

## Theme: Removing fast food sponsorship from all sport 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?

- Millions of people are exposed to advertisements for unhealthy foods.
  - Of food and beverage sponsors for junior sport development programs in Australia, **91% were classed as unhealthy**.<sup>i</sup>
  - **Over three-quarters of children aged 5-12** were able to **match an unhealthy sponsor with the relevant sport**.<sup>ii</sup>
- Sponsorship of peak sporting organisations in WA is widespread: it consists of a relatively high proportion of alcohol manufacturers and food companies.
- **50% of Western Australian adults** think that it is inappropriate to promote unhealthy foods at community events.<sup>iii</sup>

### Areas for Consideration

#### Regulation

- There is **no regulation** of sponsorship as a form of advertisement.
  - Sport sponsorship is not classified as a form of advertising under any broadcast codes of practice.
  - Current industry codes of practice are voluntary and self-regulatory.

#### The impact on children

- Children are particularly susceptible to sports sponsorship as a form of marketing:
  - 68% of children surveyed could recall sponsors of their sports clubs, and perceived these sponsors to be “cool”.<sup>iv</sup>
    - Many children had received a voucher or certificate from a food (86%) or beverage (76%) company to reward sports performance.
    - Around one third of children reported liking companies more after receiving these rewards.<sup>v</sup>
  - Boys were 65% more likely to choose an unhealthy food if it featured a sports celebrity endorsement.<sup>vi</sup>

#### Advocacy triggers

## What is being done in this space?

### In WA

- Healthway has a focus on increasing healthy sport sponsorship through:
  - Health promotion sponsorship grants.
    - Organisations who receive sponsorship must adhere to minimum requirements, including but not limited to: provision of healthy food and drink options; provision of free drinking water; alcohol and/or unhealthy food/drink must not be provided as prizes or awards<sup>vii</sup>
  - Healthy Sporting Club Program to support WA clubs to provide healthier menus at club-run canteens and kiosks.
- The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries has a Targeted Participation Program:
  - Provides funding for organisations to promote participation and active engagement of low-participation Western Australian communities in sport and active recreation. <sup>viii</sup>

### Examples from interstate

- 2007 VicHealth “Water in Sport” initiative<sup>ix</sup>
  - \$500,000 in funding for nine local councils to promote healthy drink options at sporting venues.
  - Targeting areas with high rates of obesity and sugary drink consumption.

## Gaps for Consideration

- How effective are the above initiatives? There is little in the way of evaluation.
- There are no rigorous studies evaluating the effectiveness of policy interventions organised through sporting organisations to increase healthy behaviours, attitudes, knowledge or the inclusion of health-oriented policies.<sup>x</sup>
- There is a gap in evidence relating to the sports setting as a food and health-promotion environment.
- There is little evidence relating to sports sponsorship using public health messaging, and its impact on consumer behaviour.
- There is little population-level evidence regarding the impact of fast food sponsorship in sport.

### Advocacy triggers

Media Advocacy | Political Advocacy | Coalition Building | Consensus Statements | Research & Translation | Policy and Regulation | Systems Advocacy

## References

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- <sup>i</sup> Watson, W. L., Brunner, R. , Wellard, L. and Hughes, C. (2016), [Sponsorship of junior sport development programs in Australia](#). Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, 40: 326-328.
- <sup>ii</sup> Bestman, A., et al. (2015) [Children’s implicit recall of junk food, alcohol and gambling sponsorship in Australian sport](#). *BMC Public Health*, 15, 1022.
- <sup>iii</sup> Tomlin, S., Radomiljac, A., and Kay, A. (2015) [Health and Wellbeing of Children in Western Australia 2014: Overview and Trends](#), Department of Health, Western Australia.
- <sup>iv</sup> Kelly, B., et al, (2011) [Food company sponsors are kind, generous and cool”: \(Mis\)conceptions of junior sports players](#) *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, 8:95
- <sup>v</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>vi</sup> VicHealth (201), *Sports start endorsement works a treat on junk food packaging* (website), accessed from < <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/media-releases/sports-start-endorsement-works-a-treat-on-junk-food-packaging>>
- <sup>vii</sup> Healthway WA (2017), *Health Promotion Sponsorship over \$5000, Sports, Art, Racing and Community Events, Sponsorship Guidelines*, accessed from < <https://www.healthway.wa.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/Over-5000-Sponsorship-Guidelines.pdf>>
- <sup>viii</sup> Government of Western Australia, Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (2017). *Targeted Participation Programme* accessed from < <https://www.dsr.wa.gov.au/funding/targeted-participation-program-funding-scheme>>
- <sup>ix</sup> VicHealth (2017), *Water in sport grants 2017-2020* (webpage), accessed from < <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/funding/water-in-sport-grants-2017-2020>>
- <sup>x</sup> Priest, N., Armstrong, R., Doyle, J., Waters, E. (2008) Policy interventions implemented through sporting organisations for promoting healthy behaviour change. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, DOI:10.1002/14651858.CD004809.pub3

## Advocacy triggers

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