

eviDent's Health Promoting Practices (HPP) Project

Despite significant gains in life expectancy and many areas of health risk, in Australia and internationally, the growing burden of chronic, non-communicable disease has become a critical issue for health systems, governments and the community. Diets heavy with unhealthy foods (high-fat, high sugar, high salt), physical inactivity and sedentary behaviour, the prolonged burden of tobacco-related disease, and harmful alcohol consumption are common characteristics of high and middle income countries and are therefore common risk factors targeted in health promotion campaigns.

Unhealthy diets and low levels of physical activity continue to contribute to the growing obesity epidemic. Australia has one of the highest rates of obesity, with approximately 62.8% of Australian adults being overweight or obese (up from 56.3% in 1995).

During 2011-2012, adults spent an average of just over 30 minutes per day doing physical activity. However, against the National Physical Activity Guidelines for adults "to do at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on most days", only 43% of adults actually met the "sufficiently active" threshold. Regular physical activity has the ability to reduce the risk of several major chronic diseases, as well as promote quality of life and a sense of wellbeing.

Tobacco smoking is recognised as one of the largest preventable causes of death and disease in Australia. Although smoking rates have halved since 1980, and have dropped to 13.3% in Victoria, there is still more work to do in assisting smokers to quit. A study undertaken in 2008 showed that tobacco is responsible for more than \$31 billion a year in costs to the Australian community.

Data from the Australian Health Survey 2011-13 showed that 19.5% of adults consumed more than two standard drinks per day on average, exceeding the 2009 National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Guideline for lifetime risk of harm.

The harmful consumption of alcohol has both short-term and long-term health effects. In the short term, the effects are mainly related to injury of the drinker or others affected by the drinker's behaviour. Over the longer term, harmful drinking is associated with alcohol dependence and other chronic conditions, such as high blood pressure, cardiovascular diseases, cirrhosis of the liver, types of dementia, mental health problems, and various cancers.

eviDent's Health Promoting Practices (HPP) Project aimed to assess whether the implementation of the HPP pilot project contributes to positive behaviour changes:

- for practitioners in relation to the delivery of health promoting messages; and
- for patients in relation to healthy eating, physical activity, alcohol consumption and tobacco use.

eviDent's Chief Investigator, Dr Melanie Hayes, will report on findings from this project at the 95th International Association for Dental Research Meeting in San Francisco, 22-25 March 2017.



Donate to help promote the prevention and control of dental and oral diseases!

We invite you to make your donation to the eviDent Foundation using the donation form from www.evident.net.au > Donate to the eviDent Foundation

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible. Most people who make donations to deductible gift recipients see a tax benefit in their return.

The Australian Taxation Office has endorsed the eviDent Foundation ABN 81 152 078 487 as a Health Promotion Charity and as a Deductible Gift Recipient. eviDent's fundraiser registration number is 11984.15 (valid 6 June 2015 to 5 June 2018).

