



MEDIA RELEASE

Healthy Eating advisory service making healthy community connections

09th July 2018

Childcare, schools and organisations from all over the Rural City of Mildura will get a helping hand to promote healthy eating, with free training sessions co-hosted by Sunraysia Community Health Service (SCHS) and the Healthy Eating Advisory Service (HEAS) during July.

The Healthy Eating Advisory Service is run by Nutrition Australia Vic Division, and funded by the Victorian Government. It provides free training, online tools and tailored support to assist organisations to provide and promote healthier foods and drinks in childcare services, schools, retail food outlets and with caterers.

Dietitians from HEAS are coming to Mildura over two separate weeks as part of a roadshow to visit regional and remote areas across Victoria. They're in town to host training sessions on how businesses can supply healthier foods and drinks in the places where we live, learn, work and play, without affecting their bottom line!

As well the free training events, staff from HEAS and SCHS will also visit local schools, health services and hospitals to learn more about the great work being done to promote healthy eating in the Rural City of Mildura, and to further support them to overcome any current challenges they may be facing to better meet our community's diverse needs.

"It's all about connecting businesses in our local community with the experts, and increase their skills and knowledge so that they can ultimately make the healthy changes themselves," said Rachael Longeri, Health Promotion Officer at SCHS.

HEAS and SCHS are offering three training sessions during July: one on healthy eating in long day care for cooks and managers. And two Mentorship Program sessions for health promotion officers and healthy eating 'champions' to build their skills and knowledge to be able to lead healthy eating initiatives in community organisations. There's one mentorship training session for working with schools, and another for working with organisations that have retail food outlets, catering and vending machines onsite.

"The Mentorship Program is a valuable opportunity to upskill on how to engage organisations and lead projects that transform the foods and drinks being supplied in the community. Plus trainees get ongoing peer-support from other people just like them, working in similar environments across Victoria," said Margaret Rozman, HEAS Program Manager.



“We’re excited about running the schools’ mentorship training, to support schools to enhance the health and wellbeing of students, working with school leadership and canteens to apply government policies and guidelines,” said Rachael Longeri.

“Schools can make a big difference. When children eat well they learn better, are more alert and are more likely to grow and develop to their full potential.”

Health Promotion Officers at Sunraysia Community Health Services work with local early childhood services, schools, workplaces, hospitals, sport and recreation centres, and retail outlets. These organisations are supported to provide healthier foods and drinks in their menus and through catering, food outlets and vending machines.

It’s not the first time HEAS and SCHS have worked together on healthy eating initiatives in the region. Since 2012, HEAS and SCHS have supported many of Mildura’s local food businesses, food outlets, caterers, and suppliers with local initiatives such as: the Healthy Catering Handbook; Healthy BBQ Kit; and early childhood services and school canteen menu assessments.

“HEAS is a great service for anyone who wants to provide healthier food and drinks to enhance the health and wellbeing of our community,” said Rachael Longeri, Health Promotion Officer at SCHS. Anyone who is interested in attending an upcoming training session can contact the Healthy Eating Advisory on 1300 22 52 88 (freecall) or email heas@nutritionaustralia.org.

Visit www.heas.health.vic.gov.au for more information, or contact the health promotion staff at SCHS to learn more about what is happening with HEAS at a local level.

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Photo opportunities available from 25th – 27th July 2018