

Food security and eating well for all in Victoria

B Wood, B Swinburn, C Burns

School of Health Sciences, Deakin University, Melbourne, VIC 3125

Background - Eat Well Australia (1) has recognised many of the initiatives required to address food insecurity in urban as well as rural and remote locations.

Objective - To evaluate and identify sustainable programs to improve urban food security in two local government areas.

Design - The evaluation was conducted across Demonstration Projects over 18 months in the inner urban Cities of Yarra and Maribyrnong (2). Logical Framework Analysis and a number of checklists and tools were applied, including cluster analysis. Evaluation criteria included increasing community capacity, specified reach and quality for interventions, policy and organisational change specified, sustainability and transferability.

Results - Five intervention strategy themes were identified across both Projects: local government food security policies; garden programs; local food access programs; local meals access programs, and; emergency food relief programs. Evaluation identified the qualities of each strategy in both Projects, and provided a conceptual model for improving food security.

Conclusions - Primary health care and community services and agencies offer the best opportunities for strategies with vulnerable groups at risk of individual food security. Local Government area Public Health Plans offer major settings for improving community food security and whole of population strategies. State Government policy framework is required to support these settings state-wide and food security for all.

1. SIGNAL. Eat Well Australia: An Agenda for action for Public Health Nutrition 2000-2010; 2000.
2. Wood B, Swinburn B, Burns C. Multi-Site Evaluation Food Insecurity Community Demonstration Projects. Final Report. Volume One. Burwood, Victoria: School of Health Sciences, Deakin University; 2003.