



THE GEORGE INSTITUTE
for International Health



Salt Reduction Strategies in Australia

Professor Bruce Neal

Background

- > High blood pressure known to be leading cause of death in Australia
- > Likely driven by high levels of salt consumption deriving mostly from processed foods
 - > Though few recent or representative national data
- > Multiple recommendations for reduced salt consumption
 - > But little or no implementation
- > No coordinated strategy for salt reduction



Approach

- > Establish the Australian Division of World Action on Salt and Health (AWASH)
- > Primary goal is to reduce the average amount of salt consumed by Australians to 6g per day within the next 5 years (by 2012) through:
 - > An average twenty five percent reduction in the salt content of processed foods
 - > An average 25% reduction in salt use by the catering industry
 - > Increased population knowledge of the benefits of low salt diets
 - > Clear labelling of foods that makes the salt content immediately apparent



Strategy

- > Achieve consensus, buy-in, and action from broadest possible range of stakeholders
 - > Industry
 - > Government and regulators
 - > Media
 - > Scientists
 - > Non-governmental organizations
 - > General population



Progress to date

- > Launched the '*Drop the Salt!*' campaign
- > Established AWASH as the group leading salt reduction efforts in Australia
- > Achieved broad-based support from key national stakeholders
 - > Secretariat
 - > Advisory group
 - > Supporters
- > Developed, consulted upon and commenced implementation of a coherent national salt reduction strategy



Main Components of Current Work

- > Food industry strategy
- > Government engagement
- > Media and communications
- > Research and monitoring





Structure and Governance

- > Network of representatives from medical, scientific, industry and consumer organisations who endorse the health benefits of a population-wide reduction in dietary salt consumption
- > Governance
 - > Secretariat based at George Institute Bruce Neal, Jacqui Webster, Jane Austin and Caryl Nowson (Deakin University)
 - > Advisory Group representing industry, consumers, academia and the public sector



Summary

- > Much commonality with United Kingdom (UK) strategy
- > Key aspects of approach
 - > Government and industry focussed
 - > Non-combative
 - > Seeking voluntary changes
- > Main limitation is the few resources available



Contact Details

George Institute for International Health

Web: <http://www.thegeorgeinstitute.org>

Chair: **Dr. Bruce Neal**

Tel: (+61 2) 9993 4558

Email: bneal@george.org.au

Senior Project Manager: Jacqui Webster

Tel: (+61 2) 9993 4520

Email: jwebster@george.org.au



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