

Nutrition Strategy



OUTBACK
Stores

Outback Stores

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Affordable, nutritious, quality food: Fundamental to Outback Stores by 2015

Outback Stores: Mission

To be the most efficient and effective provider of retail services that makes a positive difference in the health, employment and economy of indigenous communities by supporting quality and sustainable retail stores.

Outback stores: Core Values

Integrity	We are committed to the principles of truth and honesty and we will be equitable, ethical and professional.
Diversity	We respect and embrace cultural differences.
Health and Safety	Health and safety are fundamental elements of all our activities.
Simplicity	We value and practise simplicity.
Quality	We work to the highest standards believing that indigenous people deserve the best.
Accountability	We are transparent and accountable to our organisation, stakeholders and each other and we do what we say we are going to do.

Outback Stores: Nutrition Strategy

Aim

To improve the health and wellbeing of indigenous people living in remote communities by improving access to a nutritious and affordable food supply through collaboration with community leaders and members.



Background

- The poor health status and the lower life expectancy of Indigenous Australians comparative to the overall Australian population are highlighted through targeted national strategies aimed at reducing the health gap^{1;2}. Tackling the social determinants that impact on health is essential to reducing this gap, for this most disadvantaged group in Australia today³.
- Access to an affordable and nutritious food supply is a right of all Australians and a key driver for influencing health⁴. Poor nutrition is a major contributor to the rates of obesity and other preventable, diet-related diseases which have an adverse impact on Indigenous Australians, particularly those living in remote communities⁴.
- The reported diet for remote Aboriginal communities is typically low in fruit and vegetables and high in refined sugars, and foods containing added fats⁴. A recent report shows that an average of 0.9 serves of vegetables and 0.4 serves of fruit per person per day is purchased through community stores⁵. Diets high in fruit and vegetables are lower in calories and prevent a number of chronic diseases^{6;7}. It is recommended that Australians 'consume only moderate amounts of sugar and foods containing added sugars, and moderate amounts of fats, especially saturated fats'⁸. Reports have shown that per head of population (including infants and older people), an estimated 295ml soft-drink per day is purchased through community stores⁵.
- A nutritious food supply provides access to foods which promote an eating pattern consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Australian Children and Adolescents, and Adults⁸. Key focal points for improving food supply in remote community stores include improving the affordability, quantity, quality and variety of healthy food and drink choices⁹. Evidence is strong for supporting specific nutrition targets in improving the affordability of healthy foods and drinks; in particular increasing fruit and vegetable sales and reducing the sale of sugar through foods and drinks such as sugared drinks^{10;11}.
- Regular monitoring of the cost of food in remote communities demonstrates that there is still a large gap compared to urban Australia, and community residents generally have low incomes^{1;2;11;12}. The 2010 Northern Territory Market Basket Survey reported that 36% of household income would be required to meet a family's food needs for good health in a remote community, compared to 25% of an equivalent family income when purchasing the same foods from the Darwin supermarket¹¹. This research included 76 rural and remote stores in the NT, surveyed between April and June 2010¹¹. The cost of healthy foods has risen more than the cost of less nutritious foods in recent years. This price and energy disparity is greatest for very remote communities^{13;14}. This described "economics of food choice", suggests that consumers will maximise quantity rather than dietary quality where income is limited^{14;15}.
- Stores in remote communities have a unique role, commonly holding a monopoly on the primary food supply. Stores therefore have a social responsibility to ensure access to an affordable and nutritious food supply. Community store governance structures, in particular Store Committees, are essential to achieving health outcomes for communities. Just as important are effective relationships, through strong community engagement and supporting local decision making through store committee empowerment, as often the wisdom for improvement lies within the community itself^{16;17}.
- Evidence indicates that interventions will be more effective when they address food supply and are part of a multi-strategy approach¹⁷. Improvements in nutrition and, by inference, health outcomes will be evident for Indigenous people when there are healthy eating patterns. Demand for healthy choices can be increased through strategies which bias the stocking, pricing, marketing and promotion of healthy foods, while discouraging the promotion, limiting the range and sale of nutrient poor foods and drink¹⁶. This requires effective partnerships with service providers working in the fields of nutrition and health in remote communities.
- It is essential to use a health promotion framework, and evaluate any strategies and interventions that can build the nutrition evidence base for Indigenous communities¹⁷. An alliance with research institutions will foster this and help achieve the nutrition strategy aim.

Outback Stores and communities working together to provide nutritious, quality food and good health and economic outcomes through quality retail stores

Nutrition Strategy Goals

1. A nutritious, affordable and quality food supply.
2. Stores and takeaways create supportive environments where healthy food choices are easier choices.
3. The community in which people live supports the promotion of health outcomes through empowerment.

Nutrition Strategy Success Factors

- Successful capacity building approach with Store Committees and community members
- Commitment to health, employment and economic outcomes
- Nutrition expertise is sufficient to meet the stated goals
- Skilled store and retail support staff working in communities
- Effective partnerships with retail industry, research bodies and service providers



1. Goal

A nutritious, affordable and quality food supply.

Objectives

Outback Stores will:

- Engage Store Committees in decision making to ensure the food supply meets community needs
- Employ the *Nutrition and Health Policy, Store Compliance Checklist, Fresh Produce Manual, Take-Away Manual Version 2* and developed *Core Range*, to ensure the delivery of a nutritious, affordable and quality food supply which promotes an eating pattern consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Children, Adolescents and Adults while being tailored to specific remote Indigenous needs.
- Employ effective pricing strategies favouring the affordability of healthy food lines
- Partner with retail industry to drive changes to the supply chain to ensure a quality, nutritious food supply is always available within the challenging remote retail context
- Provide relevant on-going training to ensure staff have the right skills to effectively implement and promote policies that ensure a quality, nutritious food supply.
- Employ a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure progress in improving health outcomes

Measures

- Outcomes routinely assessed through Store Committee feedback; such as sales data and population outcomes to encourage and support a capacity building approach
- Nutrition and health policy and resources developed and reviewed in conjunction with retail policies and the evidence base
- Comparison tool developed and measured annually reviewing the cost of a “healthy food basket” and a “typical consumed basket” in Outback Stores and other relevant stores
- Outcomes of effective retail industry partnerships, gaps and emerging opportunities reported
- Proportion of staff trained
- Routine reports of progress in improving diet indicators of health

2. Goal

Stores and takeaways create supportive environments where healthy food choices are easier choices.

Objectives

In partnership, Outback stores will:

- Develop and implement in store promotion strategies that support consumer knowledge about nutrition and health by biasing the stocking, pricing, marketing and promotion of healthy foods, while discouraging the promotion of, limiting the range and sale of nutrient poor food and drinks
- Develop and implement policies that create supportive environments for health outcomes, such as promoting only nutritious foods to children
- Strengthen the collaboration of Outback Stores with Store Committees, communities, industry, health services and organisations working to improve health outcomes

Measures

- Effective promotional activities developed, implemented, recorded and evaluated by means of targeted sales data reported at least quarterly, including individual measures for each community
- Regular reports on Outback Stores and community case studies of supportive environments
- Committed internal structures and working framework encompassing a public health approach to Indigenous health issues

3. Goal

The community in which people live supports the promotion of health outcomes through empowerment.

If you would like to know more:

More information about Outback Stores can be found on our website: www.outbackstores.com.au

Alternatively, phone the Darwin support office on (08) 8982 1900 with your inquiry.

Objectives

Outback Stores aims to support community health improvements by:

- Working with Store Committees in a cooperative and empowering way to strengthen the sale of healthy food that meets community needs
- Engaging with community groups, such as the shire services, school, child care centres and aged care programs
- Supporting nutrition and health service providers who develop or evaluate programs that support the demand for a quality, nutritious food supply through strong community engagement practices
- Develop and/or advocate strategies that support nutrition and health outcomes tailored to diverse community needs

Measures

- Regular reports on Outback Stores and Store Committee case studies of supportive change
- Routine reports of the outcomes of effective partnerships developed with engaged community groups
- Routine reports of outcomes of programs to Outback Stores board, staff and stakeholders
- Strategies developed, implemented, evaluated and reported to Store Committees, Outback Stores board and staff

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