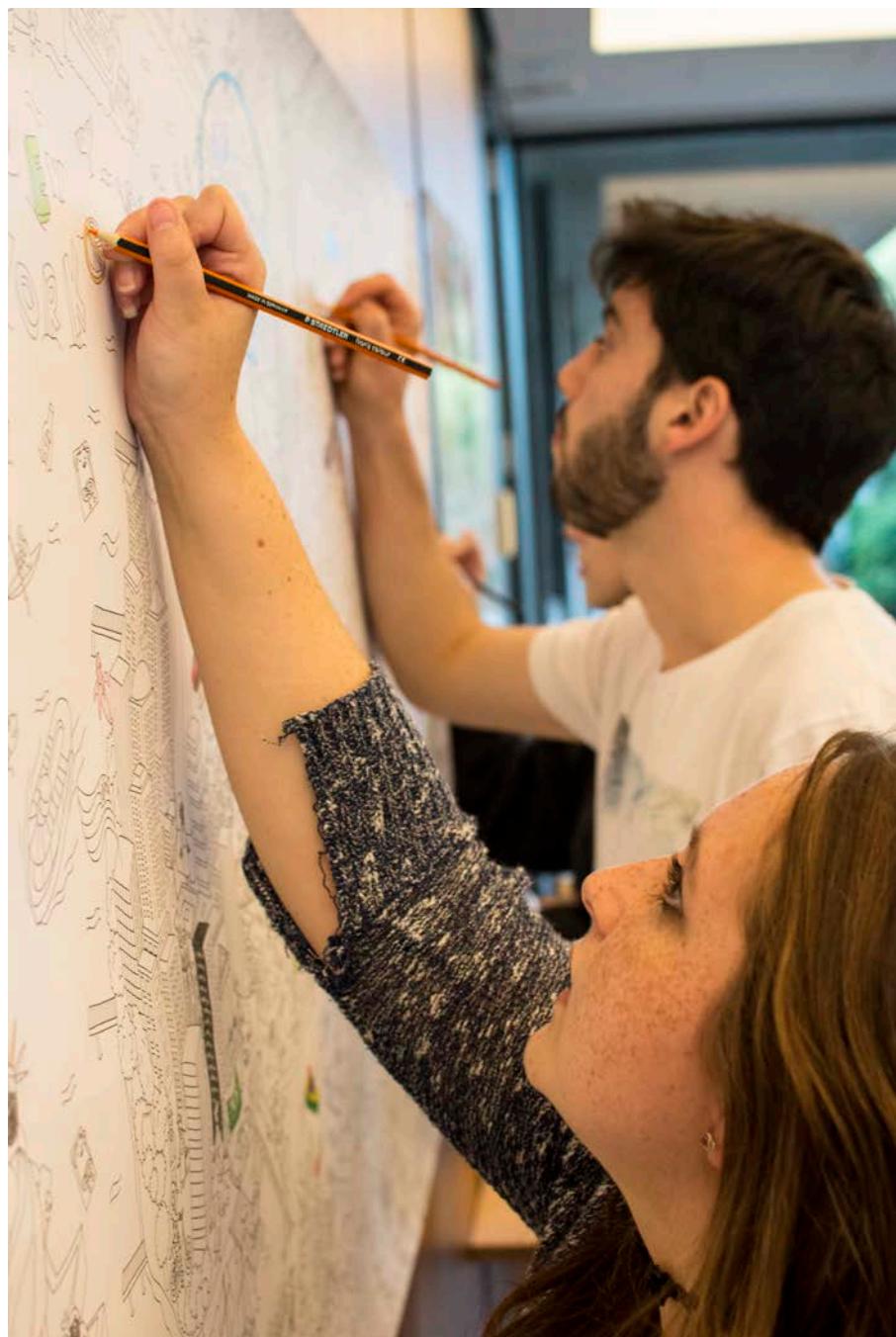




THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SYDNEY**

## **Healthy Sydney University**

### 2017 impact report





# Healthy Sydney University

## A message from the Chair

Since our inception in 2012, Healthy Sydney University has developed and championed evidence-informed initiatives that improve the physical, social and emotional wellbeing of our people and places at the University of Sydney.

2017 was an extremely successful year for Healthy Sydney University. Our competitive seed funding process allowed us to offer over \$50,000 in funding to support fourteen innovative student- and staff-led projects. These projects aligned with the University of Sydney 2016-2020 Strategy, which focuses on: creating a distinctive Sydney education; supporting excellence in research; and developing a culture built on our values.

Our flagship project for 2017 is Healthy Sydney University's contribution to an exciting period of curriculum renewal at the University of Sydney involving the development of 'Open Learning Environment' units of study. Supported by a \$12,000 grant from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Healthy Sydney University brought together the best Sydney researchers to develop a multidisciplinary zero and two credit point unit of study called 'The Science of Health and Wellbeing'.

This unit, which will be available in 2018 for students in any faculty or degree, introduces students to five important areas for their personal wellbeing: nutrition, physical activity, sleep, alcohol and other drugs, and emotional and social wellbeing. This is the first course of its kind that we are aware of in an Australian university – a fantastic achievement for the University of Sydney and a testament to the expertise of the academics involved in its development.

Other important areas of work for Healthy Sydney University include supporting the creation of healthy learning and working environments on our campuses, with clear benefits for the broader community.

Currently a major focus of the University of Sydney is the development of the Westmead precinct. This year, Healthy Sydney University's 'Eat Better' working group worked with NSW Ministry of Health and Western Sydney Local Health District on a project to audit and evaluate the food environment in line with a new framework for food in health facilities.

Our 'Move More, Sit Less' working group also oversaw the second-ever University of Sydney Travel Census, in which over 4,500 staff and students participated. The findings from this census are hugely important for the way our campuses are designed to support and promote active forms of travel by our students, staff and visitors.

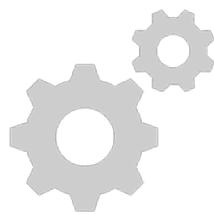
Healthy Sydney University also hosted events and seminars, supported numerous research publications, and presented at national and international conferences and workshops. Momentum is growing from other universities across Australia and internationally to engage with us as our leadership inspires others to become active in health promotion.

Lastly, I pay tribute to Professor Gwynnyth Llewellyn who had the vision for establishing Healthy Sydney University and was chair from 2012 until the end of March this year. She left a huge legacy for the benefit our community. In 2018 we will continue to grow our impact on the health and wellbeing of our students, staff and the wider community.

### **PROFESSOR MARGARET ALLMAN-FARINELLI**

Chair, Healthy Sydney University

[sydney.edu.au/healthy-sydney-university](http://sydney.edu.au/healthy-sydney-university)



# About us

## Creating a healthy campus

Healthy Sydney University is a university-wide initiative that brings students and staff together to promote the health and wellbeing of our community. We work towards the University being a [health promoting university](#). A health promoting university is one that embeds health in the everyday business of a university through its education, research, community engagement and organisational culture.

### Our vision

We believe a healthy university supports healthy people, builds healthy places, develops healthy policies, and implements healthy practices. We aim to develop projects and initiatives in collaboration with students and staff across all levels of the organisation, informed by our [five guiding principles](#) and the University's [2016-2020 Strategic Plan](#).

### Our people

Healthy Sydney University is based in the Charles Perkins Centre Research and Education Hub and chaired by [Professor Margaret Allman-Farinelli](#) from the School of Life and Environmental Sciences. The Chair is supported by an executive group of academic and professional leaders from across the university.

Healthy Sydney University has three working groups of students and staff who meet on a monthly basis to pursue initiatives and strategies relating to a health promoting university: Eat Better (nutrition and food), Move More, Sit Less (physical activity and travel), and Mental Wellbeing (emotional and social wellbeing).

### Our working groups



#### **Eat Better**

Co-Chairs:

Professor Stephen Colagiuri  
A/Prof Helen O'Connor

#### **Move More, Sit Less**

Co-Chairs:

A/Prof Martin Mackey  
Dr Josephine Chau

#### **Mental Wellbeing**

Co-Chairs:

Ms Julia Cohen  
Dr Marie Leech



# Flagship project

## The Science of Health and Wellbeing

The University of Sydney's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan includes an ambitious agenda to transform our undergraduate educational offering.

Part of this transformation includes the development of Open Learning Environment ('OLE') units of study that allow students to experience other disciplines and receive credit towards the completion of their degree. This, combined with the development of new graduate qualities, gave Healthy Sydney University an opportunity to realise our vision in which all of our students and graduates would value and manage their own health and the health of the communities they serve.

The current evidence on university student wellbeing suggests that students are experiencing: poor mental, social and emotional wellbeing; a heavy reliance on less healthy food options; a reduction in physical activity levels; and concerning levels of alcohol use. All of these behaviours can contribute to poor wellbeing and impact negatively on student progression, with flow on effects for the student experience. We wanted to develop a unit of study that addressed all of these areas, giving our students the skills and knowledge about health and wellbeing they can transfer to other areas of their lives.

The resulting unit of study, [\*\*The Science of Health and Wellbeing\*\*](#), was developed by a multidisciplinary team of researchers and teachers with demonstrated expertise across the key areas of interest for young adult health: nutrition; physical activity; sleep; alcohol and other drugs; social and emotional wellbeing. The seven modules in the unit cover these areas and include a number of practice quizzes, podcasts, videos and material to engage students in understanding how their health is shaped by their personal decisions, but also by their communities and environments (including the university environment). We also were granted human ethics approval to do 'user testing' with current students to inform the final product. This research will be published as a formative evaluation in 2018.

The development of the unit was funded by Healthy Sydney University with additional funds from a Strategic Education Grant from the University's Education Innovation portfolio. We also received in kind support and academic time from the faculties and schools associated with the unit: Science, Medicine, Health Sciences, Nursing, Architecture, and Engineering and IT.

The unit will be offered in 2018 as both a zero credit and a two credit point unit. While the two credit point subject is only at this point in time available for students in the broad-based undergraduate degrees, the zero credit point unit can be taken by any student. Both units are taught online and are accessible through our University's refreshed learning management system, Canvas. The zero credit point unit is designed to increase students' knowledge and skills regarding personal wellbeing, while the for-credit unit includes additional topics on critical thinking about how our environments shape our health.

This is Healthy Sydney University's contribution to the strategic vision of the University to develop graduates who are resilient, engaged, interdisciplinary and creative thinkers.





## Collaboration

### Student and staff projects

#### Eat Better

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##### **Westmead and Blacktown Food Environment Audit**

Dr Carrie Tsai  
Prof Vicki Flood  
Ms Helen Shi

A food environment audit tool, previously developed by University of Sydney students and staff, was adapted to review the food retail outlets and vending machines at Westmead and Blacktown hospital sites in Sydney in line with the new NSW Health Framework for food provision in health facilities.

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##### **Creating healthy and sustainable food policies**

Dr Sinead Boylan  
Dr Becky Freeman  
Ms Alexandra Jones  
Ms Amanda Grech

A systematic review of the literature on university sustainable food policies showed that few universities have implemented a 'whole of system' approach to food sustainability. There is further opportunity to provide strong leadership in promoting and supporting sustainable food systems at the University of Sydney.

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##### **Student Cooking Classes**

Ms Tessa Heinonen  
Prof Margaret Allman-Farinelli

Preliminarily research was undertaken to develop a survey about student perceptions of participating in on-campus cooking classes.

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##### **Student Food Security**

Ms Nina Verzosa  
Prof Vicki Flood  
Dr Helen Parker

Formative research was conducted to develop a survey instrument to ask university students about food security and healthy diets.

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The Westmead and Blacktown Food Environment Audit bridged research gaps between the Camperdown campus with the Westmead precinct, including the Western Sydney Local Health District and NSW Ministry of Health. The findings have been instrumental in guiding food vendors on how to better comply with current healthy food and drink standards. Additionally, the findings will inform future interventions to improve the food environment in health facilities to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

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**Dr Carrie Tsai - Lecturer, Faculty of Dentistry**

## Move More, Sit Less

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### The Higher Degree Research (HDR) Student 'Stepathon'

Ms Amy Vassallo  
A/Prof Martin Mackey

Forty HDR students in the Faculty of Health Sciences enrolled in a student 'Stepathon' to increase their physical activity and improve engagement with their peers.

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### Walking trails in CampusFlora

A/Prof Rosanne Quinnell  
Mr Richard Dimon

Walking trails were developed in the 'CampusFlora' app, allowing staff, students and visitors to enjoy guided walks and engage with the natural botanical environment on our campuses. One of the trails includes the Patyegarang trail, which connects the Sydney Language back to the landscape and has been carried out in collaboration with the Wingara Mura –Bunga Barrabugu strategy and CIS.

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### University Travel Census

Dr Lina Engelen  
Dr Melanie Crane  
Ms Erika Goldbaum

Over 4,500 staff and students responded online to questions asking about physical activity and travel mode on 19 September 2017.

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### Activity Based Working

Dr Lina Engelen  
A/Prof Martin Mackey  
Dr Josephine Chau  
Ms Sarah Young

A systematic review was conducted on the literature of activity-based working ('ABW') and an evaluation conducted of the health effects and perceptions of staff moving from a 'regular' office space to an activity-based working environment at a location on the Camperdown/Darlington campus.

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### Active Women over 50

Prof Cathie Sherrington  
A/Prof Anne Tiedemann  
Ms Geraldine Wallbank

Over seventy female participants from the University of Sydney and RPA Hospital registered to attend a series of workshops and information sessions about increasing their levels of daily physical activity.

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**“** Our research suggests that activity-based working can be effective and beneficial for staff productivity and wellbeing. This project gave us an opportunity to promote collaboration between academic and professional staff. Our research expertise was put into practice for the benefit of present and future workplace design on campus. **”**



Dr Lina Engelen - Senior Research Fellow,  
School of Public Health and Charles Perkins  
Centre

## Mental Wellbeing

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### **The 'We' in Wellbeing: A Participatory Exploration of Collective Resilience**

Dr Emma Tseris  
Ms Jessica Gillies

This project utilised a series of focus groups to ask how University of Sydney students support themselves and others during difficult and challenging times. It found students may benefit from more community-based approaches to dealing with stress and recommended further informal resources to support students.

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### **Therapaws**

Ms Kristi Cheng  
Ms Karen Walker  
Dr Rebecca Johinke

Student leaders in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences ran five events in 2017 using therapy dogs to engage their peers in information and messaging about mental wellbeing and student support.

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### **Disability Bystander Intervention**

Dr Jamee Newland  
Mr Sai Soe  
Ms Pradytia Pertiwi

A disability-bystander education intervention and campaign was developed and evaluated by staff and students, and implemented on campus during Disability Awareness Week in September 2017.

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### **Community Garden & Wellbeing**

Dr Micah Goldwater  
Ms Kate Ridgway

Researchers in the School of Psychology looked at whether engagement in the University's community garden could improve mental wellbeing.

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### **University Alcohol Policy Checklist**

Dr Kate Chitty  
Ms Johanna Chow-Chuen

An evidence-based, best practice checklist was developed, applicable to Australian universities' policies on alcohol. This checklist will provide a framework from which to support the development of a more comprehensive and up-to-date alcohol policy at the University of Sydney.

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### **Are You 'Exam Ready'?**

Ms Coral Black  
Ms Megan O'Brien

The University Library developed a program of activities during exam periods to assist students to reduce stress and improve preparation for examinations and final assessments.

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“ Through Healthy Sydney University, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences was able to access seed funding to partner with our students to create Therapaws, a student-led dog therapy program. In 2017, Therapaws engaged a total of 2,500 student participants who attended dog therapy sessions where they received peer-to-peer messages about student support services and mental health. ”

Dr Rebecca Johinke - Senior Lecturer and Associate Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences



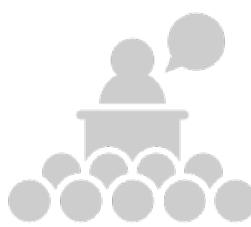


**“** The funding through Healthy Sydney has really helped put the ‘exam ready’ program on the map. Increased numbers of student have engaged in activities to support them through exams including our Chill Out Zones, therapy dogs, sessions on healthy eating, the importance of sleep and exam preparation. Students love the program saying, ‘please do more of this all the time’, ‘great anti-stress initiative’, ‘good way to make me take a break’.

**”**

Coral Black - Director, Site Services, University Library





# Engagement

## Presentations and seminars

**World Congress of Public Health, Melbourne**  
April 2017

**Monash University, Melbourne**  
April 2017

**Healthy Sydney University Seminar Series: Prof Sue Powell (Manchester Metropolitan University, UK)**  
April 2017

**Healthy Sydney University Seminar Series: Kirstan Corben (Alfred Health, Victoria)**  
May 2017

**Australian Library and Information Association panel, Sydney**  
June 2017

**Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA), Sydney**  
June 2017

**AIESEC Youth Global Leadership on Sustainable Development Goals, Sydney**  
July 2017

**Students Transitions Achievement Retention & Success (STARS) Conference, Adelaide**  
July 2017

**Healthy Sydney University Seminar Series: Rosie Tressler (CEO of mental health charity Student Minds UK)**  
August 2017

**Way Ahead NSW Mental Health Association Healthy Workplaces Workshop, Sydney**  
September 2017

**International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Calgary**  
October 2017

**European Public Health Conference, Stockholm**  
November 2017

**10th Asia Pacific Conference on Clinical Nutrition, Adelaide**  
November 2017



## Research

### Publications and manuscripts

#### Published

- Engelen, L, Chau, J, Goldbaum, E, Young, S, Hespe, D, Bauman, A (2017). Is Active Design changing the workplace? A natural pre-post experiment looking at health behaviour and workplace perceptions. *Work*, 56(2), 229-237.
- Engelen, L, Dhillon, H, Chau, J, Hespe, D, Bauman, A (2016). Do active design buildings change health behaviour and workplace perceptions? *Occupational Medicine*, 66(5), 408-411.
- Freeman, B, Rooney, K, Howse, E (2017). The obesity epidemic and sugar-sweetened beverages: a taxing time. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 207(6), 270-270e1.
- Grech, A, Hebden, L, Roy R, Allman-Farinelli, M (2017). Are products sold in university vending machines nutritionally poor? A food environment audit. *Nutrition & Dietetics*, 74(2), 185-190.
- Howse, E, Freeman, B, Wu, J, Rooney, K (2017). 'The university should promote health, but not enforce it': opinions and attitudes about the regulation of sugar-sweetened beverages in a university setting. *BMC Public Health*, 18(1), 1-10.
- Tam, R, Yassa, B, Parker, H, O'Connor, H, Allman-Farinelli, M (2017). University students' on-campus food purchasing behaviours, preferences, and opinions on food availability. *Nutrition*, 37, 7-13.
- Roy, R, Rangan, A, Hebden, L, Louie, J, Tang, L, Kay, J, Allman-Farinelli, M (2017). Dietary contribution of foods and beverages sold within a university campus and its effect on diet quality of young adults. *Nutrition*, 34, 118-123.

#### Forthcoming

- Chitty, K, Chow Chuen, J, Howse, E, Thow, A (2017). Content of University Alcohol Policies in New South Wales, Australia. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*.
- Dergham, N, Partridge, N, Kairey, L, Howse, E, Norman, C, Sim, K, Colagiuri, S, Davis, T, Allman-Farinelli, M. (2017) University Healthier Choice Catering Guidelines: development, implementation and social marketing. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*.
- Engelen, L, Chau J, Young S, Mackey M, Jeyapalan D, Bauman A (2017). Is Activity Based Working (ABW) impacting health, work performance and perceptions? A systematic review. *Building Research & Information*.
- Grech A, Freeman B, Jones A, Boylan S (2017). A systematic review of policies promoting and supporting sustainable food systems. *Food Policy*
- Jayanetti, A, Jones, A, Freeman, B (2017). Pizza, burgers and booze: Online marketing and promotion of food and drink to university students. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*.
- Johinke, R (2017). Wagging tails and happy faces: Partnering with students in a dog therapy initiative. *International Journal for Students as Partners*.
- Partridge, S, Howse, E, Llewellyn, G, Allman-Farinelli, M (2017). Young adult wellbeing in Australia: A scoping review. *International Journal of Public Health*.
- Shi, Y, Grech, A, Allman-Farinelli, M (2017). Change in the nutritional quality of products sold in university vending machines since implementation of the Health Star Rating in 2014; An environmental audit. *Nutrition*.
- Taylor, P, Saheb, R, Howse, E (2017). Creating healthier graduates, campuses and communities. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*.