

Theme: Improving nutrition for all Aboriginal People in Western Australia.

Important note: The information set out below is a snapshot of the evidence to guide collaborative and cohesive discussions at the Obesity Advocacy Target Food Focus forum 2019. It is not intended to be a comprehensive and/or exhaustive review of the all the available evidence related to the topic.

Why are we worried?

- In WA, there is a 1.3x higher prevalence of obesity among Indigenous adults compared to non-Indigenous adults.ⁱ
- Only 8% of Indigenous Australians met Recommended Dietary Intake guideline for vegetables.ⁱⁱ
- Indigenous adults consume 50% more sugar than WHO recommendations.ⁱⁱⁱ
- We don't know what we don't know: there is a large data gap relating to Western Australian Indigenous nutrition.
- Poor diets are estimated to contribute to 19% of the Indigenous health gap in Australia.^{iv}
- Indigenous Australians experience a higher prevalence of morbidity and mortality from diet-related diseases (including obesity, cardiovascular disease and diabetes).^v

Areas for consideration

Rural and remote food security

- 25% of Australia's Indigenous people are located in very remote locations, and face food insecurity.^{vi}
 - Aboriginal people in remote areas are more likely to run out of food than those in non-remote areas.
 - In 2010, the cost of a healthy living basket was 23.5% higher in remote Indigenous communities compared to the Perth metropolitan area.
 - High food prices, poor quality and limited availability are mainly due to transport inefficiencies and freight costs.^{vii}

Income

- Due to lack of employment and adequate income, some Indigenous people do not have enough money to buy food. This is compounded by inappropriate expenditure on alcohol, tobacco, drugs and gambling.^{viii}

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What works?

- There is some evidence that educating Indigenous communities on nutrition can be an effective strategy, if combined with other strategies.^{ix}
- Community involvement in program initiation, design and implementation can help to create more effective programs.^x
- Can the community store serve as a health promoting environment?
 - Approximately 175 stores supply food in some of the 1187 discrete Indigenous communities in remote locations across Australia.^{xi}
 - Indigenous people in remote communities can purchase up to 80-95% of their food at the local remote community store and takeaway store.^{xii}
 - There is little understanding of health-promoting food pricing policies in remote stores.^{xiii}

Gaps for consideration

- The presence of public health nutritionists can help strengthen community stores' ability to improve supply of and demand for healthy food. However, there is a poor workforce capacity.^{xiv}
- There is a lack of evidence on: improving the participation of Indigenous people in the development and delivery of initiatives; which interventions are effective; capacity building projects.
- There is little data that speaks to the complex of Indigenous nutrition: many historical, socio-economic, environmental and geographical factors combine to contribute to poor diets.

Advocacy triggers

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References

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- ⁱ Lee a, Ride K (2018) [Review of nutrition among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.](#) Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet.
- ⁱⁱ Ibid.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.
- ^{iv} Ibid.
- ^v Ibid.
- ^{vi} Pollard, C., Nyaradi, A., Lester, M., Sauer, S. (2014) [Understanding food security issues in remote Western Australian Indigenous Communities](#), *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*, available online.
- ^{vii} Ibid
- ^{viii} Lee a, Ride K (2018) [Review of nutrition among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.](#) Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet.
- ^{ix} Schembri, L., et al. (2015) [The effect of nutrition education on nutrition-related health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: a systematic review.](#) *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 40(S1).
- ^x S Lee a, Ride K (2018) [Review of nutrition among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.](#) Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet.
- ^{xi} Ferguson, M., et al. (2018) [Health-Promoting Food Pricing Policies and Decision-Making in Very Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Stores in Australia](#) *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 15(2).
- ^{xii} Pollard, C., Nyaradi, A., Lester, M., Sauer, S. (2014) [Understanding food security issues in remote Western Australian Indigenous Communities](#), *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*, available online.
- ^{xiii} Ibid.
- ^{xiv} Schembri, L., et al. (2015) [The effect of nutrition education on nutrition-related health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: a systematic review.](#) *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 40(S1) .

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