



# **National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nutrition Strategy and Action Plan (NATSINSAP)**

## **Quarterly Update**

April 2008

**Welcome to first edition for 2008 of the NATSINSAP Quarterly Update which is designed to inform progress towards implementing the NATSINSAP project at both national and state/territory level. The update is for all people across sectors with an interest in improving health and nutrition.**

**Please feel free to forward this update through your relevant networks**

### **A brief history**

The NATSINSAP 2000-2010 is a nationally agreed framework for action to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health through better nutrition. The NATSINSAP is separate though aligned to *Eat Well Australia- an Agenda for Action for Public Health Nutrition 2000-2010*.

To download a copy of the NATSINSAP visit

<http://www.nphp.gov.au/publications/signal/natsinsa1.pdf>.

To progress implementation, a NATSINSAP national project officer position is hosted by the Heart Foundation and funded by the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (OATSIH). This position works under the guidance of a national Steering committee and Reference group.

**An overview and update of recent action under agreed priority areas of the NATSINSAP is described below:**

### **Communicating and disseminating 'good practice'**

***Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet***- a comprehensive nutrition section is now live on the Australian Indigenous Health InfoNet, the widely recognised internet resource on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. This initiative has been funded by OATSIH in partnership with contributions from State Departments of Health from NSW, WA, SA and Tasmania and is managed by Edith Cowan University.

The Nutrition section was launched in March 2008 and provides a range of current policies, programs, resources and links to Indigenous nutrition programs across Australia. Further 'good practice' programs and resources will be added over time. There is also the option of joining the nutrition 'yarning place' and 'e-message stick' (list serve) to support online yarning and networking across different sectors, organisations and locations around the country. As well as enabling people to network electronically, the yarning place encourages people to share details about



their programs, projects, reports and resources. Membership is free; simply log onto [www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/nutrition](http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/nutrition)

- **National Nutrition Networks Conference 2008**- the conference held in Alice Springs was a great success with around 200 participants; Indigenous presenters from the Torres Strait to Tasmania; a host of workshops and a lively social program. Tom Calma, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner set the scene providing an inspiring address on a human rights based approach to Indigenous Australians and nutrition. There was an enthusiastic response to the conference 'recommendations process'; the first time this has been trialed at a Nutrition Networks conference. More than 80 recommendations were submitted. These were further summarised into a set of priority recommendations by the Conference Recommendations Committee. The recommendations will inform ongoing work from the NATSINSAP; the Close the Gap and various other bodies and forums.

There was significant media interest with more than forty interviews including Fran Kelly Breakfast- ABC Radio National, CAAMA radio and considerable interest from ABC regional radio as far as Broome, Cairns, Canberra and Adelaide.

You can download **conference abstracts, presentations** and the **conference recommendations** by visiting the Indigenous Health InfoNet <http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/nutrition>

## **NATSINSAP promotion, stakeholder engagement and strategic alliances**

- **Close the Gap- National Indigenous Health Equality summit- March 18-20<sup>th</sup> 2008**

*'Our challenge for the future is to embrace a new partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. The core of this partnership for the future is closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians on life expectancy, educational achievement and employment opportunities. This new partnership on closing the gap will set concrete targets for the future: within a decade to halve the widening gap in literacy, numeracy and employment outcomes and opportunities for Indigenous children, within a decade to halve the appalling gap in infant mortality rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children and, within a generation, to close the equally appalling 17-year life gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous when it comes to overall life expectancy.*

**Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples, 13 February 2008**

The NATSINSAP project officer was included among more than 100 representatives from peak Indigenous and mainstream health bodies, non-government organisations and the reconciliation movement which met together with the Australian Government at the National Indigenous Health Equality Summit from 18-20 March in Canberra. The Summit was led by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, Tom Calma and organised through the 'Close the Gap' campaign which involves more than 40 organisations.



The first 2 days were dedicated to developing targets and benchmarks for achieving health equality. Professor Kerin O’Dea presented on behalf of nutrition and set the scene for the inclusion of key nutrition targets focusing on ‘early life’ and ‘subsidisation of the healthy food basket’. The summit culminated in a public event at the Great Hall of Parliament House with the Minister for Health and Ageing, other members of the government and Opposition, as well as Olympians Catherine Freeman and Ian Thorpe.

The Statement of Intent is available online at [http://www.humanrights.gov.au/social\\_justice/health/statement\\_intent.html](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/social_justice/health/statement_intent.html) .

- **DAA/PHA Food Security paper**  
The NATSINSAP Project Officer has continued to contribute to the combined DAA and PHAA policy and position statement on ‘Food Security and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’. Further work is being done to align the paper with the NATSINSAP, and to more clearly define the purpose and intent of the paper, and align with recommendations arising from the Nutrition Networks conference. Consultation with Indigenous people will also take place.

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nutrition workforce**

- **Development of ‘nutrition support materials’ for the Primary Health Care qualification** - Jan Lewis, Nutritionist who worked previously in WA on the Healthy Tucker Resources has now been contracted by the Industry Skills Council to undertake this work which is underway currently.

### **Food supply in remote and rural communities**

- **NATSINSAP submission to the ACCC Grocery Inquiry**  
Thank you to those who contributed comments to the NATSINSAP submission to the ACCC (Australian Competition and Consumer Commission) Grocery Prices inquiry. The NATSINSAP submission focused on the key issues of food security in remote and urban areas, and food supply in remote and rural communities. Recommendations arising from the recent National Nutrition Networks conference, such as mechanisms for monitoring of food security issues, national market basket surveys and provision of subsidies for basic foods including fresh fruit and vegetables were highlighted in the submission.
- **Remote Indigenous Stores and Takeaway project (RIST)**  
The RIST project was officially launched at the Nutrition Networks Conference in March and key RIST resources are now available to download at <http://www.healthinonet.ecu.edu.au/nutrition> Each State and Territory jurisdiction engaged in this work have separate plans for integrating and disseminating the resources within existing networks- stay tuned.

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 Takeaways
- Maximising the Shelf Life of fruit and vegetables



- Keeping track of Healthy Food - a Store Food Sales Monitoring Tool
- The **Heart Foundation Buyers Guide for Store Managers**- this project was undertaken by the Heart Foundation TICK program under the guidance of the RIST Steering committee is near completion and due to be available in the next few weeks. Distribution will be managed by the Heart Foundation.

### Family focused maternal & child nutrition

- **National review of the Community Services Training Package CHCO2**- On behalf of the NATSINSAP a submission was prepared on Draft 11 of the Community Services Training Package CHC02 . Of particular interest within this package is the review of the Children's Services qualification which includes accredited courses for child care workers, family day care workers and playgroup supervisors. Given the expansion of Indigenous children's services they are key settings to promote access to nutritious food as well as opportunities for skill development and learning for staff, caregivers and children. For further information about this process visit [www.cshisc.com.au](http://www.cshisc.com.au)

### NATSINSAP Project Officer Position update

- Welcome to Judith Myers (3 days spread over Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday) who is now job sharing the NATSINSAP project officer position with Sharon Laurence (Tuesday, Thursdays). Judith will be broadly responsible for the 'Maternal and Child nutrition' & 'Communicating Good Practice' action area, while Sharon will retain responsibility for 'Food Supply' and 'Workforce' area.

**If you wish to contribute information to the next NATSINSAP Update, be added to the email list or would like further information, please contact Judith or Sharon at the contact details below.**

**Best wishes**

#### **NATSINSAP Project Officers**

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