

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

2017 NSW RURAL HEALTH AND RESEARCH CONGRESS

27 – 29 SEPTEMBER 2017, WAGGA WAGGA

PLEASE DO NOT EXCEED 350 WORDS

Concurrent Stream: *Choose the most relevant from I) to IV) provided on the abstract submission form*

ii) Healthy Rural Communities (equity and access to health care, primary health care, health promotion and prevention, integrated health services)

Keywords: *Choose one or two from the list of keywords provided on the abstract submission form*

1. National Health Priority Areas (Cancer control, Cardiovascular health, Injury prevention and control, Mental health, Diabetes mellitus, Asthma, Arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions, Obesity, Dementia)

Abstract Title: *Short one sentence title please*

Scale up of a multi-strategic intervention to increase implementation of a mandatory state-based healthy canteen policy across both urban and rural schools.

Author/s: *Authors' first and last name with presenting author in bold. Primary position title (one only) and organisation including city, state, and country. Do not include degrees or professional titles (eg Dr, Prof, etc).*

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Background: *Describe the identified issue/problem and its relevance to rural health in your setting. Spell out acronyms in full the first time they appear.*

Interventions to improve the dietary intake of children have been recommended as a key strategy for reducing the burden from chronic diseases. Accordingly, school healthy eating

policies have been introduced in all Australian jurisdictions. Despite their popularity, implementation of such policies is poor, particularly in rural schools where distance and cost of accessing healthier food have been reported barriers. A small number of trials have identified strategies that improve compliance with such policies. However, as these studies have not been conducted at scale, the effectiveness of, and the ability to deliver these strategies across a large number of schools including those in rural regions is unknown. The aim of this study is to assess the effectiveness of an intervention to support implementation, at scale, of a healthy canteen policy in Australian urban and rural primary schools.

Approach: *What methods / strategies were used to address the problem?*

A non-controlled before and after study involving a multi-strategic intervention to support school implementation of a healthy canteen policy was delivered over a nine month period to 173 primary schools located in the Hunter New England region of New South Wales, Australia. Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory was chosen to guide the development of intervention strategies adapted from a previous successful randomised control trial. The RE-AIM evaluation model was used to assess the impact of the intervention. The primary trial outcome was compliance with the state-based healthy canteen policy, measured through menu audits.

Outcomes / Results: *Provide evidence of the impact of your project/research. What was achieved? If research, what were the results?*

Of the 173 schools eligible to participate in the study, 40% (n=69) were located in rural Local Government Areas. Thirty five percent (55/157) of all schools at follow-up compared to 17% (29/168) at baseline (OR= 2.7 (1.6-4.7), p=0.0003) had menus compliant with the state healthy canteen policy, with similar increases in prevalence between urban schools (17% to 30%) and rural schools (17% to 43%).

Take Home Message: *How*

(words exceed 350 word count from this point)