



Attachment A

Scoping Activity: Review of international nutrition guidelines and country specific food-based dietary guidelines

Summary

This scoping activity reviewed and analysed international nutrition guidelines and country specific food-based dietary guidelines published after the 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines (the 2013 Guidelines). The purpose of this activity was to:

1. compare recommendations from international health bodies' nutrition guidelines; and country specific food-based dietary guidelines, to recommendations from the 2013 Guidelines.
2. identify the key steps in the evidence review process used to produce each international guideline recommendation.

Methods

The following sources or websites were searched on 29 September 2020, to identify relevant international nutrition guidelines and country specific food-based dietary guidelines:

- Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations¹
- World Health Organisation (WHO)
- UK National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
- Guidelines International Network library.

Eligible guidelines were those that were:

- published by, or relating to, countries at a similar level of human development to Australia²
- published between 2014 and 2020
- available in English

Supplementation guidelines were excluded, except for supplementation in pregnancy.

High level guidelines for each country were extracted, summarised and themes categorised for comparison and analysis. Guidelines published between 2018 and April 2021 were also compared and contrasted to identify recent trends in guideline development and review processes.

Key results comparing recommendations

Of the 42 countries with food based dietary guidelines on the FAO website with a similar human development index to Australia, 12 country specific food-based dietary guidelines met the inclusion criteria (Table 1). The most common recommendations included:

- food group-based recommendations including fruit, vegetables, dairy, meat /alternatives, grains and cereals, healthy fats
- advice about limiting certain foods or nutrients, including sugar, salt and saturated fat
- guidelines for hydration.

Some of the guidelines also considered additional topics such as the effect of where and when we eat and the importance of developing food skills, like cooking a healthy meal.



Of the 50 international health body nutrition guidelines identified, four met the inclusion criteria (Table 2). Consistency in key topics were identified between food-based dietary guidelines and nutrition guidelines from international health bodies, such as:

- reducing sugar, alcohol and energy density
- providing physical activity recommendations.

Two of the international guidelines recommended supplementation in pregnancy. This topic was not generally prioritised in the high-level recommendations for country specific food-based dietary guidelines.

Key results comparing evidence review processes from international guidelines

Guidelines for America^{3,4}, Canada^{5,6,7} and the Nordic Countries^{8,9,10,11} met the inclusion criteria for analysis of trends in guideline development processes.

Of the guidelines included, the following steps were found to be consistent with the process for the 2013 Guidelines and NHMRC standards for guideline development:

- engaging an expert committee
- conducting evidence review processes using available evidence (e.g. systematic reviews and primary studies)
- use of an evaluation tool to determine the quality and bias in studies used to inform recommendations
- a process for managing industry funded research
- a public consultation process.

Country Specific food-based dietary guidelines which met inclusion criteria

Barbados ¹²	Norway ¹⁸
Canada ¹³	Sweden ¹⁹
Ireland ¹⁴	Qatar ²⁰
Malta ¹⁵	Turkey ²¹
Netherlands ¹⁶	United Kingdom ²²
New Zealand ¹⁷	United States of America ²³

International health organisation guidelines which met inclusion criteria

World Health Organisation 2015 Guideline: sugars intake for adults and children
World Health Organisation 2018 WHO guideline: Calcium supplementation during pregnancy for the prevention of pre-eclampsia and its complications
World Health Organisation. 2016 Guideline: use of micronutrient powders for point of use fortification of foods consumed by pregnant women
National Institute for Health and Care Excellence 2015: Preventing excess weight gain.



References

- ¹ Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. Food-based dietary guidelines [27 April 2021]. Available from: <http://www.fao.org/nutrition/education/food-dietary-guidelines/home/en/>.
- ² The United Nations Human Development Index was used to identify countries at a similar level of human development to Australia. A classification of very high (0.800 or greater) on the Human Development Index was chosen. See United Nations Development Programme. Human Development Reports 2020 [Available from: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/>].
- ³ Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee. Scientific Report of the 2020 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee: Advisory Report to the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Health and Human Services. Washington: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service
- ⁴ From the Scientific Advisory Report to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans: USDA-HHS Development of the Dietary Guidelines [Available from: <https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/usda-hhs-development-dietary-guidelines#reviewprocess>].
- ⁵ Ministry of Health Canada. Evidence Review of Dietary Guidelines Technical Report. Ottawa: Ministry of Canada; 2016.
- ⁶ Health Canada. Revision process For Canada's food guide [updated 9th Feb 2021]. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/canada-food-guide/about/revision-process.html>
- ⁷ Colapinto CK, Ellis A, Faloon-Drew K, Lowell H. Developing an Evidence Review Cycle Model for Canadian Dietary Guidance. Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior. 2016;48(1):77-83.e1.
- ⁸ Christensen JJ, Arnesen EK, Andersen R, Eneroth H, Erkkola M, Høyer A, et al. The Nordic Nutrition Recommendations 2022 - principles and methodologies. Food Nutr Res. 2020;64:10.29219/fnr.v64.4402.
- ⁹ Arnesen EK, Christensen JJ, Andersen R, Eneroth H, Erkkola M, Høyer A, et al. The Nordic Nutrition Recommendations 2022 - structure and rationale of qualified systematic reviews. Food Nutr Res. 2020;64.
- ¹⁰ Helsedirektoratet. Nordic Nutrition Recommendations 2022 2019 [updated 19 May 2020]. Available from: <https://www.helsedirektoratet.no/english/nordic-nutrition-recommendations-2022#denovosystematicreviews>
- ¹¹ Arnesen EK, Christensen JJ, Andersen R, Eneroth H, Erkkola M, Høyer A, et al. The Nordic Nutrition Recommendations 2022 - handbook for qualified systematic reviews. Food Nutr Res. 2020;64.
- ¹² National Nutrition Centre. Food Based Dietary Guidelines for Barbados Revised Edition. Ministry of Health Barbados; 2017.
- ¹³ Health Canada. Canada's Dietary Guidelines for Health Professionals and Policy Makers. 2019
- ¹⁴ Department of Health Ireland. Healthy Food for Life- Revised healthy eating guidelines and food pyramid rationale. 2016.
- ¹⁵ Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate. Dietary Guidelines for Maltese Adults- Information for Professionals involved in Nutrition Education. Ministry of Health; 2016.
- ¹⁶ Health Council of the Netherlands. Dutch dietary guidelines 2015. The Hague: Health Council of the Netherlands; 2015.
- ¹⁷ Ministry of Health. Eating and Activity Guidelines for New Zealand Adults. Wellington: Ministry of Health; 2015.
- ¹⁸ Norwegian Directorate of Health. The Norwegian Dietary Guidelines. 2014.
- ¹⁹ Livsmedelsverket. The Swedish Dietary Guidelines- Find your way to eat greener, not too much and be active. 2015.
- ²⁰ Health Promotion and Non-communicable Diseases Section. Qatar Dietary Guidelines. The Supreme Council of Health; 2015.



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²¹ Public Health Agency of Turkey. Turkey Dietary Guidelines. Ministry of Health; 2016.

²² Public Health England. Your guide to the eatwell plate. 2016.

²³ U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025. 9th ed, 2020.