

A Better Choice

Healthy options made easy



Did you know most adults make around 227 decisions every day on food alone?

With more than half of Queenslanders eating out at least once a week¹, many of these decisions are about what to eat at local sports clubs, large stadiums and hospital cafes.

Many of these food outlets provide products high in saturated fat, sugar, and salt. This coupled with the availability, placement, cost, and marketing of food and drinks, helps shape what we choose to eat. Together, this creates an environment where people are choosing less healthy options which is impacting their health.

Health and Wellbeing Queensland (HWQld) is addressing this through the delivery of A Better Choice. A Better Choice gives food venues strategies to help them provide Queenslanders with healthier food and drinks options when eating out.

It's based on the [Australian Guide to Healthy Eating](#), and uses a traffic light system to classify products according to their nutritional value:

- Green: most nutritional value
- Amber: some nutritional value
- Red: limited or no nutritional value

By ensuring that healthier options are easily accessible, strategically placed, attractively promoted, and competitively priced, they become the most obvious choice.

Queenslander's have told us this is what they want, with well over 50% of people surveyed asking for healthier food options across schools, hospitals and sports clubs.*

- More than 80% of Queenslanders said they want healthy food and drinks for children at school
- 63% want them at hospital food outlets
- 55% want them at sports clubs, and
- 41% want them at stadiums.*

HWQld has a number of strategies, tips and resources available for healthcare facilities and sport and recreation facilities, that they can use to provide healthy food options. We're looking to expand A Better Choice across other food settings in the future.

For more information, contact abetterchoice@hw.qld.gov.au.



* [The Queensland Consumer Market Research for Food Environment study \(2022\), Insights Report](#)

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Queensland Healthcare Facilities

The [A Better Choice Strategy for Queensland Healthcare Facilities](#) supports Hospital and Health Services to promote healthier food and drinks to staff and visitors. It was first introduced by Queensland Health in 2007, and made compulsory in 2016 with the introduction of the [Health Service Directive: Healthier food and drinks in healthcare facilities](#).

HWQld now supports hospitals through:

- funding for the A Better Choice project officer, located within Statewide Foodservices at Metro North Hospital and Health Service to support Hospital and Health Services with implementation;
- funding for [FoodChecker](#), an online food and drink classification tool
- access to resources and information on how to promote healthier options in retail settings
- a new retailer implementation toolkit, currently undergoing trials
- annual auditing and reporting on performance against the Health Service Directive so they can check if they are on track with providing healthy food options.

Sport and Recreation Facilities

The [A Better Choice Food and Drink Supply Strategy for Queensland Sport and Recreation Facilities](#) was launched in May 2023, and supports sport and recreation clubs and facilities, as well as large venues and stadiums.

Changes aim to create better balance in the availability and promotion of healthier food options by providing venues with access to tools and resources to achieve this.

HWQld partnered with the Queensland Department of Tourism, Innovation, and Sport and Stadiums Queensland, to develop the strategy and connect with stadiums and state-level sports organisations. The partnership aims to promote healthier choices as the norm by making healthier meals more accessible and affordable.

A suite of free resources is available to support sport and recreation settings to successfully implement A Better Choice, including:

- factsheets on healthier food and drink ideas
- tips on promoting healthier options and making a profit
- advice on healthier menus and ideas for fundraising
- access to resources to promote healthier options
- resources to support clubs to guide players on how to fuel right before, during and after sport.



Smart Choices Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for Queensland Schools

The Queensland Department of Education is delivering the [Smart Choices Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for Queensland Schools](#). This is similar to A Better Choice as it uses a traffic light system to guide the food and drinks provided in school tuckshops. HWQld provides funding to the Queensland Association of School Tuckshops to support adoption of the Smart Choices Strategy.