

Concurrent Session 3: Joint NSA/ANTF Session: Nutrition and Aboriginal Health

The Remote Indigenous Stores and Takeaways (RIST) resources

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The Remote Indigenous Stores and Takeaways (RIST) project was a collaboration of the Australian Government and governments of Queensland, Northern Territory, Western Australia, South Australia and New South Wales. Aligned with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2000-2010, the project aimed to improve access to healthy food in remote Indigenous communities. Access to affordable, healthy foods including fruit and vegetables, is essential for healthy growth and development in early life, and for the prevention and management of chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and obesity, all of which are particular problems for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

One outcome of RIST is a set of guidelines and tools for use by store and take-away managers and the nutritionists who work with them. These resources promote access to healthy foods and discourage the promotion of energy dense/nutrient poor food and drinks. The resources have been piloted in seven remote communities. Distribution, training, promotion and evaluation is being coordinated within each jurisdiction.

The RIST resources include: Guidelines for stocking healthy food in remote community stores, Fruit and vegetable quantity spreadsheet, Marketing ideas for healthy food in remote community stores, Healthy fast food, The freight improvement toolkit, Checklists for the store and takeaway, Maximising the shelf life of fruit and vegetables, Keeping track of healthy food - a store food sales monitoring tool and the Heart Foundation buyer's guide.

To download all of the RIST resources, visit

http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/html/html_community/nutrition_community/resources/nutrition_rist.htm

The “no share” card: how does a budgeting tool to address food insecurity for Aboriginal people in remote Australia impact on purchasing patterns and customer satisfaction?

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Background – Food security exists “when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”. Aboriginal people particularly in remote communities do not have equal opportunities to access sufficient resources to obtain appropriate foods for a nutritious diet and the reasons for this are many-fold. In 2007, the Arnhem Land Progress Association (ALPA) developed an electronic food card that allowed money to be voluntarily placed on a user's card to purchase food and other household items deemed essential. Between October '07 to March '08, this food card was trialled in a community in North East Arnhem land before then becoming the vehicle (in all of the ALPA member and consultancy stores) for mandatory income management under the Australian Government Northern Territory Emergency Response.

Objectives – This paper reports the findings of a study to evaluate the impact of the “food card” on purchasing patterns in four communities in Northern Australia and perceived customer satisfaction. It provides the first quantitative preliminary analysis of the impact of income management on store sales and qualitative assessment of people's experiences of income management in first language.

Design – This study was undertaken in partnership with an Aboriginal research group in one of the study communities. Electronic point of sale data (including sales and turnover of food items) from four participating ALPA stores was collected in monthly batches for the period October '06 to June '08 and imported into a Microsoft Access database. Linear regression was applied to determine differences in foods sold during the trial and income management periods in the study communities compared to the period of no intervention. Qualitative data was collected through interviews and family group discussions with FOODcard users and key stakeholders using Yolngu research methods and processes.

Conclusions – The outcomes and conclusions from this study will be presented.