



NATIONAL CENTRE OF
IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



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A NOTE FROM OUR DIRECTOR, LUKE WOLFENDEN



I am delighted to take this moment to reflect on and share the achievements of NCOIS in our 2023 annual report.

This year we continued to bring together the best available evidence to shed light on effective strategies for chronic disease prevention in key settings. Our national surveys offered a comprehensive snapshot of the implementation of evidence-based healthy eating and physical activity practices in Early Childhood Education and Care across Australia.

We shared new perspectives and insights to optimise models for scaling-up healthy eating programs in schools, drawn from partnerships with Local Health District Health promotion teams across NSW. We also continued to break new ground in our sustainability stream with our nationwide qualitative surveys with policy makers and practitioners, and leadership of an international consortium advancing much needed methods research.

I take immense pride in our team's dedication to training and capacity-building. Notably, the success of our 4th Training Institute for Dissemination and Implementation Research in Health (TIDIRH) Australia underscores our commitment to fostering skills and expertise in this field.

This year we were privileged to engage closely with our policy and practice partners, allowing us to listen to, understand and respond to emerging evidence needs. These relationships are a valued and crucial way to enhance the impact of our work at the intersection of research, policy, and practice.

As we move into 2024, I am excited about new possibilities to continue to bridge the gap between “what we know” and “what we do” in the implementation of chronic disease prevention programs in community settings.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luke Wolfenden'.

Professor Luke Wolfenden
NCOIS Director

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

NCOIS acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands on which we live and work.

We respect the wisdom of Elders past, present and emerging.

We recognise that First Nations sovereignty was never ceded. This continent always was and always will be Aboriginal Land.



ABOUT NCOIS

The National Centre of Implementation Science (NCOIS) is an NHMRC funded Centre for Research Excellence. We bring together national and international implementation experts and chronic disease prevention researchers, policy makers and practitioners.

We use implementation science to put evidence-based chronic disease prevention interventions in community settings into practice, in the most effective ways.

We focus on known risk factors for chronic disease including poor nutrition, inactivity, smoking and harmful alcohol use. These are some of the most prevalent risk factors for chronic disease.

We focus on interventions that can be routinely implemented in the community settings of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), schools, workplaces and sporting clubs.

OUR RESEARCH

IMPLEMENTATION GAPS AND PRIORITIES

Research in this stream looks to identify effective prevention programs, policies and practices targeting risk factors for chronic disease in schools, early childhood education and care (ECEC) services, sporting clubs and workplaces.

In schools and ECEC services we are also identifying gaps in the implementation of these effective prevention programs, policies and practices across Australia. Through this work we are looking at factors that could help inform what should be prioritised for implementation to have the biggest impact.

COCHRANE SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS

In 2023, [Associate Professor Serene Yoong](#) (right) and her team published the most up-to-date and comprehensive **evidence of what works and what doesn't work to improve child healthy eating in ECEC settings**.



Image: Associate Professor Serene Yoong

This research, published in the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews asked:

- Do programs delivered in ECEC settings improve children's dietary intake?
- Do these programs promote healthy weight?
- What is the impact of these programs on language and cognitive skills, social and emotional learning, and quality of life?
- Are the programs cost-effective?
- Do they cause any unintended adverse effects?

The review also explored the effects of programs that included different strategies of the WHO Health Promoting Schools framework (such as curriculum, environment, and partnerships), and the effects of programs on high and low SES populations.



The key findings demonstrated that healthy eating interventions delivered in ECEC settings:

- may improve child diet quality,
- likely increase fruit consumption,
- may increase vegetable consumption,
- may have favourable effects on child weight and risk of overweight/obesity.
- likely have no impact on consumption of less healthy foods and consumption of sugar sweetened drinks

Very few studies have reported on costs or the potential adverse effects of interventions.

Little is known about the impact of ECEC-based healthy eating interventions on child social/emotional outcomes, language and cognitive outcomes, and quality of life.

There were no differences of effects observed by socio-economic status.

We also found that most interventions:

- target the environments, partnerships, and curriculum
- often also include strategies to promote physical activity

Read the 4 page summary
of the review,
“Do healthy eating strategies in early childhood education & care settings work?”

Listen to the podcast
or
read the full text.

NATIONAL CENTRE OF IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE Cochrane Public Health

Do healthy eating strategies in early childhood education & care settings work?
PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY - JUNE 2023

KEY MESSAGES & RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY MAKERS & PRACTITIONERS

1. Continue to support delivery of healthy eating programs in ECEC as a strategy to:
 - improve children's diet quality
 - improve children's fruit and vegetable consumption
 - possibly reduce excessive weight gain.
2. Focus on programs that include:
 - educator-led lessons
 - the physical environment
 - policies
 - engaging parents and communities
3. Invest in coordinated population-wide implementation support



Image: Dr Rebecca Hodder

In 2023, [Dr Rebecca Hodder](#) (left) and team identified and synthesised new research studies for an update of the Cochrane **Living Systematic review exploring the impact of interventions to increase fruit or vegetable consumption (or both) among children aged five years and under**. The updated manuscript was submitted at the end of 2023. [Read the 2020 update](#).

In the sporting clubs setting, Dr Rebecca Hodder is leading a Cochrane systematic review looking at the effectiveness of interventions within sporting organisations. These interventions aim to foster physical activity, encourage healthy dietary habits, and reduce alcohol and tobacco consumption. The review has advanced to the submission stage at the end of 2023. For further details, [read the published protocol](#).



NATIONAL SURVEYS

In 2023 we published [findings from our national survey assessing the implementation of evidence-based healthy eating and physical activity practices by ECEC settings across Australia](#). This research is mapping what is happening on the ground in Australia for the first time.

Overall, a total of 1,028 ECEC services participated. Findings showed that practices such as encouraging children to consume age-appropriate beverages and providing families with child physical activity education had low implementation rates (17.9% and 14.6%, respectively). We also identified variations in the implementation of healthy eating practices based on service characteristics, with long day care services implementing significantly more practices than preschools.

This research highlights the need for further implementation support for these practices, particularly in preschools. [Read the full paper](#).

To help identify what is a good 'fit' for implementation on the ground, we also asked ECEC educators to tell us how easily different practices could be implemented within their existing resources and infrastructure. This research will help to identify key insights about which scalability factors are most influential for different evidence based physical activity and healthy eating policies and practices in this setting - we look forward to sharing these important new findings in 2024!

Our schools' national survey to determine prevalence, scalability, of prevention programs for nutrition, physical activity, tobacco, alcohol, and mental health programs in primary schools wound up in 2023. The results, coming in 2024, will help to better inform which programs should be prioritised for implementation in Australian primary schools and what support schools need to implement them.

[Read more about the survey of primary school principals on our website](#).



EVIDENCE BASED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

This stream aims to synthesise, in a timely way, evidence about effective implementation strategies to ensure that policy makers and practitioners can access high quality and up-to-date evidence to support implementation decision making.

In 2023 we progressed work to convert our Cochrane systematic review of strategies to assist schools to implement policies and practices to prevent chronic disease into living mode. The protocol for the conversion of the review has been approved, the identification and synthesis of new research is complete, and the updated manuscript finalised at the end of 2023. Publication of the review update is expected in mid 2024. [Read more about this research on our website.](#)



FOCUS ON LIVING SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS

In the past there has been no timely mechanism to synthesise evidence about effective implementation strategies for chronic disease prevention programs in community settings.

To address this, we are producing living systematic reviews that continually and actively monitor the literature for new evidence about effective implementation strategies for chronic disease prevention interventions in ECECs and schools.

This will ensure the most up-to-date evidence is readily available for decision makers and practitioners.

[Read more](#) about how living systematic reviews can improve the currency and relevance of evidence-based public health guidelines, from our Research Lead Dr Rebecca Hodder.



Interventions to prevent or stop electronic cigarette use in children & adolescents - what works? A Cochrane living systematic review

- We found no published randomised controlled trials (RCTs)
- The review identified 22 RCTs currently underway
- Findings will be updated as studies are published



This study is part of the research collaboration, **SPARKE**, of which NCOIS is a foundational member.

In 2023 NCOIS researcher Dr Courtney Barnes published a Cochrane “living systematic review” looking at the impact of interventions to prevent or cease youth e-cigarette use (also known as vaping). [Read more on our website.](#)

SCALE-UP

Research in this stream focuses on identifying how best to implement, at scale, an app-based healthy lunchbox program, [SWAP IT](#). SWAP IT takes a novel approach to supporting families of primary school-aged children by integrating within an existing school communication app (SkoolBag) that many schools already use to deliver information to parents and carers.

SCALING UP SWAP IT: A SCHOOL-BASED, HEALTHY LUNCHBOX PROGRAM



Image: Dr Alison Brown

In 2023, [Dr Alison Brown](#) (left) published a paper exploring **parent perspectives of SWAP IT** that sought to understand how families perceive and engage with the program.

Findings from 413 participating parents revealed high levels of acceptance, appropriateness, and feasibility of SWAP IT, with positive scores on validated scales measuring these aspects.

Most parents reported receiving and opening the program's lunchbox messages, and a significant percentage found the program helpful in substituting discretionary foods with healthier alternatives.

This important work tells us that SWAP IT is not only effective but also incorporates many elements favourable for broader implementation. [Read the full paper.](#)

In another study, [Dr Courtney Barnes](#) (below right) and collaborators explored **factors supporting the success of a Community of Practice (CoP)** set up to enhance the collective impact of SWAP IT when scaled up in the Hunter New England, Central Coast and Mid North Coast Local Health Districts.

The success of the CoP was put down to key elements such as:

- planning workshops,
- implementation check-ins,
- knowledge exchange meetings and
- the program's alignment with both local and state health priorities.



Image: Dr Courtney Barnes

Importantly, the model did not impose significant time demands on participants, ensuring its sustainability and continued effectiveness.

This research tells us that a formalised CoP holds promise as an effective model for enhancing collaboration, information sharing, and best practice across Local Health District Health Promotion teams in NSW. [Read more on our website.](#)



Building on this work, at the end of 2023 the team successfully completed an optimisation study with 11 NSW Local Health Districts involving 340 primary schools. This research aimed to maximise the impact of SWAP IT by scaling up the program among existing users of the SkoolBag school-parent communication app. The scale-up strategy was developed in consultation with researchers and stakeholders from health, education, and industry.

This [TRGS funded randomised controlled trial](#) looked at the impact of scale-up strategies on SWAP-IT program adoption (the number of schools that register and deliver the program at 12-month follow-up), efficiency and affordability of the intervention (using a cost-consequence analysis and budget impact assessment), and acceptability.

Read Dr Alice Grady's review of digital health interventions to increase user engagement with digital health interventions to improve healthy eating & physical activity

What works to enhance user engagement with Digital Health Interventions that promote healthy eating, activity & healthy weight?

- The review includes 54 studies that employed different strategies to support user engagement.
- Social support and knowledge shaping strategies showed a positive association with intervention usage and user experience.
- The quality of the evidence is very low. More research is exploring the impact of different types of strategies is needed.

NATIONAL CENTRE OF IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE | THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

In 2023, the team also completed a novel collaborative network trial involving simultaneous testing of different scale-up strategies developed by each Local Health District independently. The strategies selected by each LHD were based on their unique capacity and local context.

The study will contribute new and rigorous evidence about the effects of a variety of strategies, that could be used for different contexts to support SWAPIT program adoption at scale. Importantly, it will also provide evidence about whether health service-centred, collaborative research models can rapidly generate new knowledge and to inform practice improvements.

[Read more about this work in the published protocol.](#) Results for these studies will be available in the second half of 2024.

We are also excited to report that in 2023 the SWAP IT national dissemination continued to progress with collaborations across jurisdictions in NSW, South Australia, Victoria, and Queensland. This year we completed scale up strategy workshops and formed a national implementation working group. In 2023 baseline data collection was also completed in NSW and Victoria and got underway in South Australia.

This innovative and important body of work has seen research lead [Associate Professor Rachel Sutherland](#) recognised by the Hunter Medical Research Institute as 2023 Early Career Researcher of the year.



Image: Associate Professor Rachel Sutherland awarded HMRI 2023 Early Career Researcher

SCALE-UP RESEARCH

This year **Dr Alice Grady** took a closer look at the reporting of **scalability factors in studies included within the published Cochrane systematic review of healthy eating interventions delivered in ECEC settings.**



Image: Dr Alice Grady

The aim was to assess how comprehensively factors that are essential in informing decisions about what interventions to (and not to) scale up were reported. For this research the team applied the Intervention Scalability Assessment Tool (ISAT) with domains describing: the problem, the intervention, strategic and political context, effectiveness, costs, fidelity, and adaptation, reach and acceptability, delivery setting and workforce, implementation infrastructure, and sustainability.

The findings revealed a significant shortfall in reporting of crucial scalability factors, particularly the areas of intervention cost, sustainability, and fidelity. [Read the full paper.](#)



Image: Dr Sam McCrabb

Dr Sam McCrabb published a study exploring the **dynamics of implementing and scaling up health behaviour interventions for broader community impact.** Health behaviour interventions aim to improve individual behaviours like healthy eating, physical activity and minimising alcohol consumption to prevent the development of chronic disease.

The study surveyed authors of 104 health behaviour interventions to understand how often they are implemented in communities, the adaptations made, the frequency of scale-up, and to identify characteristics that might be associated with scale-up.

Findings showed that both implementation and scale-up following trial completion occurred in half of the interventions. The study also found adaptation to be a common occurrence, highlighting the need for strategies to manage modifications that could result in “voltage drop.”

Importantly, comprehensive strategies to disseminate research findings were found to be associated with the successful translation of research trials into practice. This highlights the need to ensure interventions selected for scale-up are actually effective so that they are best placed to improve community health outcomes.

Read the full paper of
Dr Sam McCrabb's
exploration of the scale
up of health behaviour
interventions



SUSTAINING IMPLEMENTATION

Research in this stream examines how to plan for, and support, the continued delivery of chronic disease prevention and health programs that we know work.

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES

In 2023, the team commenced baseline data collection for their Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT). This trial aims to assess the effectiveness of support strategies provided to schools in sustaining their long-term implementation of physical activity across the school week.

Following baseline assessments, schools across four NSW local health districts, were randomly assigned to receive a sustainability support strategy, or to a control group. The trial will continue with follow-up assessments at the twelve-month mark in 2024 and the twenty-four-month mark in 2025.

APPROACHES TO SUSTAINABILITY

From July to November 2023, we conducted qualitative surveys with policy makers and practitioners from every Australian state. Specifically, we sought to understand the approaches they employ to support the sustainability of chronic disease prevention programs, the strategies they utilise in real-world settings, and their perceptions of the primary challenges and needs associated with sustaining chronic disease prevention initiatives.

The findings are currently undergoing analysis. We anticipate their availability in 2024, promising valuable insights into this critical aspect of preventive health practice.



SUSTAINABILITY GUIDANCE

In October, NCOIS researchers lead a consortium bringing together international experts in sustainability for a one-day workshop. This workshop built on the valuable experience of sustaining chronic disease prevention interventions shared by Australian policy makers and practitioners through research conducted by [Associate Professor Nicole Nathan](#) in 2023.

Together the consortia participants identified key research areas needed to advance sustainability science and drive progress in the field. The workshop also functioned as a research project, collecting qualitative data to inform the development of (i) a typology manuscript and (ii) a paper to outline the goals and future directions needed to progress the field of sustainability science.

This work ultimately aims to deliver practical solutions for sustaining evidence-based interventions in real-world scenarios.

[Learn more about this research on our website.](#)



Image (above): The sustainability consortium was held on the land of the Awabakal Peoples & commenced with a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony.

Image (below left): Presentation at the Sustainability Consortium by Associate Professor Nicole Nathan. (Below right) Consortium participants workshoped ideas to guide the development of sustainment typologies, and future directions needed to develop sustainability science.



Dr Alix Hall and team also undertook a study **to assess the extent of sustainability-focused research in the field of public health**. This research involved a cross-sectional review of articles published in 10 leading public health journals over three time periods (2010, 2015, and 2020/2021).



Image: Dr Alix Hall

Among 10,588 identified articles, only 1.3% focused on sustainability with a slight increase in the proportion of sustainability research reported across the three time periods. The majority of the identified research was descriptive/epidemiological, with limited focus on measurement, sustainability interventions, or cost effectiveness.

The findings highlight the need for increased emphasis on sustainability research in public health, particularly in areas such as measurement strategies, interventions for sustainability, and cost effectiveness. [Read the full paper.](#)

Read more about pressing issues for sustaining the implementation of evidence-based interventions in clinical and community settings in this editorial led by Research Lead **Associate Professor Nicole Nathan** (pictured right).



INFORMING DISSEMINATION APPROACHES

This year our researchers continued to undertake research to shed light in areas crucial to informing and enhancing current and future implementation and dissemination practice in preventive health contexts.

DISSEMINATION RESEARCH

Dr Heidi Turon and collaborators published a scoping review that delved into the **dissemination of public health evidence related to preventing non-communicable diseases**.



Image: Dr Heidi Turon

Despite the importance of dissemination in translating research evidence into action, the study reported a notable gap in evidence-based guidance for effective dissemination strategies. That is, most studies focused on reporting dissemination preferences and outcomes rather than rigorously analysing the effectiveness of different strategies. Researchers were identified as the primary source of disseminated evidence, with peer-reviewed publications and presentations dominating as channels. Practitioners emerged as the most common target audience.

The findings underscore the need for more experimental studies to evaluate the impact of various dissemination strategies on the uptake of public health evidence for prevention.

[Read the full paper.](#)



Image: Dr Meghan Finch

Dr Meghan Finch published a study investigating the **dissemination preferences of ECEC educators in Australia**. This work aims to better inform transfer and uptake of evidence-based research and guidelines in this sector.

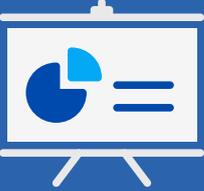
The study found that influential sources such as the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, ECEC agencies, and Government Departments were crucial for disseminating research evidence.

Educators expressed keen interest in content offering evidence-based recommendations and information on health issues, with a preference for receiving research through workshops, conferences, and webinars.

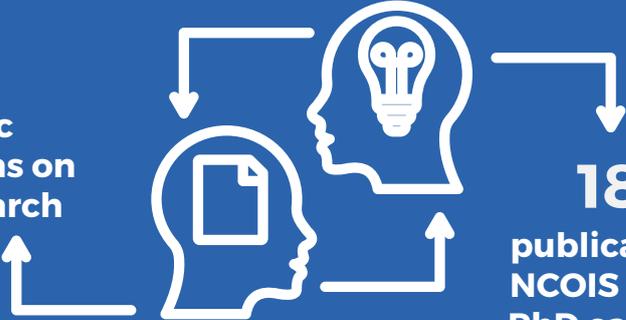
The research emphasizes the importance of tailoring dissemination strategies to align with ECEC staff preferences and engaging influential sources in promoting evidence-based health promotion. [Read the full paper.](#)

OUR CENTRE'S IMPACT IN 2023

KNOWLEDGE GENERATION



22 academic presentations on NCOIS research



18 publications by NCOIS EMCRs & PhD candidates



SEE NCOIS PUBLICATIONS ON OUR WEBSITE



INFORMING DECISION MAKING



19 briefings, consultations & presentations to policy & practice agencies



31 knowledge translation products developed



“ NCOIS publications (2019-2023) have been cited 1901 times with 21 citations in policy documents.



GRANT FUNDING

14 grants awarded



6 nationally competitive grants



>\$5.5 million in funding awarded in 2023



CAPACITY BUILDING

In 2023, we supported knowledge sharing and development opportunities through our newsletters, webinars, training, events and communities of practice.

Below is a snapshot of our activities for the year:

15 PhD candidates

2 PhD completions



19 invited presentations delivered by NCOIS researchers

2 webinars delivered to 130 participants. Viewed over 75 times on Youtube



6 Infomails (e-newsletters)

Each reaching over 200 researchers, practitioners & partners.



20 early-mid career researchers

8 independent research fellowships:

- 3 NHMRC Investigator grants
- 2 Heart Foundation fellowships



17 workshops and training events delivered by NCOIS researchers to over 280 participants

320+ views of the NCOIS resource repository



In 2023 we also:

- Partnered with universities and Advanced Health Research Translation Centres to organise Australia's premier implementation science conference in 2023 - the **Implementation Science Health Conference Australia**. Centre researchers contributed to the event's scientific and organising committees and were invited speakers, session chairs and panellists.
- Coordinated the delivery of a two-day **evaluation workshop** delivered by the Prevention Research Centre of the University of Sydney. The workshop was designed for NSW Health, Local Health District health promotion staff to address capacity building priorities identified by the GREAT-HP research and evaluation network.
- Lead the planning group that delivered the **2023 NSW Health Promotion Forum** in collaboration with the NSW Ministry of Health and NSW Health Promotion Leadership Group.
- Coordinated the delivery of a half day pragmatic **evaluation workshop** for health promotion, delivered by Professor Adrian Bauman.

TIDIRH

Thirty-three participants completed the third round of our Training Institute for Dissemination and Implementation Research in Health (TIDIRH).

The training culminated in 3 days of workshops held in Newcastle with implementation experts from around the globe joining TIDIRH participants.

2023 TIDIRH FACILITATORS



ISBNPA IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE WORKSHOP

NCOIS was delighted to facilitate a two-day implementation science short course in collaboration with the International Society for Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity Implementation and Scalability Special Interest Group, the University of Arkansas for Medical Science, Amsterdam University Medical Centers, the University of Amsterdam and the University of Newcastle.



Image: Dr Femke van Nassau presenting at the ISBNPA Implementation workshop in Uppsala, Sweden.

The workshop held in Amsterdam in June, was designed for researchers, practitioners and policymakers, and delivered the skills and knowledge needed to support them to translate physical activity, nutrition and health promotion research into practice.

20 participants experienced plenary lectures, working group assignments and individual coaching from some of the world's leading experts in implementation science as well as gaining access to some valuable networking opportunities.



Image: Participants attending the ISBNPA Implementation workshop in Uppsala, Sweden.

WORKSHOP: SUSTAINING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION INITIATIVES IN COMMUNITY SETTINGS

In August our researchers delivered a half day workshop in Vancouver, as part of the International Congress of Behavioural Medicine. The workshop was designed to inform and upskill participants around key concepts in sustaining implementation.

During the workshop [Associate Professor Nicole Nathan](#), [Dr Alix Hall](#), [Professor Luke Wolfenden](#) and [Dr Adam Shoosmith](#) shared current information and insights about (i) the concept of EBI sustainability; (ii) determinants to sustaining EBIs; (iii) theories, frameworks and applications; and (iv) practical methods for planning and addressing sustainability.

VICHEALTH SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHOP SERIES

NCOIS' sustainability science experts [Associate Professor Nicole Nathan](#), [Dr Alix Hall](#) and [Dr Adam Shoosmith](#), were engaged by VicHealth to prepare and deliver a series of workshops throughout 2023 under the VicHealth Local Government Partnership (VLGP) program.

Drawing on current theories and frameworks, the highly tailored workshop program introduced sustainability science with practical tools to assist Victorian Local Government representatives in planning for and supporting the sustainment of their chronic disease prevention programs.

The first two workshops were conducted online with the final workshop in November held in person at Ballarat. A team of 12 from NCOIS travelled to Ballarat to provide support to workshop participants as they prepared their specific program sustainment plans.

“Your final program sustainability workshop was very well received. We had such great feedback from a lot of council staff... So, thanks again!”
- VicHealth program participant

Image (right): Participants of the VicHealth Local Government workshops hear from Associate Professor Nicole Nathan



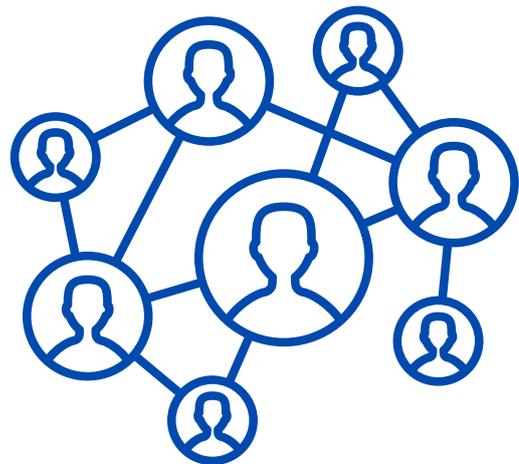
GROUP FOR RESEARCH EVALUATION AND TRANSLATION IN HEALTH PROMOTION (GREAT-HP)

GREAT-HP was established by NCOIS in November of 2021 as a community of practice to support Local Health District Health Promotion Unit collaboration, partnerships and capacity building in research, evaluation, and research translation.

This year GREAT-HP continued to grow to 26 members representing 14 LHDs. In 2023 NCOIS continued to facilitate the quarterly network meetings providing members with the opportunity to exchange ideas and build research and evaluation capabilities together.

This year also saw us coordinate multiple events for members to share their work, build networks, and access unique development opportunities. This included webinars, two face to face workshops and delivery of the NSW Health Promotion Forum.

In 2023, we surveyed NSW LHD Health Promotion teams to ask for their feedback about the network and capacity building activities. The findings will help to inform future priorities and plans for GREAT-HP. [Read the report.](#)



CAPACITY BUILDING SURVEY: INSIGHTS TO INFORM FUTURE STRATEGIES

In 2023, we surveyed NCOIS researchers and partners to ask for their insights on the capacity building activities offered by the Centre.

We, specifically wanted to understand:

- How helpful the capacity building supports and activities have been that we have provided so far.
- What activities, topics, and supports should we focus on to best meet development needs moving forward.

The survey was completed by ten EMCRS, Nine PhD candidates and 19 of our policy and practice partners.

We will use this information to ensure we invest in activities that match our researcher and partner needs and priorities.

[Read the full report.](#)



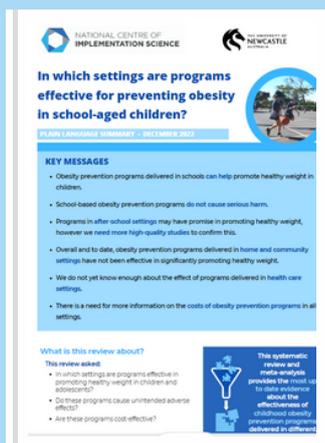
KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION

In 2023 we disseminated our research in a variety of formats to increase the accessibility of findings and enable our partners and other knowledge users to put our research into practice.

See below for a snapshot of NCOIS knowledge products.

Plain language summaries and infographics were prepared for key NCOIS publications.

These have been shared on social media, our website and with networks and key contacts.



Cumulatively, these have been viewed over 500 times on the website, and gained over 10,900 impressions on X (formerly Twitter).

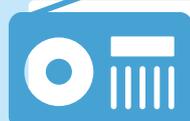
We produced 6 **website news items** to amplify awareness of NCOIS research disseminated through publications and conference presentations.



Cumulatively, these have been viewed 600 times.

In 2023, NCOIS researchers disseminated their findings through both traditional print and audio media platforms.

Associate Professor Serene Yoong curated a **podcast** focusing on her review of healthy eating strategies in ECEC settings.



Dr Courtney Barnes engaged in **interviews across three radio programs** to discuss the findings of her youth e-cigarette living systematic review.

Associate Professor Nicole Nathan provided insights from her research on the influence of school uniforms on physical activity in an **interview with the Sydney Morning Herald.**

UNLOCKING IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH FOR POLICY

In 2023 NCOIS were invited to lead an implementation knowledge synthesis of research conducted by The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre and prevention focused NHMRC Centres of Research Excellence involved with the Collaboration for Enhanced Research Impact (CERI).

The aim of this work is to collate and communicate impactful and relevant research in a way that directly speaks to the implementation evidence needs and priorities of prevention policy agencies across Australia.

The team and collaborators convened two online dialogues with key policy and practice stakeholders. The dialogues identified common evidence needs which were then formulated into review questions. Select evidence of direct relevance to these specific review questions was then gathered and synthesised.

This process helps to ensure the findings are directly relevant to the issues and challenges identified by policy and practice partners in their work. The synthesis report and findings were drafted in late 2023, to be finalised for release early in 2024. [Read more.](#)

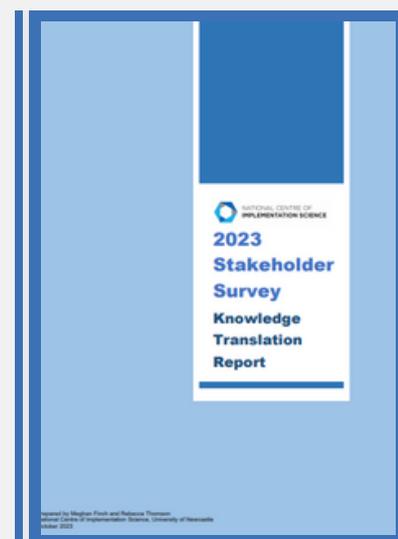


KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION SURVEY: ENHANCING OUR RESEARCH TRANSLATION AND DISSEMINATION STRATEGIES

In 2023, we conducted a survey among researchers and partners to get feedback on the knowledge translation supports and activities provided by the Centre. Additionally, we aimed to understand the dissemination preferences of policy and practice partners. This included asking about their preferred sources for receiving research relevant to their work, the type of content they prefer, and their preferred format for receiving research.

The insights from the survey will inform our centre's future knowledge translation strategies. This will help to ensure that we disseminate our research effectively, increasing the likelihood of it being accessed, understood, and utilised by our policy and practice partners.

[Read the full report.](#)

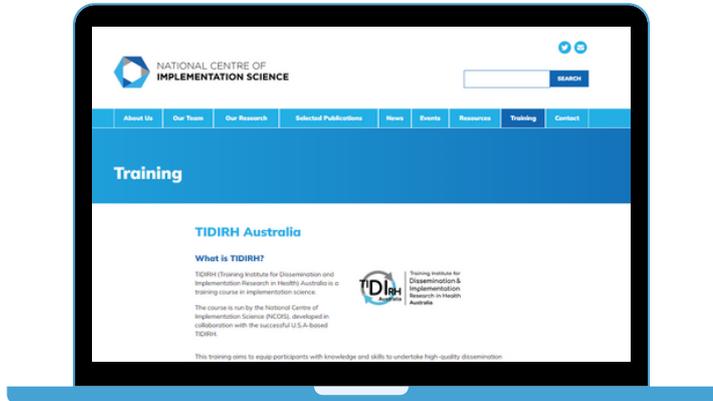


WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

This year we continued to maintain an X (formerly Twitter) account and website that profiles new NCOIS evidence and methods to inform research, policy and practice in implementation research to prevent chronic disease.

The website has been visited over 17,900 times. 5,700 people visited our website in 2023, an increase of 50% in visitors compared to 2022.

The 'Training' page on our website was viewed over 2,700 times in 2023.



Most visitors to our website found us through search engines (50%) and direct links (36%).

A smaller, but significant, proportion of visitors were directed to our website via social media (11%).



Our X following has grown by 15% over the year with over 1,385 followers at the end of 2023. Over the year, our posts on X gained more than 152,000 impressions.

Posts about training opportunities such as TIDIRH and NCOIS webinars cumulatively gained over 34,000 impressions.

One of our most popular posts about training on X in 2023: Promoting the NCOIS webinar presented by Dr Elaine Toomey.



Posts about new NCOIS research cumulatively gained over 10,900 impressions.



The post on X of Associate Professor Serene Yoong's Cochrane systematic review gained over 7,200 impressions.

AWARDS

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF BEHAVIOURAL NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (ISBNPA)

2023 Early Career Researcher, Best Overall Presentation Award

Winner: Dr Cat Lane

2023 Implementation and Scale-up Special Interest Group

Early Career Researcher, Impact Award

Winner: Dr Cat Lane

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF BEHAVIOURAL MEDICINE

2023 Early Career Award

Winner: Associate Professor Rachel Sutherland

IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE HEALTH CONFERENCE AUSTRALIA (ISHCA) 2023

Early Career Researcher Meritorious Abstract Awards

Winner: Dr Alix Hall

Student Meritorious Abstract Awards

Winner: Adam Shoesmith

People's Choice Oral Presentation

Winner: Katie Robertson

People's Choice Oral Rapid Fire Presentation & Student Meritorious Rapid Fire Presentation

Winner: Nina Imad

NSW HEALTH

2023 NSW Highest Quality Healthcare Award

Finalist: SWAP-IT program (led by Associate Professor Rachel Sutherland)

HUNTER MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

2023 Early Career Researcher

Winner: Associate Professor Rachel Sutherland

UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

Alumni Award for Regional Leadership 2023

Winner: Associate Professor Nicole Nathan

Alumni Award, Beryl Nashar Young Researcher

Winner: Dr Alice Grady

PUBLICATIONS

Grady A, Pearson N, Lamont H, Leigh L, Wolfenden L, Barnes C, Wyse R, Finch M, Mclaughlin M, Delaney T, Sutherland R, Hodder R, Yoong SL. **The effectiveness of strategies to improve user engagement with digital health interventions targeting nutrition, physical Activity, and overweight and obesity: Systematic review and meta-analysis.** *Journal of Medical Internet Research* 2023;25:e47987. <https://doi.org/10.2196/47987>

McCraab S, Hall A, Milat A, Bauman A, Hodder R, Mooney K, Webb E, Barnes C, Yoong S, Sutherland R, Wolfenden L. **Disseminating health research to public health policy-makers and practitioners: A survey of source, message content and delivery modality preferences.** *Health Research Policy and Systems*. 2023 Nov 27;21(1):121. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12961-023-01066-7>

Grady A, Jackson J, Wolfenden L, Lum M, Yoong SL. **Assessing the scalability of healthy eating interventions within the early childhood education and care setting: secondary analysis of a Cochrane systematic review.** *Public Health Nutrition*. 2023;26(12):3211-3229. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1368980023002550>

Barnes C, Jones J, Wolfenden L, Robertson K, Seidler AL, Norman J, Budgen P, Mattingly M, Piliskic C, Moorhouse L, Mozina J. **A collaborative network trial to evaluate the effectiveness of implementation strategies to maximise adoption of a school-based healthy lunchbox program: A study protocol.** *medRxiv*. 2023:2023-11. <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-3616996/v1>

Barnes C, Turon H, McCraab S, Hodder RK, Yoong SL, Stockings E, Hall AE, Bialek C, Morrison JL, Wolfenden L. **Interventions to prevent or cease electronic cigarette use in children and adolescents.** *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2023, Issue 11. Art. No.: CD015511. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD015511.pub2>

Hall A, Wolfenden L, Gardner C, McEvoy B, Lane C, Shelton RC, McFadyen T, Lee DC, Shoesmith A, Austin K, Nathan N. **A bibliographic review of sustainability research output and investment in 10 leading public health journals across three time periods.** *Public Health in Practice*. 2023 Oct 29:100444. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhip.2023.100444>

Yoong SL, Turon H, Wong CK, Bayles L, Finch M, Barnes C, Doherty E, Wolfenden L. **An audit of the dissemination strategies and plan included in international food-based dietary guidelines.** *Public Health Nutrition*. 2023 Nov;26(11):2586-94. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1368980023001714>

Finch M, Lum M, Yoong SL, Hodder RK, Grady A, Wolfenden L. **Dissemination of public health research evidence and guidelines to Australian Early Childhood Education and Care staff: Views about source, content and format.** Health Promotion Journal of Australia. 2023 Jan 1. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hpja.820>

Lum M, Grady A, Wolfenden L, Lecathelinais C, Yoong SL. **Implementation of healthy eating and physical activity practices in Australian early childhood education and care services: A cross-sectional study.** Preventive Medicine Reports. 2023 Dec 1;36:102455. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pmedr.2023.102455>

Barnes C, Sutherland R, Jones G, Kingon N, Wolfenden L. **Development and piloting of a Community of Practice to support learning and improvement in health promotion practice within NSW local health districts.** Public Health Research and Practice. 2023 Sep 1;33(3). <https://doi.org/10.17061/phrp3332326>

McCrabb S, Hall A, McKay H, Gonzalez S, Milat A, Bauman A, Sutherland R, Wolfenden L. **From trials to communities: Implementation and scale-up of health behaviour interventions.** Health Research Policy and Systems. 2023 Jul 31;21(1):79. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12961-023-01027-0>

Yoong SL, Lum M, Wolfenden L, Jackson J, Barnes C, Hall AE, McCrabb S, Pearson N, Lane C, Jones JZ, Dinour L, McDonnell T, Booth D, Grady A. **Healthy eating interventions delivered in early childhood education and care settings for improving the diet of children aged six months to six years.** Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2023, Issue 6. Art. No.: CD013862. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD013862.pub2>

Barnes C, Yoong SL, Stockings E, Bialek C, Wolfenden L. **The need for an evidence surveillance system to inform the public health response to e-cigarette use in youth.** Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health. 2023 May 13;47(3):100060, 47. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anzjph.2023.100060>

Turon H, Wolfenden L, Finch M, McCrabb S, Naughton S, O'Connor SR, Renda A, Webb E, Doherty E, Howse E, Harrison CL, Love P, Smith N, Sutherland R, and Yoong SL. **Dissemination of public health research to prevent non-communicable diseases: a scoping review.** BMC public health. 2023 Dec;23(1):1-5. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-023-15622-x>

Brown A, Nathan N, Janssen L, Chooi A, Lecathelinais C, Hudson N, Wolfenden L, Sutherland R. **New models to support parents to pack healthy lunchboxes: Parents acceptability, feasibility, appropriateness, and adoption of the SWAP IT m-Health program.** Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health. 2023 Jun 1;47(3):100043. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anzjph.2023.100043>

Nathan N, Shelton RC, Laur CV, Hailemariam M, Hall A. **Sustaining the implementation of evidence-based interventions in clinical and community settings.** *Frontiers in Health Services.* 2023 Mar 24;3:1176023.

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Imad N, Pearson N, Hall A, Shoesmith A, Nathan N, Giles L, Grady A, Yoong S. **A pilot randomised controlled trial to increase the sustainment of an indoor–outdoor-free-play program in early childhood education and care services: A study protocol for the sustaining play, sustaining health (SPSH) trial.** *International journal of Environmental Research and Public Health.* 2023 Mar 13;20(6):5043.

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Yoong SL, Bolsewicz K, Reilly K, Williams C, Wolfenden L, Grady A, Kingsland M, Finch M, Wiggers J. **Describing the evidence-base for research engagement by health care providers and health care organisations: A scoping review.** *BMC Health Services Research.* 2023 Dec;23(1):1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-022-08887-2>



PARTNERS

Alcohol and Drug Foundation

Cancer Council NSW

Central Coast Local Health District

Hunter New-England Local Health District

Mid North Coast Local Health District

NSW Ministry of Health

Prevention SA

The Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (NSW)

The Early Learning and Care Council of Australia

The Heart Foundation

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