

FAQs about the Auckland DHB Healthy Food & Beverage Environments

1. Why do the Auckland Hospitals (including Starship and the Greenlane Clinical Centre) need a healthy food and beverage environments policy?

Many of the diseases that need hospital care are associated with what we eat or drink, and how much activity we do. Obesity has now overtaken smoking as the leading cause of health loss in NZ. Our hospitals help people become well. It is important that we provide a good environment with healthy food and drink choices for adults and children to support health and prevent disease.

2. Who does this policy apply to?

This policy will affect anyone who buys food or drinks at any of our hospitals or clinical centres and the cafes and vending machines in these locations. This will be mostly staff and visitors.

Patients have their meals provided by the hospital kitchens and any special food requirements will be arranged separately for them.

3. What will I see?

At shops, cafes and vending machines on all three Auckland Hospital sites, you will notice that drink choices being offered will be mostly water, milk and smaller portions of juice and artificially sweetened drinks.

Many of our retailers are already selling items like cakes, slices & pies in smaller portions, and we will continue to work with them in 2016, to continue to improve the food options available for sale.

4. Why have you removed drinks with added sugar?

Sugar-sweetened beverages can add up to 8 teaspoons of sugar for each cup you drink – and if you don't use this sugar up as energy, it is converted and stored on your body as weight. The World Health Organisation recommends that adults only have about 6 teaspoons per day, and that child have less than this. Many health problems (including heart disease, diabetes, gout and some cancers) are caused by, or made worse, by being overweight. Most sugary drinks are also acidic. Drinking acidic drinks can erode the enamel covering on your teeth and cause tooth decay.

5. What are 'sugar-sweetened' beverages?

These are any drinks that contain added sugar. The main types of sugary drinks include soft drinks, fizzy drinks, sachet mixes, fruit drinks, flavoured milks, cold teas and coffees, and energy and sports drinks'.

6. I thought juice had sugar in it as well - why is it still being sold?

It is true that juice contains natural sugar and is quite acidic. We recommend that you eat your fruit whole, rather than drink it. Because there are some good nutrients in juice (like vitamin C), we are still selling it in small quantities at this stage, and encouraging staff and visitors to choose water.

7. Why have flavoured milks been removed?

Flavoured milks often have high levels of added sugar in them. Unflavoured, reduced fat milk and non-dairy alternatives (soy and nut milks) are good sources of calcium that are much lower in sugar and better for your health.

8. Are artificially sweetened ('diet') drinks okay to drink instead?

Artificially sweetened drinks use a range of sweeteners. While these drinks do not add extra calories, they are highly acidic, and can contribute to tooth decay. We are currently selling small quantities of artificially-sweetened drinks, but are encouraging our staff and visitors to choose water.

9. If the sugar sweetened beverages are being removed – what other options for beverages will we have?

We are working with our retailers to have a greater range of water, milk and non-dairy alternative drinks available for purchase

10. Where can I get a drink of water?

There is a water fountain in the Grafton café on L5 of Auckland Hospital, and many of the wards and departments have water coolers or kitchen facilities for you to get water.

11. Where can I go for more information about healthy food and drink choices?

Big Change Starts Small: www.eatmovelive.govt.nz

My Family Food & Activities: www.myfamily.kiwi

Healthy Food Guide: www.healthyfood.co.nz