



Media Release

Embargoed until Midnight Saturday March 1, 2003

Improved nutrition leads to healthier Tasmanians

Tasmanians are more likely to be overweight, have diabetes, heart disease and other diet-related illnesses than their mainland counterparts.

Fruit and vegetable consumption is well below recommended levels and saturated fat intake in Tasmania is higher than the national average. These health issues are exacerbated by the small nutrition workforce in Tasmania. The State has less than half the national rate of dietitians per head of population.

A recent survey of Tasmanian high school students indicates these health problems may be most profound in rural areas of Tasmania where dietitians are scarce. The survey showed poorer dietary habits and greater disregard for health issues amongst rural students compared to urban students.

To address these issues, the Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services has developed a community nutrition service that uses innovative and flexible techniques to address nutrition issues in Tasmania.

“The community nutrition service delivers a range of strategies to improve nutrition and reduced diet-related disease in Tasmania,” says Ms Alison Ward of the Community Nutrition Service. “These strategies foster partnerships with other organisations across the government and non-government sectors to provide training to educators and local health and community workers to increase the reach of the community nutrition messages, especially in rural areas,” she added.

Ms Ward will present a paper on the Tasmanian Community Nutrition Unit at the 7th National Rural Health Conference, which will be held at the Grand Chancellor Hotel, Hobart from March 1-4, 2003. Ms Ward will speak at 11:15am on Sunday March 2 in the Ballroom Centre.

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Media Contact: Marilyn Chalkley 0418 624 304 ah and during conference. Office (02) 6260 6500

7th National Rural Health Conference, 1 – 4 March 2003, Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart
National Rural Health Alliance, Deakin, Canberra ph: 02 6285 4660 www.ruralhealth.org.au

7thNRHC.17/03