

BENCHMARKING FOR HEALTHY STORES PROJECT NEWSLETTER 3 – DECEMBER 2022

WELCOME BACK!

We are pleased to bring you the third edition of the Benchmarking for Healthy Stores Project Newsletter. Once again, a lot has been achieved over the past few months and you can find out all about what's been happening below!

PROJECT PROGRESS

BENCHMARKING IN ACTION – REPORTS & FEEDBACK

The very first Benchmarking feedback reports were released to strategy stores and the nutritionists working with them in mid-November – hooray! Getting these reports out for the first time required a huge team effort involving our research team, data scientists, business analyst and graphic designer. Here's a sample of the main dashboard (using mock data):



This dashboard shows stores their own results on each of the 3 purchasing indicators (overall sugar sales, fruit and vegetable sales and healthy food/beverage sales), their Store Scout practice score and number of Policy Actions adopted. It also shows the store's overall ranking and the average score of all stores so they can see how their store is doing compared to other study stores, as well as 3 key strengths and 5 key opportunities for improvement.

Stores Nutritionists and Public Health Nutritionists from our partner organisations are now in the process of arranging meetings with store owners and/or managers to discuss the results of the Benchmarking assessment and co-design an action plan with the aim to improve their store's health practices. Implementation of each store's chosen actions will take place during 2023 with the support of their nutritionists prior to the data collection period in July-August.

2022 TASK GROUPS WRAP UP

You have heard in previous newsletters some of the incredible work our Benchmarking Co-design Task Groups have been doing, and with the end of 2022, we are wrapping up three of these groups as they have achieved what they set out to in co-designing our Benchmarking assessment tools for Policy, Practice, Purchasing and Environment.

It has been great to reflect on what has been achieved by our task groups over the year. Thanks to all who have contributed to a task group– the time and expertise you gave was invaluable in making all of this work possible.

POLICY-PRACTICE TASK GROUP KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

This task group put a huge amount of thought and discussion into updating the Store Scout App to assess store practice, with Version 2 released in July 2022 and used for Benchmarking baseline data collection. Updates to the app included:

- alignment of questions and actions with the Healthy Stores 2020 Policy Action Series
- clarification of existing questions and tooltips
- addition of new questions and actions in line with new evidence
- removal of nutrient criteria and inclusion of the Good Tucker App to simplify assessing healthier options; and
- development of a weighting system for scoring.



Special mention goes to Dr Meaghan Christian for facilitating the Store Scout App updates!

The Policy-Practice Task Group also helped to develop the Policy Action Progress Audit tool (based on the Healthy Stores 2020 Policy Action Series) to assess store nutrition policy. This included facilitating a world café session at the Benchmarking Co-Design Workshop in June to incorporate stakeholder feedback and creating a final e-survey in REDCap which was used for Benchmarking baseline data collection. Big thanks to Chief Investigator Dr Megan Ferguson for leading the Policy component!

PURCHASING TASK GROUP KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

This task group helped to develop the purchasing indicators and performance targets used to analyse store sales data for the Benchmarking assessment. This involved deciding on metrics to be used, how to visualise sales data most effectively, creating mock graphs and facilitating a world café session at the Benchmarking Co-Design Workshop in June to incorporate stakeholder feedback. The Purchasing indicators and targets determined (below) were used to analyse baseline sales data from 28 stores for Benchmarking reports.

Purchasing indicators	Performance targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % healthy/unhealthy food/drink purchases by weight • kg/\$10000 spend fruit and vegetable purchases • kg/\$10000 spend free sugar purchases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Health target (to meet evidence-based guidelines) • 2023 target (for store specific improvement)

A big shout out to Chief Investigator Dr Emma McMahon for leading the Purchasing Task Group!

ENVIRONMENT SCAN TASK GROUP KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

This task group helped develop the Environment Scan survey tool to assess environmental influences on store practice. This included qualitative analysis of all publicly available submissions from the 2020 Parliamentary Inquiry into Food Pricing and Food Security in Remote Indigenous Communities to identify key environmental factors influencing practice, as well as facilitating a world café session at the Benchmarking Co-Design Workshop in June to incorporate stakeholder feedback and creating a final e-survey in REDCap which was used for Benchmarking baseline data collection.

A manuscript on this survey development process has also been prepared for submission to Health and Place journal. Special thanks to Emma van Burgel and Molly Fairweather for doing the hard work here!

PROJECT BRANDING

You may have noticed our beautiful new newsletter header and the wonderful design of our Benchmarking reports which feature this stunning artwork created by Ngarrindjeri man Jordan Lovegrove of Karko Creations to represent the story of Benchmarking for Healthy Stores:

A First Nations Advisory Group was formed including project investigators and workshop participants from remote Aboriginal communities in the NT. The group were asked to describe the story of Benchmarking for Healthy Stores, what the project means to communities and different partners, related imagery, and locations involved. From these discussions the key themes were identified which informed the artwork.

The artwork features the three regions of the NT (Top-End, Katherine and Central Australia) represented by the 3 different coloured sections. The large central meeting place represents all of the remote stores. It is connected to all of the communities through pathways which are represented by the smaller meeting places. These meeting places are surrounded by different sized people to represent the diverse population that use and gather at these stores (including Elders, children, men and women).

Each region has their own traditional food such as turtle, kangaroo, fish, and bush berries. The various animal and food symbols represent good food/tucker. It doesn't matter where you are from, what community; if you are an Elder, child, man or woman; if you live in Saltwater, Freshwater or Desert country; everyone needs good tucker to stay healthy and strong. The store, along with traditional bush food is vital to health. This artwork connects everyone together.

A logo for the project has also been created using elements of this artwork:

You can now regularly enjoy this beautiful art across all of our project-related materials! Thanks once again to the First Nations Advisory Group who provided such valuable cultural guidance and feedback throughout the design process.



INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON OBESITY 2022

The International Congress on Obesity 2022 was held in Melbourne in October, which provided a welcome opportunity for some Benchmarking for Healthy Stores Chief Investigators, Associate Investigators and research team members to connect face-to-face after several years of virtual conferences! Project Lead A/Prof Julie Brimblecombe also presented on the Benchmarking Model as part of the Centre for Research Excellence in Food Retail Environments for Health (RE-FRESH) workshop.

WHAT'S NEXT?

PRICING TASK GROUP COMMENCING

In 2023, the Benchmarking assessment will include a Pricing indicator to benchmark stores on food pricing, based on The Healthy Diets Australian Standardised Affordability and Pricing protocol (Healthy Diets ASAP). Healthy Diets ASAP is a global, standardised approach to monitor price and affordability of 'healthy' and 'less healthy' foods, meals and diets and so can be used to compare food price and affordability across jurisdictions.

This data is planned to be collected alongside the scheduled biennial Northern Territory Market Basket Survey data collection. In collaboration with our research partners, University of Queensland and NT Department of Health, we will be commencing a Pricing Task Group to co-design the most effective methodology for collecting Healthy Diets ASAP and NT Market Basket Survey data in remote stores in the Northern Territory participating in the Benchmarking for Healthy Stores project.

We are seeking expressions of interest from any partners who would like to contribute to this work – please email Amanda.hill@monash.edu if you are keen!

FEASIBILITY INTERVIEWS

Feasibility Interviews are planned to commence in early 2023 with key players who have been involved in the Benchmarking process throughout 2022 (including store directors, store managers, area managers, stores nutritionists and public health nutritionists). If this includes you keep your eyes peeled for an invitation to participate which should be heading your way in the new year. This is your opportunity to share your experiences and perceptions of the benchmarking process, its impact on their practice, factors that helped or hindered implementation and whether the process was felt to be of benefit to your store or organisation. This will help to improve the Benchmarking process and provide valuable insights into considerations for potential long-term sustainability and future scale up.

WEBSITE UNDER DEVELOPMENT

We are in the process of developing a project website which will be a one-stop shop for everything Benchmarking related. The website is planned to be launched in 2023 – so watch this space!

UPCOMING PROJECT DATES

Activity	Date	Location
Benchmarking Action Plan implementation period (strategy stores)	January – June 2023	Remote NT
Economic Analysis 2-monthly Usual Practice (control stores) and Implementation (strategy stores) Nutritionist Resource Surveys	January – June 2023	e-survey
Benchmarking Co-Design Committee Meeting	February 16, 2023	Zoom
Feasibility Interviews (Timepoint 1 – Nutritionists, Store & Area Managers) (strategy stores)	February-April 2023	Phone/ Zoom
Benchmarking Co-Design Committee Meeting	April 13, 2023	Zoom
2023 Data Collection Training for Nutritionists (strategy & control stores)	June 16, 2023	Zoom
Benchmarking Co-Design Committee Meeting	June 8, 2023	Zoom
2023 Practice & Pricing in-store Data Collection (strategy & control stores)	July 3- September 1, 2023	Remote NT
2023 Policy & Environment Survey Data Collection (strategy stores)	July 3- September 1, 2023	e-survey
Feasibility Interviews (Timepoint 1- Store Directors) (strategy stores)	July 3- September 1, 2023	Remote NT
Economic Analysis Data Collection Nutritionist Resource Surveys (strategy & control stores)	July 3- September 1, 2023	e-survey
Deadline for Store Sales Data to be received (strategy & control stores)	July 14, 2023	Web upload/ email

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to our: Partner organisations- Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation, Katherine West Health Board Aboriginal Corporation, Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation, NT Health - Central Australia & Top End regions, and Outback Stores.

Chief Investigators- Assoc Prof Julie Brimblecombe (Monash University), Dr Emma McMahon (Menzies School of Health Research), Dr Leisa McCarthy (Menzies School of Health Research), Dr Megan Ferguson (The University of Queensland), Prof Bronwyn Fredericks (The University of Queensland), Ms. Nicole Turner (Indigenous Allied Health Australia), Prof Amanda Lee (The University of Queensland), Prof Joanna Batstone (Monash University), Assoc Prof Christina Pollard (Curtin University), Prof Louise Maple-Brown (Menzies School of Health Research).

Associate Investigators- Ms. Khia De Silva (Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation), Dr. Simone Nalatu (Health and Wellbeing Queensland), Mr. Adam Barnes (NT Department of Health), Ms. Clare Brown (Apunipima Cape York Health Council), Mr. Eddie Miles (Menzies School of Health Research), Prof Ross Bailie (University of Sydney), Prof Marjory Moodie (Deakin University), Prof Anna Peeters (Deakin University), Assoc Prof Gary Sacks (Deakin University).

INTRODUCING...

This time, we're introducing some of our amazing partner organisation dietitians and nutritionists who have had such valuable input to the project, from co-design to data collection and now feedback/action planning with strategy stores.

PROJECT PARTNER (KATHERINE WEST HEALTH BOARD) – SALLY TSEKOURAS

Sally is the Food Supply Nutritionist at Katherine West Health Board Aboriginal Corporation, where she has worked in public health for 8 years. Sally was born in Katherine in the Northern Territory, so it has always been her home. She loves the laid-back lifestyle of the NT where she is always meeting new people, hearing their stories and sharing hers. She enjoys remote work as it brings something different every day, and she is able to watch the incredible change in the landscape from dry to wet season. In particular she loves working with mums and babies on their breastfeeding journey, which led her to study Breastfeeding and Lactation management.

What's your hidden talent? Competitive horse riding. I have been riding since I was 7 years old. I also do in-hand showing of my Clydesdale Bessie who has been winning Champion Heavy horse for many years now. I am competing in dressage now however I would like to make more time to ride as I have slowed down after having a family.

What's your career highlight? Being a part of store research like the Benchmarking for Healthy Stores project with Monash University.

What's your most memorable meal? Magpie goose. I lived in Jabiru as a child. My dad was a ranger, so all the bush rangers used to cook magpie goose every season. I remember sitting and watching the plucking and disliking the smell.



Sally with her eldest daughter Athena (who is now 4 years old!)

PROJECT PARTNER (MIWATJ HEALTH) – REBEKAH CLANCY



Bek first set foot in the NT in 2018 for a child nutrition job. She was based in far north SA in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands, but with regular travel to the head office in Alice Springs. After a mini nutrition career break working in a playgroup, she ended up in Darwin in 2021. She is currently working at Miwatj Health implementing their first Food Security and Nutrition Strategy and taking on the role of Nutrition Team Lead. She loves the variety that comes with the role and the opportunities to learn about traditional Yolngu foods and food systems. Bek's dad is an agronomist, and he would always bring home fresh, delicious produce and stories of farmers. If she was lucky enough to tag along, they would have snacks fresh from the paddock, which played huge role in sparking her interest in food and food systems.

What's your hidden talent? I can touch my thumb to my forearm on the same side. Not sure if it's a talent or a concern!

What's your career highlight? It's more a collection of 'pinch me' and 'as if I get to do this for work' moments... Usually during a trip on country with beautiful landscape and food alongside learning more about Anangu and Yolngu cultures.

What's your most memorable meal? I always come back to a random tomato and egg fried rice dish I made with two friends I lived with in Malawi. We didn't have much spare cash, had to lug our groceries 5km up a hill and had a limited repertoire of recipes between us. This creation became a regular meal. One burner on our stove worked and only on high. It always made crispy rice at the bottom of the pot which we would share as an entree to our weird fried rice. I've tried to make it since and I think the magic was absolutely in the moment and company!

PROJECT PARTNER (NT HEALTH CENTRAL AUSTRALIA REGION) – DANIEL SHYHUN

Dan moved from South East Queensland to Alice Springs almost 3 years ago for work and adventure. During this time he has remained in the NT Health Central Australia Primary and Public Health Care Outreach team in various roles including Public Health Dietitian, Acting Outreach Manager, Health Lead in COVID-19 Rapid Response Teams, and currently he is in a split Senior Health Promotion Planning and Evaluation Officer/Public Health Dietitian role. His favourite things about his job are the breath-taking Central Australian landscapes and being able to share his knowledge with Aboriginal people, while being fortunate enough for Aboriginal people to share their culture and knowledge with him.

What's your hidden talent? According to my twin 9-year-old boys I am the 'best dad in the world' and 'the most annoying dad in the world'. The funny thing is, I'm proud of both achievements!

What's your career highlight? Moving to the Northern Territory and having the privilege to work closely with Aboriginal people.

What's your most memorable meal? When we travelled through Thailand in 2007 I had the most delicious Thai Green Curry Fried Rice dish during our stay in the Krabi Province. I just love that we stumbled upon a home cook serving meals from the basement of their house.



Finding bush tucker in Purnululu National