

Response ID ANON-W7Q4-A616-H

Submitted to **Healthy Food and Drink Guidance survey**

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Introduction

1 Are you:

please select your role:

other (please specify)

please answer:

Public health unit

2 Do you have any comments on the purpose, scope and principles?

please answer:

We encourage broadening the policy scope to include:

- Strengthening the curriculum to improve students' knowledge and skills in healthier eating
- Sponsorships aligning with healthy eating
- Gifts and rewards, whether or not funded by the school as this is known to occur in many school settings. Rewards, such as chocolate and sweets, contribute to children developing food consumption patterns related to emotions and does not support child wellbeing.
- Fundraising, as this is an opportunity for schools to show leadership in this area. Chocolate, sweets and cakes have been part of our NZ fundraising culture for years but this is only adding negatively to a food environment which is already saturated with unhealthy food.
- Develop culture change within schools and ECE settings with supportive leadership and involvement of staff and students in healthier eating

Our most recent national children's survey was in 2002. Even at that time the following foods were being eaten weekly by almost half of all school children (5-14 years)

- 48% have sweets
- 83% have crisps
- 45% have soft drinks
- 45% have sausages

Therefore, what is served at the canteen, provided as a lunch order in primary school or on the early childhood menu is only a small part of the picture; rewards, fundraising, self-catered celebrations for students and staff, and even food brought from home and the community are part of the whole picture. A whole school environment approach is required to meet the outcomes of healthy growth and development of children, to optimise learning, and to support development of healthy eating habits.

3 Do you agree with the 3.5 HSR as the cut off to compare healthiness of food and drinks?

select one:

Yes

Do you have any comments?:

4 Do you have any suggestions to improve the nutrient criteria for fruit and vegetables?

please answer:

No.

5 Do you have any suggestions to improve the nutrient criteria for breads, cereals and grains?

please answer:

In the green category it should state wholemeal couscous, as couscous is in the amber category.

6 Do you have any suggestions to improve the nutrient criteria for milk and milk products?

please complete:

No.

7 Do you have any suggestions to improve the nutrient criteria for legumes, nuts, seeds, fish and other seafood, eggs, poultry and red meat?

please answer:

Nuts and seeds; larger size of 50g recommended

Some sausages should be included as amber category, ones with a high meat percentage >80% or with an HSR >3.5

8 Do you have any suggestions to improve the nutrient criteria for mixed meals/ready-to-eat and ready-to-heat meals?

please answer:

No.

9 Do you have any suggestions to improve the nutrient criteria for fats and oils, spreads, sauces, dressings and condiments?

please answer:

No.

10 Do you have any suggestions to improve the nutrient criteria for packaged snack foods?

please answer:

No.

11 Do you have any suggestions to improve the nutrient criteria for baked items?

please answer:

Pies should be included as a red category item, alongside sausage rolls.

12 Do you have any suggestions to improve the nutrient criteria for drinks?

please answer :

No.

13 What toolkit resources would be helpful to deliver healthy food and drinks?

please answer :

Translation of the high level guidance to a toolkit

A toolkit with resources and an implementation process in place will support schools with interpretation of the healthy food and drink guidance. This is particularly important given that the changes are voluntary, which affects peoples' motivation and ability to get on-board and engaged. Reflecting on the experience of the Heart Foundation in the education sector, most progress is made when changes are seen as achievable, and gradual and when support is provided.

For both schools and early learning services the following resources would support the translation and implementation on-the-ground of the guidance documents:

- An exemplar policy
- An exemplar menu plan
- An ingredients checklist
- A preparation and cooking methods checklist
- Food and recipe ideas
- Modifying recipes to align with the Guidance
- A simple list of commonly provided foods and which category they fit in
- Healthy fundraising ideas
- A list of food sponsorship agencies (eg kidscan) which aligns with the Guidance

Please refer to previous HEHA resources: Food and Beverage Catering Guide and Food and Nutrition for Healthy Confident Kids (HEHA) for examples of this. Best practice would be to pilot these exemplars in the Education Setting for feedback before publication and release.

The Ministry of Education should be able to support creating a toolkit and the implementation of the Guidance.

14 Do you have any further other comments?

Please respond :

We have been involved in the development of the National DHB Food and Drink Policy. We have also been at the coalface of implementing our regions 3DHB Healthy Food and Drink Guidelines with an 85% green and 15% amber requirement, this has similar category criteria to the national policy.

In reality this high percentage of green was not achievable in the DHB environment, we believe this will be similar in school and early childhood environments. This is due to the strict criteria particularly around mixed meals and sandwiches. For example, a sandwich with wholegrain bread, chicken, lettuce, tomato and mayo would be an amber item, due to the mayonnaise. A pasta salad containing 50% vegetables, some meat and white penne pasta would also be an amber item, due to the pasta.

Auckland DHB's have implemented most of the National DHB Food and Drink Policy, which is very similar to the guidance documents in education settings. Student dietitians have 'audited' the policy in the hospital setting. Julie Carter who leads this work is happy to share the databases, which show the challenge of meeting the policy requirements of 55% of products in the green category.

Regional Public Health's understanding from being involved in the National DHB Food and Drink Network and operationalising this policy, is that there is a significant risk that schools will disengage from the proposed guidance document due to the stringent requirements of requiring 75% of foods in the green category.

Regional Public Health recommends that the green percentage be set at 55% and amber at 45% to make the guidelines achievable for schools and early childhood settings. We also recommend when a percentage is determined, it is made explicit what this means. The 'eyeball' approach will not work from a monitoring/evaluation perspective. Percentage of the product range or shelf space is a more measurable description.