

From: [Sharon Mathiesen](#)
To: [Hazelwood Info Shared Mailbox](#)
Subject: Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry submission
Date: Monday, 10 August 2015 10:57:46 AM
Attachments: [Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry submission - 10 August 2015.pdf](#)

Dear Professor Catford

Please find attached the Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry submission from Todd Harper, CEO Cancer Council Victoria.

Kind Regards

Sharon Mathiesen

Administration Support
Office of the CEO Todd Harper
Cancer Council Victoria

T: [REDACTED]
615 St Kilda Rd, Melbourne VIC 3004 Australia



Cancer Council Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land and waters throughout Victoria and pays respect to them, their culture and their Elders past, present and future.

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31 July 2015

Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry
Att: Professor John Catford
PO Box 24
Flinders Lane VIC 8009

Dear Professor Catford,

Re: Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry submission

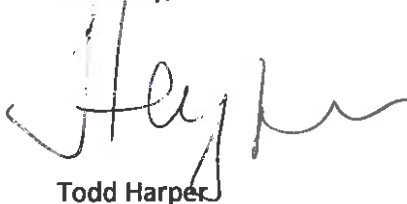
The Latrobe Valley has a high burden of overweight and obesity that is strongly correlated to disadvantage. An increase in investment with sustained intervention led by the Latrobe Valley community could turn this around.

Cancer Council Victoria suggests that with leadership from the Latrobe community and local government that obesity prevention be prioritised and the following objectives be addressed:

- 1) Reduce health inequity through creating environments that make the healthy choice the easy choice
- 2) Embed healthy food systems into local policies
- 3) Mobilise the community to drive health promoting initiatives and support adoption of healthy public policy
- 4) Local government are leaders in health promotion and obesity prevention.

Cancer Council Victoria has a key interest in obesity prevention and addressing health inequalities. We have a strong track record in the above objectives and would be delighted to support improving the health outcomes of the Latrobe Valley community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harper".

Todd Harper

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Introduction

The recent International Burden of Disease study adds to the already vast body of evidence for the need for long term investment in prevention and early intervention. Obesity now costs Australia around \$8.3 billion¹ per annum and for the first time dietary risks and high body-mass index, account for the most disease burden in Australia along with tobacco use. The most recent analysis² has shown obesity rates in Australia and New Zealand have soared by more than 80 per cent in the past 33 years. Almost one in three Australians is obese (29%), compared to 16 per cent in 1980. About one quarter of children and more than 60 per cent of adults are either overweight or obese.

The picture is worse in the Latrobe Valley. 36.8 percent of adult Latrobe valley residents are overweight and an additional 23.8 percent are obese³. This is significantly higher than the Victorian average (32.5 per cent and 17.3 percent respectively). Those with lower levels of education, lower income and psychological distress are more likely to have an unhealthy weight. Lifestyle choices and an environment conducive to unhealthy behaviours are also contributing to this.

22.5 per cent of Latrobe City residents drink sugary drinks on a daily basis (This is significantly higher than Vic average 15.9%). Those with lower levels of education, lower income and psychological distress are more likely to drink soft drinks more frequently. Fast Food Outlets account for 32 per cent of food retailers in Latrobe City, where as retailers selling fresh fruit and vegetables account for only 8 per cent⁴ The availability of fresh fruit and vegetables in satellite towns is even less.

Only 9.9 per cent of residents eat the recommended serves of vegetables and only 18.7 per cent eat the recommended amount of fruit.

Cancer Council Victoria (CCV) is committed to reducing Victorians risk of cancer and other chronic diseases. CCV currently deliver four obesity prevention initiatives LiveLighter, Achievement Program, Rethink Sugary Drink and the Obesity Policy Coalition which aim for large-scale reach across the Victorian population, initiating action on the systems that influence the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.

Any relevant activities and initiatives that you currently provide in the Latrobe Valley

1. LiveLighter

LiveLighter is a critical element of Healthy Together Victoria (HTV). HTV represents a whole of systems effort to improve the health and wellbeing of Victorians. The Cancer Council Victoria (CCV) in partnership with the Heart Foundation delivers the campaign.

¹ No Time to Weight, Obesity Australia

² Global Burden of Disease Study 2013 study, led by University of Washington researchers and published in the journal Lancet

³ Victorian Population Health Survey 2011-12

[http://docs2.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/7ECFD5BB9AA02CF0CA257D540018EE41/\\$FILE/VPHS_2011_2012_WEB_pt2.pdf](http://docs2.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/7ECFD5BB9AA02CF0CA257D540018EE41/$FILE/VPHS_2011_2012_WEB_pt2.pdf)

⁴ Visser N, McCartan J *Shifting the System: Food Access and Availability in LaTrobe City*; December 2014
<http://www.sustainabilitygippsland.com/uploads/3844fdf97086a504676f8cdfde4aa42.pdf>

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After the initial six weeks of advertising in 2014 the campaign recall for television commercials was 62 per cent amongst Victorians. The campaign resonated further in the target group with overweight and obese adults having higher recall (65 per cent) and finding the campaign self-relevant (68 per cent vs 42 per cent). Paid media coverage was achieved in all 12 Healthy Together Communities (HTCs). There was also good coverage across rural paid and unpaid media. Campaign recall was not significantly different between metropolitan and rural markets (63 per cent and 57 per cent respectively).

LiveLighter had a substantial media buy in Latrobe throughout 2014-15 with three bursts of advertising focusing on achieving and maintain a healthy weight through adopting healthy lifestyle changes. Regional media spend was \$281,500 including TV, press and radio in the Latrobe Valley. This will continue however at a lower level due to government funding for LiveLighter being less in 2015/16 than it was in 2014/15 . LiveLighter has also been successful in generating supporting unpaid media coverage in the Latrobe Valley through media releases and social media.

LiveLighter has provided many leveraging opportunities for supporting organisations. The campaign has also been supported by highly respected health organisations, public health experts and local councils across the state. Significant partner outcomes include the creation of an Indigenous radio ad, development of LiveLighter workplace education sessions, cross referral into other Victorian programs and coverage of the campaign in local press and newsletters.

LiveLighter has played an important role in bringing stakeholders across the state with an interest and influence on healthy eating and physical activity together to work on a common goal of improving the health of all Victorians. This has included working closely with Healthy Together Latrobe to ensure healthy weight messages and a health promoting environment is embedded into local initiatives and policies.

2. Achievement Program

The Achievement Program is a simple, evidence-based framework to support whole-organisation health and wellbeing approaches for early childhood services, schools and workplaces. There are eight benchmarks in relation to key health areas two of which are healthy eating and physical activity.

In Latrobe, there has been excellent uptake of the Healthy Together Achievement Program. Currently, 34 (87%) early childhood services, 23 primary schools (74%) and 3 (43%) secondary schools are participating in the program. Thirty organisations are also taking part, creating healthier workplaces for their employees. Sustained effort in the Latrobe Valley would contribute to reducing inequalities in health and ensure that best practice public health interventions are available to the Latrobe community.

3. Rethink Sugary Drink

Rethink Sugary Drink (Rethink) is a partnership of 12 health organisations including Diabetes Australia and the Heart Foundation and is led by Cancer Council Victoria. It aims to increase public

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awareness of the link between sugary drink consumption and tooth decay, obesity and chronic diseases. The campaign resources are available for LGAs, community health and other health promotion agencies to ensure these messages reach the Latrobe community. The public can also access advice and resources via the website.

Additionally Rethink has partnered with VACCHO to communicate messages specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. This has included the production of new video featuring Aboriginal actors highlighting the damage sugary drinks cause. The video has been disseminated by VACCHO and Victorian Aboriginal Health Services.

4. Partnerships with local health services and Aboriginal Health

As part of the Healthy Together Victoria systems approach LiveLighter and the Achievement Program have been working with local services in Latrobe to ensure maximum impact in the community. Latrobe community health service and Latrobe City Council are LiveLighter partners.

LiveLighter has partnered with VACCHO to ensure the campaign reaches the Victorian Aboriginal community, including in the Latrobe Valley. Work with VACCHO to date has included the recording of an Aboriginal specific radio ad which aired on Latrobe indigenous radio station 3GCR as well as in other areas. VACCHO have also worked with Aboriginal Health Services to ensure the campaign resources are available to the local Aboriginal community.

Any recommendations for strategies, approaches or programs that you think would assist. Any evidence that is available to support interventions that you might recommend, including any cost benefit analysis that you may have available.

1. Latrobe Valley should apply systems principles in obesity prevention linking to wider work.

We support the recommendation that a health conservation zone be created to ensure medium and long term impacts are achieved.

A significant benefit of working as part of the systems framework is the ability to adopt interventions and policies with proven effectiveness in other regions. New efforts if proven successful in Latrobe could similarly be rolled out in Victoria (and nationally) with guidance from CCV and other organisations within the obesity prevention system.

The report from the UK Government's Foresight Programme⁵ demonstrates how the causes of obesity are complex and intertwined. A systems approach to addressing obesity is essential including activity directed to reducing personal barriers to healthy lifestyles as well as improving the underlying environmental and societal causes such as the food system, built environment and health services geared towards prevention.

Evidence to support this approach includes that from EPODE. EPODE is a methodology designed to involve all relevant local stakeholders in an integrated and concrete prevention programme aimed at facilitating the adoption of healthier lifestyles in everyday life⁶. Results from this intervention showed that over a decade rates of childhood overweight were lower in intervention towns when compared to control towns⁶.

⁵ Tackling Obesity: future choices project report 2007. UK Government Foresight Programme

⁶ J.-M. Borys et al *EPODE approach for obesity prevention* Obesity Reviews 2012 (13) pp299-315

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CCV will continue to link Latrobe Valley into the wider system of prevention. With additional resources this link could be enhanced further and tailored to the Latrobe Valley population.

2. Significant local investment to embed LiveLighter and Achievement Program in Latrobe Valley

LiveLighter has been highly effective in Healthy Together Communities where local initiatives have leveraged from the social marketing.

The standing LiveLighter-HTC working group plays a significant role in identifying the leveraging opportunities from LiveLighter in HTCs. The group has also been instrumental in communicating opportunities through HTC networks and coordinating evaluation efforts. The LiveLighter stakeholder evaluation demonstrated that HTCs value the connection to the broader prevention system through LiveLighter. Campaign resources have been adapted by HTCs to suit local audiences and needs. A stronger local workforce based in local government would ensure that LiveLighter messages align and support other community level work.

To date LiveLighter has had significant impact in Healthy Together Communities including Latrobe. On the ground links to local press, local settings and importantly local government has been imperative to ensure the campaign reaches where most needed. Evaluation has shown a higher proportion of people living in HTCs are engaging with LiveLighter online compared to other local government areas. Figure 1 shows that sign up to the meal and activity planner in HTCs was 0.42 per cent per head of the population compared to other LGAs where it was 0.31 per cent. The use of campaign resources in community settings has been significantly higher in HTC areas. LiveLighter support is available to HTC policy makers to ensure local policy creates a healthy environment. Increased investment would ensure an ongoing high level of support to local policy makers.

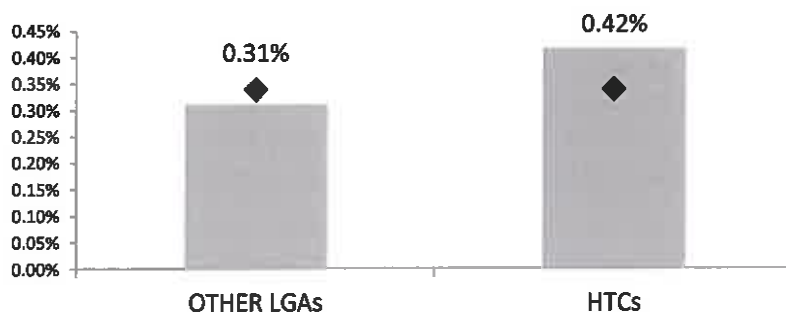


Figure 1: The rate of sign up to the LiveLighter meal and activity planner in 'other LGAs' and 'HTCs'. ♦ indicates the Victorian average.

3. Major settings reducing sugary drink availability while increasing availability of free water.

This recommendation is in line with the strategy of the Victorian Healthy Eating Enterprise (VHEE) which has prioritised approaches to reduce sugar sweetened beverage consumption. The VHEE is a key Healthy Together Victoria initiative to support prevention. It provides a platform for collaboration between government, public health stakeholders and business with a shared commitment to improve healthy eating through a systems approach. CCV leads the VHEE sugary drinks work.

There is evidence that consumption of sugar sweetened beverages is associated with weight gain and increased risk of type two diabetes^{7,8}, as well as with increased dental decay in children⁹. This

⁷ Imamura et al *Consumption of sugar sweetened beverages, artificially sweetened beverages, fruit juice and incidence of type 2 diabetes: systematic review, meta-analysis, and estimation of population attributable fraction.* BMJ 2015; 351:h3576

⁸ The InterAct Consortium *Consumption of sweet beverages and type 2 diabetes incidence in European adults: results from EPIC-InterAct* Springer 2013

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puts a significant burden on individuals as well as the local health system. Leadership from local government in reducing sugary drink availability is supportive of a systems approach to addressing obesity.

A sustained effort to remove or reducing sugary drinks in health facilities and local council venues, education settings and sports and leisure facilities in the Latrobe Valley is likely to lead to a reduction in sugary drink consumption. It is recommended that local government lead on this with support from the VHEE and local health services. To increase the impact of this further availability of free water in public spaces should also be prioritised by local government.

4. Increase availability of affordable physical activity options for adults and children.

Availability of safe, accessible and affordable physical activity options for residents is likely to increase physical activity levels. Children of a lower socio-economic background are known to have lower levels of physical activity and would benefit most from increased availability¹⁰. OPAL by EPODE in Australia has successfully implemented environmental changes to promote free or low cost physical activity¹¹.

In the Achievement Program all 6 workplaces in the Latrobe Valley that have shown progression on benchmarks that have included physical activity as a health priority and are working towards making changes in this priority area. The two primary schools and 1 early childhood service have also all selected physical activity.

5. Prioritise an affordable healthy food system

In order to reduce inequalities in obesity, affordable healthy food security should be prioritised in local government policies. The design of obesity interventions and policies should ensure those with the highest risk of obesity, particularly children and their families, are prioritised. This recommendation extends to food security investment including food systems research, investment in healthy retailers, reduction in FFO availability and improvements in food affordability and fresh fruit and vegetable access. It is known that fresh food is less available and more costly in satellite towns in Latrobe and in other regional and remote areas, creating a significant barrier to food security.

Access to nutritious and safe food is a key determinant to health¹². A recent Lancet series on obesity identified creation of a healthy sustainable food policy as a key part of obesity prevention, particularly in reducing inequalities in health¹³. Healthy Together Latrobe with Monash University monitor food security and implement changes at a community level. Initiatives have included working with stores to increase availability of healthy food, developing community gardens, embedding food growing in school and monitoring the price of healthy food in Latrobe Valley¹⁴. With

⁹ Slater PJ et al *Patterns of soft drink consumption and primary tooth extractions in Queensland children* Australian Dental Journal 2010; 55 pp 430-435

¹⁰ Salmon J et al Trends in children's physical activity and weight status in high and low socio-economic status areas of Melbourne, Victoria, 1985-2001 ANZJPH 2005; 29 (4) pp337-342

¹¹

<http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/4ea30f00446c4dfead87af76d172935c/G337+OPAL+Case+Studies+Copper+Coast+Wallaroo+INTERNAL.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=4ea30f00446c4dfead87af76d172935c>

¹² Dowler et al *Rights-based approaches to addressing food poverty and food insecurity in Ireland and UK*, Social Science and Medicine (74) pp44-51, 2012.

¹³ Hawkes et al, *Smart food policies for obesity prevention*, Lancet 2015

¹⁴ Shifting the System: Food Access and Availability in LaTrobe City.

<http://www.sustainabilitygippsland.com/uploads/3844fdf97086a504676f8cdfde4aa42.pdf>

additional resources LiveLighter could target campaign activity in Latrobe valley to include food security messages.

6. A review of planning permits issued to food outlets selling discretionary food items in close proximity to education centres and areas of high disadvantage should be undertaken.

The availability of unhealthy food significantly increases the quantities of unhealthy food and beverages consumed. There is a stronger relationship when the unhealthy food is cheaper, healthy food is limited and when the unhealthy food outlets are in disadvantaged areas.

Healthy systems planning should promote access to healthy affordable food and reduce availability of unhealthy foods and beverages particularly near education facilities, leisure centres and community venues. Local government should become a leader in this area extending the policies to council facilities and events.

Healthy Food Basket monitoring in Latrobe Valley demonstrates the impact of high fast food availability and limited healthy food availability on socio-economic inequalities in obesity^{15,14}. With additional investment CCV could provide expert policy advice to local government ensuring obesity prevention is prioritised.

What capacity and resources your organisation may be able to offer to support improvements in the health of the Latrobe Valley communities in the next few years

Initiatives under the Healthy Together Victoria collective impact strategy including LiveLighter will continue to link local initiatives into the wider system to maximise their impact. LiveLighter will continue to make connections to the work occurring in Latrobe Valley and ensure the campaign is leveraged successfully by other local initiatives. Additional funding would allow for a targeted media campaign in Latrobe Valley to increase exposure to healthy weight messages.

Rethink can provide support on adapting policies such as supply chain, provision of healthy drinks and availability of water in public spaces. Additional funding would allow for a larger LiveLighter campaign investment in local media (eg TV, radio) and development of an accompanying communication plan specific to the Latrobe valley to support local obesity interventions.

The Achievement Program will continue to support settings in the Latrobe Valley to achieve the benchmarks and sustain healthy changes. Additional funding would allow for an increase in support to ensure that advice is tailored to local requirements and needs for the Latrobe population. Currently evaluation demonstrates that higher levels of support increase uptake of the program as well as progression through benchmarks.

¹⁵ http://www.rrh.org.au/publishedarticles/article_print_1074.pdf

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