

# Victorian Healthy Supermarkets project summary

In 2015, under a Vichealth innovation research grant, an 18-month research project was conducted to determine if health promotion marketing techniques geared towards healthy choices in a supermarket setting could in fact benefit communities by increasing healthy food consumptions by consumers. This project was done in collaboration with Bendigo Council, Deakin University, the Champions IGA chain and VicHealth using 7 stores (3 intervention and 4 control).

## Opportunity

This project opportunity presented itself through existing relationships between the City of Greater Bendigo and Champions IGA. After discussions around the implementation of Healthy Choices in the Stadium café, key staff from the City of Greater Bendigo and Brendon Goddard, a board member of the Stadium and Executive Chairman of Champions IGA, recognised the opportunity for this project to have further community reach by offering more healthy choices within local IGA stores. The City of Greater Bendigo was a Healthy Together Victoria site meaning that the project aligned closely with council priorities.

## FACTS

- 63% food spending occurs in supermarkets
- Marketing techniques have been determined to influence consumer choice
- Australia 2<sup>nd</sup> most unhealthy country when it comes to healthy food options/marketing within a supermarket setting (in a study of 8 “Western” style countries)
- Displays at end of aisles are a key driver of sales. Checkout and island bin displays are also a common site for promotion of discretionary food
- Shelf space of unhealthy foods related to SES in Victorian study
- International study showed larger supermarkets related to higher national obesity prevalence

This **collaboration** used a **collective impact** model approach, utilising multiple organisations to participate in the project who had a:

1. **Common agenda**- shared understanding, joint approach same goal
2. **Backbone support**- skill specific staff, participate throughout entire project
3. **Shared measurement**- consistency, accountability

## Key partners:

- 1) Champions IGA, 2) City of Greater Bendigo, 3) Deakin University Global Obesity Centre and 4) VicHealth

## Measurable Outcomes

- Data- sales
- Data-customer perception
- Process evaluation with interviews

## Nudges (6-week baseline, 8-week nudge)

### 1. Healthier displays at end of aisle bins

-Weekly display planning meetings

*Demonstrated change in back-of-aisle displays and island bin displays, but not front-of-aisle displays*

*No impact on sales due to lack of change at front of aisle*

### 2. Health star rating shelf tags on all products rated 4.5 to 5 star (similar to specials tickets)

-Plus, Posters in fruit and veg section

*12% increase in sales of 4.5/5 star rated products 6.3% increase in profit*

### 3. Custom Healthy choices signage

-Trolleys, baskets, floor

*Positive customer feedback Core foods increased 0.5% and discretionary decreased 0.9%*

**Challenges:** sceptics, profitability, contracts, brief meetings and comms

## At what cost?

“Promotion is different to choice”

## Keys to success

- Don't demand too much
- Provide support
- Understanding of business
- Develop strong relationships
- Use partnerships/stakeholders that can collaborate

**Phase 2-** 9 month randomised controlled trial of a packaged intervention incorporating strategies used in pilot trials, plus in-store and local area promotion (flyers, posters, banners, t-shirt's, media, social media) in 11 IGA stores throughout regional Victoria commencing in May 2017.

Launched 12/5/2017 – see

<http://www.bendigoadvertiser.com.au/story/4656869/healthy-eating-in-the-spotlight-at-iga/>

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/national/geelong-supermarkets-take-part-in-deakin-university-research-trial/news-story/025ff468cd9b4702b6c1bab8f5f6d846>

<http://invenio.deakin.edu.au/positive-spin-on-power-of-persuasion/>