedemann A. Effect of a home-based exercise program on falls in community-dwelling older people. Presented at Australia and New Zealand Falls Prevention Conference, Auckland, New Zealand December 2021.

Grants

- Evaluating the effectiveness and feasibility of a Virtually enhanced Community Care model for Chronic Disease. 2021 ISLHD & IHMRI Collaborative Health Professional Research Grants. Investigators: Broyd S, Lambert K, Muir K L, Jones A, Samuel Sameh, **Furber S**. (\$27,508).
- The effect of a text message program (TEXT4HealthyHeart) on reducing overweight and obesity for people referred to the Shoalhaven Cardiac Rehabilitation Program. ISLHD Allied Health, Nursing & Midwifery Research Grants 2021. Investigators: Kandl B, Turner R, **Waller K**, Bauman A, Davies K, **Furber S**. (\$9,945.58).



Research & evaluation cont.

Publications

- **Bates A, Furber S**, Sherrington C, van den Dolder P, Ginn K, Bauman A, Howard K, **Kershaw M, Franco L**, Chittenden C and Tiedemann A. (2022), Effectiveness of workshops to teach a home-based exercise program (BEST at Home) for preventing falls in community-dwelling people aged 65 years and over: a pragmatic randomised controlled trial. BMC Geriatrics 22: 366.
- Crowe R, Probst Y, **Norman J, Furber S**, Stanley R, Ryan S, Beets M, Weaver R.G., Vuong C, Hammersley M, Wardle K, **Franco L**, Davis M, Innes-Hughes C, Okely A D. (2022). Foods and beverages provided in out of school hours care services: an observational study. BMC Public Health. DOI: 10.1186/s12889-022-12652-9
- Crowe R, Probst Y, Stanley R, Ryan S, Weaver R.G., Beets M, **Norman J, Furber S**, Vuong C, Hammersley M, Wardle K, **Franco L**, Davis M, Innes-Hughes C, Okely A D. (2021), Physical Activity in Out of School Hours Care: an observational study. International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. DOI: 10.1186/s12966-021-01197-6
- **Johnston R, Norman J, Furber S, Parkinson J.** (2021), The barriers and enablers to implementing the NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy in secondary schools in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven region: A qualitative study. Health Promotion Journal of Australia. DOI: 10.1002/hpja.528
- Kerr E, Kelly B, Hammersley M, Hernandez L, **Norman J, Furber S**, Vuong C, Ryan S, Wardle K, Okely A D. (2021), Foods provided to children in family day care: An observational study. Public Health Nutrition. DOI: 10.1017/S1368980021001506
- Kerr E, Kelly B, Hammersley M, **Norman J**, Hernandez L, **Furber S**, Vuong C, Wardle K, Ryan S, Okely A D. (2022), Assessment of feeding practices and mealtime environments in Australian family day care services: an observational study. Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior. DOI: 10.1016/j.jneb.2021.10.006
- Kerr E, Kelly B, **Norman J, Furber S**, Hernandez L, Hammersley M, Ryan S, **Franco L**, Vuong C, Okely A D. (2021), Nutrition, physical activity and screen time policies and practices in family day care in NSW. Public Health Research and Practice. DOI: 10.17061/phrp31342114
- Mead C, **Tindall R**, Charlton K. (2022), Evaluation of a nutrition education resource for refugees and newly arrived migrants to Australia. Health Promotion Journal of Australia. DOI: 10.1002/hpja.625
- **Norman J, Van Weerdenburg K, Furber S**, Stratten M, Okely A.D. (2022), A health and wellbeing program for preadolescents in underserved Australian communities: Child and stakeholder perspectives. Health Promotion International. DOI: 10.1093/heapro/daab065
- **Waller K, Furber S**, Bauman A, Allman-Farinelli M, van den Dolder P, Hayes A, Facci F, **Franco L**, Webb A, Moses R, Cook R, Gugusheff J, Owen K, Colagiuri, S. (2021), Effectiveness and acceptability of a text message intervention (DTEXT) on HbA1c and self-management for people with type 2 diabetes. A randomized controlled trial. Patient Education and Counselling 2021, 104:1736-1744.
- **Waller K, Furber S**, Cook R, Allman-Farinelli M, Colagiuri S, **Franco L**, Moses R, Webb A, Bauman A. (2021), Effectiveness and costs of strategies to recruit Australian adults with type 2 diabetes into a text message intervention (DTEXT) study. Public Health Res Pract. Online early publication. DOI: 10.17061/phrp31232113

Thank you to all our partners; including local councils, schools, early childhood centres, non-government organisations and community groups who partnered with us throughout 2021/22. Also, a big thank you to the wonderful people who participated in our activities, workshops and programs.

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

Health Promotion Service



ISLHD-HealthPromotion@health.nsw.gov.au



(02) 4221 6728

