



# Supportive Environment & Policy

## Creating Workplaces That Support Healthy Eating

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### Overview

Promoting healthy eating in your workplace will mean change—both for the organization and for individual employees. Remember changing eating habits and taking part should always be voluntary. Not everyone may be ready to participate. In this section, you will find information on getting supervisors and managers to buy into the idea of a healthy eating program and to make changes to ensure that healthy choices are available to staff. For more background information, you will also find the Government of Nova Scotia's Healthy Workplace Policy and Capital Health's Healthy Eating Position Statement.

### Goal

To develop a Healthy Workplace™ by creating surroundings and conditions at work that support healthy eating.

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### Topics Included

1. **Diversity**
2. **What Managers Can Do:** Gaining the support of supervisors and/or managers for a workplace environment that encourages and sustains healthy eating practices
3. **Catering:** Ensuring that catered meetings, workshops, and other events in your workplace include healthy food choices
4. **Cafeterias, Canteens, and Other Eateries:** Ensuring that healthy food choices are offered in cafeterias, canteens, and other eateries where employees eat
5. **Vending Machines:** Ensuring that the vending machines in your workplace offer healthy food choices
6. **Fundraising:** Ensuring that fundraising activities in your workplace are supportive of healthy eating guidelines
7. **Policies**
  - a. Government of Nova Scotia Healthy Workplace Policy
  - b. Capital Health, Healthy Eating Position Statement

Each topic is organized under the following headings:

- Purpose
- Suggested Activities
- Materials

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## Diversity

Our social culture has become very diverse, and diversity is one of the key values in the Nova Scotia public service. Valuing diversity in people and accepting our differences and similarities is the first step in creating a healthy work environment. When conducting any of the activities listed in this resource, please remember to acknowledge the importance of diversity and create an environment that is welcoming and comfortable for everyone. For guidance, please refer to the following Diversity Checklist.

### Diversity Checklist

Use this Diversity Checklist when planning your healthy eating activities.

- Be sensitive to and aware of different religious observances and cultural food preferences of employees.
- Design activities so that everyone can participate at some level, regardless of any physical limitations.
- Consider dietary requirements when ordering foods for an activity such as a breakfast nutrition session.
- When using brochures, posters, videos, or other media resources for health education, ensure that they reflect the diversity of Nova Scotia.
- Consider individuals' disabilities and ask ahead of time what supports they might need to participate fully in activities.
- Ensure that diverse perspectives and views are honoured and respected.
- Understand that perceptions of health, wellness, and preventive health services have different meanings to different cultural or ethnic groups.

# What Managers Can Do

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## **Purpose**

To gain the support of supervisors and/or managers for a workplace environment that encourages and sustains healthy eating practices

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## **Suggested Activity**

Discuss the following handout with the manager.

## **Supporting Healthy Eating in the Workplace**

The Nova Scotia government is working to establish a healthy, safe, and supportive workplace for its employees. The work environment can positively influence the health of employees. Healthy eating is a personal choice and should always be voluntary. The goal of being a health-promoting workplace means that the environment or culture can make healthier eating for employees an easier choice, and that becomes a win-win for employees and the employer.

The success of health promotion initiatives in the workplace depends heavily on management commitment and support. See [www.gov.ns.ca/psc/healthyworkplace](http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/healthyworkplace) for more information on the Business Case for a Healthy Workplace™.

As a manager, you can take a broad view of the workplace and consider how the work environment might be influencing the eating patterns of your employees. For example, if employees are working long hours without breaks, are regularly extending their workday, or are working shifts, their meal routines can be disrupted, leading to poor food choices or skipping meals.

Managers are in a unique position to influence policy development in the workplace. You can work with others to develop corporate or departmental policy related to healthy eating. Guidelines can also be developed at individual worksites. If there is uncertainty about the need for guidelines in a certain area, they could be piloted for a specific time and evaluated.

There are many ways that managers can show their commitment and support for healthy eating in the workplace. It doesn't have to be expensive or time-consuming. You can make simple changes and take small steps. Here are just a few.

- Complete the self-assessment tool *Be the Manager You'd Love to Have—Managing a Healthy Workplace™*. It has been developed to help managers determine how well they are doing in supporting the elements of a Healthy Workplace™. You can use the checklist on your own or hold a meeting with your employees to select answers. The tool can be used over and over again to chart progress. It may be completed in its entirety, or you may choose to fill out individual sections of the tool, such as Health and Lifestyle Practices. You can download this healthy workplace tool from [www.gov.ns.ca/psc/pdf/HealthyWorkplace/Managers.pdf](http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/pdf/HealthyWorkplace/Managers.pdf) or see the attached CD.
- Share information about the *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Guide* with employees and encourage them to participate in workplace awareness sessions and skill-building activities.
- Model healthy eating by making healthy choices and participating in awareness sessions and skill-building activities.
- Collaborate with employees to assess how well their workplace environment and culture support healthy eating.
- Encourage employees to make suggestions and voice any concerns.
- Reassure employees that participation is voluntary.
- Support staff in taking breaks away from their work and walk the talk yourself.
- Encourage employees to visit the Take Back the Lunch Break page at [www.gov.ns.ca/psc/healthyworkplace](http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/healthyworkplace).
- Schedule meetings during times that do not coincide with lunch breaks. If it is necessary to meet over lunch, provide healthy food choices.
- Ensure that employees have a safe, clean place to eat with a fridge, microwave, and toaster available.
- Try tasting a new fruit or vegetable at a staff meeting.
- Set up a canteen or pantry that allows employees to purchase healthy food items at a reasonable cost.

- Provide a water cooler to encourage staff to drink water more often.
- Provide a healthy eating library or bookshelf with credible cookbooks, recipes, and videos.
- Provide time for employees to attend awareness sessions; try not to offer all sessions as Lunch and Learns.
- Consider diversity, food, and allergies when bringing food into the workplace.
- Consider incentives like small prizes to encourage participation in healthy-eating competitions or promotions.
- Work with your healthy workplace committee to develop catering guidelines (review the *Put Health on the Agenda* table tent as a start).
- Ask cafeterias and restaurants in your workplace to offer healthy choices.
- Review workplace fundraising for charities or other events with employees and encourage options that do not rely solely on the sale of less-nutritious food items.
- Use locally grown fresh produce wherever possible.
- Develop food safety guidelines for bringing food into the workplace for potlucks and celebrations.
- Ensure that any vending machines at worksites offer healthy choices.
- Recognize employees for adopting healthier eating habits by featuring them in the departmental newsletter or on a healthy workplace website (if they are willing).
- Review *Guide to Nutrition Promotion in the Workplace* by Nutrition Resource Centre of Ontario Public Health Association for more information on workplace nutrition programs, workplace nutrition assessment tools, sample policies, and program logic models. The guide can be downloaded from <http://action.web.ca/home/nutritio/attach/nrc-workplace-guide.pdf>.

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## Materials

- Diversity Checklist
- Supporting *Healthy Eating in the Workplace* handout
- *Be the Manager You'd Love to Have—Managing a Healthy Workplace™* (Nova Scotia Public Service Commission, Healthy Workplace, in partnership with the National Quality Institute) (See the attached CD or go to [www.gov.ns.ca/psc/pdf/HealthyWorkplace/Managers.pdf](http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/pdf/HealthyWorkplace/Managers.pdf))
- Posters: *Take Back the Lunch Break* (To order posters contact Nova Scotia Public Service Commission, Healthy Workplace)
- Postcards: *Take Back the Lunch Break* (See sleeve inserts at the back of the binder. To order multiple copies contact Nova Scotia Public Service Commission, Healthy Workplace)
- Table tent: *Put Health on the Agenda* (See sleeve inserts at the back of the binder. To order multiple copies contact Nova Scotia Public Service Commission, Healthy Workplace)
- Fact sheet: *Step Right Up to Healthy Eating: Food Allergy and Food Intolerances—What's the Difference?* Dietitians of Canada (See Additional Resources, p. 255)
- *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Action Plan Worksheet* (See Additional Resources, p. 221)
- *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Implementer's Evaluation Worksheet* (See Additional Resources, p. 235)

# Catering

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## Purpose

To ensure that catered meetings, workshops, and other events in your workplace include healthy food choices

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## Suggested Activities

- Assess your caterers' food and beverage options using the Healthy Eating Suggestions for Catered Events checklist on the following page.
  - Use the Healthy Eating Suggestions for Catered Events checklist to choose healthier food choices for events.
  - Review the *Put Health on the Agenda* table tent for additional ideas on making your events healthier.
  - Discuss potential changes with your caterer (e.g., offering more sandwiches made with whole grain bread or wraps than with white bread or wraps).
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## Materials

- Diversity Checklist
- Healthy Eating Suggestions for Catered Events
- Table tent: *Put Health on the Agenda* (See sleeve inserts at the back of the binder. To order multiple copies contact Nova Scotia Public Service Commission, Healthy Workplace)
- *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Action Plan Worksheet* (See Additional Resources, p. 221)
- *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Implementer's Evaluation Worksheet* (See Additional Resources, p.235)

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## Healthy Eating Suggestions for Catered Events

Use the following food choices to replace or add to other, less healthy choices:

### Beverages

- Ice water
- Milk (2% MF or less)
- Chocolate milk (2% MF or less)
- Fortified soy beverage
- 100% fruit juice
- 100% vegetable juice

### Breakfast Meetings

- Fresh fruit
- Fruit smoothies
- Yogurt—flavoured (2% MF or less)
- Bagels—3 ½" diameter or less, served with low-fat cream cheese, jam, or jelly
- Muffins—small or mini (5 g fat or less per muffin)
- Fruit bread (5 g fat or less per oz.)—do not serve with margarine or butter
- Beverages from the list of recommended beverages

### Snacks

- Fresh fruit—cut up and offered with yogurt dip (2% MF or less)
- Raw vegetables—cut up and offered with fat-free or low-fat dressing or salsa dip
- Pretzels—served with sweet mustard dip
- Tortilla chips—baked and offered with salsa dip
- Popcorn (5 g fat or less per serving)
- Whole grain crackers (5 g fat or less per serving)
- Low-fat cheese (20% MF or less)
- Hummus or salsa dip
- Angel food cake with fruit topping
- Beverages from the list of recommended beverages

## Lunches and Dinners

- Sandwiches made with low-fat mayonnaise; whole grain bread, pitas, or wraps; and fillings such as turkey, lean beef, lean ham, salmon, tuna, egg, humus, vegetables, and/or lower-fat cheese
- Broth-based or tomato-based soups
- Entrée with lean meat, poultry, or fish that has been prepared with little or no fat (e.g., roasted, grilled, broiled, or baked) and gravy on the side
- Vegetarian entrées, such as a bean casserole
- Lower-fat ethnic entrees, such as a Chinese chicken and vegetable stir-fry
- Fresh or steamed vegetables (with butter or cream sauces on the side)
- Brown rice or whole grain pasta
- Salads with low-fat or fat-free dressing dressing on the side
- Whole grain breads and grain products
- Lower-fat/lower-calorie desserts, such as cut-up fresh fruit with yogurt dip (2% MF or less); sherbet or sorbet; angel food cake with fruit topping; and low-fat fruit cobbler or crisp
- Beverages from the list of recommended beverages

Information adapted from the University of Minnesota School of Public Health publication *Guidelines for Offering Healthy Foods at Meetings, Seminars and Catered Events*, 2004.

# Cafeterias, Canteens, and Other Eateries

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**Purpose** To ensure that healthy food choices are offered in cafeterias, canteens, and other eateries where employees eat

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- Suggested Activities**
- Assess the food and beverage options offered by your cafeteria, canteen, and other eateries using the Healthy Eating Checklist for Cafeterias, Canteens, and Other Eateries on the following page.
  - If any of the food providers do not meet all the criteria listed on the Healthy Eating Checklist for Cafeterias, Canteens, and Other Eateries, meet with their management to discuss your findings and whether it would be possible for them to meet all the criteria.
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- Materials**
- Diversity Checklist
  - Healthy Eating Checklist for Cafeterias, Canteens, and Other Eateries
  - *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Action Plan Worksheet* (See Additional Resources, p. 221)
  - *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Implementer's Evaluation Worksheet* (See Additional Resources, p. 235)

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## Healthy Eating Checklist for Cafeterias, Canteens, and Other Eateries

Do your cafeterias, canteens and other eateries meet all the criteria listed below? Check off the box for each item below if the criterion is being met. Note: Some criteria may not be applicable.

### Offered Daily Grain Products

- At least half of all pre-made sandwiches on bread, bagels, pitas, rolls, tortilla wraps, etc., use whole grains such as 100% whole wheat, cracked wheat, multigrain, or whole rye.
- In made-to-order sandwich bars, at least half of bread choices are whole grain.
- At least half of breakfast cereals offered are whole grain, such as whole wheat, rolled oats, and whole oats, and provide at least 2 grams of fibre per serving.
- At least one low-fat grain snack (e.g., plain popcorn, cereal, pretzels, or lower-fat cookies such as social tea, arrowroot, ginger snaps, or Fig Newtons) is available.

### Vegetables and Fruit

At least three or four of the following vegetable and fruit choices are offered (excluding Caesar salad, deep-fried vegetables, vegetables in cream or other high-fat sauces or dressings):

- Fruit (1 piece)
- Fruit salad (125 ml/½ cup minimum)
- 100% fruit juice (125 ml/4 oz.)
- Frozen 100% fruit juice bars
- 100% vegetable juice (125 ml/4 oz. minimum)
- Leafy green or vegetable salad (250 ml/1 cup minimum)
- Baked, boiled or mashed potato (prepared in a lower-fat way)
- Tomato sauce, e.g., on pasta (125 ml/½ cup minimum)
- Stir-fried vegetables (125 ml/½ cup minimum)
- Other vegetables (125 ml/½ cup minimum)

## Milk and Alternatives

- At least two lower-fat (2%, 1%, or skim) plain or chocolate milk choices or milk alternatives fortified with calcium and vitamin D, such as soy beverages are available.
- At least two choices of the following milk snacks are available:
  - 20% MF or less cheese (50g maximum)
  - 2% MF or less yogurt (175 g or  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup minimum)
  - Milk pudding (175 g or  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup maximum)
  - Frozen iced milk or frozen yogurt—no more than 3 g of fat per 100 calories (250 ml/1 cup maximum)

## Meat and Alternatives

- At least one meat, fish, poultry, or vegetarian entrée choice is available (could include a salad entrée that contains a meat or meat alternative) is prepared in a lower-fat way (such as by steaming, poaching, broiling, roasting, baking, or barbecuing).
- Prepared sandwich fillings (e.g., tuna, chicken salad, egg salad) use low-fat mayonnaise or other low-fat dressings/mixes.

## Daily Specials

- All daily specials contain at least three of the four food groups according to Canada's Food Guide.

## Other

- Calorie-reduced or fat-free salad dressings are used and/or are available (lemon wedges or oil and vinegar in separate containers are acceptable).
- Other fat-based condiments, dips, spreads, and sauces/gravies are lower fat whenever possible (e.g., sour cream, mayonnaise).
- Upon request, other fat-based condiments, dips, spreads, and sauces/gravies are served on the side or not at all.
- A substitute for French fries/poutine is offered if they are served as part of an entrée. The substitute could be baked, boiled, or mashed potatoes, vegetables, salad, rice, or other grain products prepared in a lower-fat way.
- Information about ingredients is available upon request.
- Water (tap and/or bottled) is available.

Information adapted with permission from *LifeWorks*, Hastings and Prince Edward Counties Health Unit, Belleville, Ontario publication *Healthy Eating Workplace Binder*, 2004.

# Vending Machines

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## **Purpose**

To ensure that the vending machines in your workplace offer healthy food choices

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## **Suggested Activities**

- Assess the food and beverage options available in the vending machines in your workplace using the Healthy Eating Checklist for Vending Machines on the following page.
  - Use the Vending Machine Suggestions list of suggested foods and beverages at the end of this activity to choose healthier items for those machines.
  - Discuss potential changes with your vending machine supplier.
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## **Materials**

- Diversity Checklist
- Healthy Eating Checklist for Vending Machines
- Vending Machine Suggestions
- Food and Beverage Standards for Nova Scotia Public Schools ([www.ednet.ns.ca/healthy\\_eating/](http://www.ednet.ns.ca/healthy_eating/)) carries a detailed listing of healthy eating choices for vending machines, cafeterias, and canteens in public schools.
- *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Action Plan Worksheet* (See Additional Resources, p. 221)
- *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Implementer's Evaluation Worksheet* (See Additional Resources, p. 235)

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## Healthy Eating Checklist for Vending Machines

The vending machine(s) in your workplace should meet all the criteria listed below. Check off the box for each item below if the criteria are being met. See also Vending Machine Suggestions on the following page.

- At least half of vending machine choices are dedicated to healthier foods and/or beverages.
- A variety of 100% fruit choices is offered.
- At least two whole grain choices are offered.

### If the vending machine is refrigerated

- A variety of vegetable choices is offered.
- A variety of healthy beverages, including at least two milk choices, is offered.
- Yogurt and other milk product choices (other than fluid milk) are offered.
- If entrées are available, a lower-fat vegetarian entrée is offered.
- Lower-fat and higher-fibre entrée choices are offered.

Information adapted with permission from *LifeWorks*, Hastings and Prince Edward Counties Health Unit, Belleville, Ontario publication *Healthy Eating Workplace Binder*, 2004.

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## Vending Machine Suggestions

### Beverages\*

- bottled water
- 100% fruit juice or vegetable juice
- white and chocolate milk (skim, 1%, 2%)

### Grain Products

- breakfast cereal (single servings)
- low-fat cookies (digestive biscuits, fig-filled, etc.)
- whole grain crackers
- lower-fat muffins
- Rice Krispie squares
- pretzels
- low-fat granola bars and cereal bars
- rice cakes

### Milk and Alternatives

- lower-fat cheese (20% MF or less)\*
- lower-fat yogurt (2% MF or less)\*
- ice milk bars\*\*
- frozen yogurt\*\*
- milk puddings

### Meat and Alternatives

- sandwiches made on whole grain bread, pitas, or wraps with little or no mayonnaise and fillings such as turkey, lean beef, lean ham, salmon, tuna, egg, vegetables, and/or lower-fat cheese\*
- vegetarian dishes with legumes such as beans or chick peas\*
- small packages of trail mix
- small packages of nuts/seeds
- canned soups (lower in fat and reduced salt)

### Vegetables and Fruit

- fresh fruit
- canned fruit (single serving)
- vegetable sticks\*
- salads with low-fat dressings on the side\*
- frozen 100% juice bars\*\*
- apple sauce
- dried fruit (e.g., raisins)

\* Need to be kept in refrigerated vending machines

\*\* Need to be kept in a freezer

Information adapted with permission from *LifeWorks*, Hastings and Prince Edward Counties Health Unit, Belleville, Ontario publication *Healthy Eating Workplace Binder*, 2004.

# Fundraising

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## Purpose

To ensure that fundraising activities in your workplace are supportive of healthy eating guidelines

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## Suggested Activities

- If food is involved in fundraising activities in your workplace, assess whether they promote the use of healthier choices by referring to *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* (for more information about this resource see the Introduction and Background section of this manual). Foods that should be used less often for fundraising are those high in fat or sugar and low in fibre and nutrients.
  - Review the Food and Non-Food Fundraising Suggestions on the following page to get ideas for fundraising activities.
  - *Food and Nutrition Policy for Public Schools*, produced by the Nova Scotia Departments of Education and Health Promotion and Protection includes a section on Fundraising with Healthy Food and Beverages ([www.ednet.ns.ca/healthy\\_eating/pdf/NS-Fundraising-LoRes.pdf](http://www.ednet.ns.ca/healthy_eating/pdf/NS-Fundraising-LoRes.pdf)). This document has many creative ideas and some suggestions that might be useful for workplace fundraising.
  - Discuss potential ideas with employees who are involved in fundraising efforts.
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## Materials

- Diversity Checklist
- Food and Non-Food Fundraising Suggestions
- *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Action Plan Worksheet* (See Additional Resources, p. 221)
- *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Implementer's Evaluation Worksheet* (See Additional Resources, p. 235)

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## Food and Non-food Fundraising Suggestions

Foods that should be used less often for fundraising are those that are high in fat and sugar and low in fibre and nutrients. You might consider using some non-food items instead of food items for your fundraising activities. Here are some suggestions for food and non-food fundraising items:

- raffle tickets for a basket (e.g., fruit and cheese, picnic, bath)
- books (e.g., cookbooks, health books, novels) and magazines
- household items such as garbage bags, gift paper, etc.
- flowers, bulbs, or seeds
- fabric lunch bags or tote bags
- greeting cards (get children of employees to design them)
- T-shirts
- dried and roasted coffee beans
- citrus fruit
- rummage and garage sales
- car washes
- workplace healthy cookbook (This takes time, but it can be very successful. Employees submit healthy recipes that are compiled into a cookbook. A committee decides on parameters to ensure that the recipes meet healthy eating guidelines. Advertising space can be sold to local merchants, and sponsors, for example, local service clubs, can be found to cover the cost of printing.)

Information adapted with permission from *LifeWorks*, Hastings and Prince Edward Counties Health Unit, Belleville, Ontario publication *Healthy Eating Workplace Binder*, 2004.



# 6.6 Healthy Workplace Policy

## Policy Statement

The Government of Nova Scotia is committed to providing a healthy, safe and supportive workplace which will enhance employee health and job satisfaction, and enable employees to contribute most effectively in their roles of delivering high-quality public service.

This policy gives direction to Government's Healthy Workplace Initiative and provides the umbrella or overarching context under which individual policies, programs and activities comprising a comprehensive healthy workplace approach will fall.

## Guiding Principles

Efforts to meet Government's commitment to a healthy, safe and supportive workplace will be supported by the following guiding principles:

- A positive, healthy work environment contributes to an organization's success. Healthy employees are essential to achieving a productive workforce.
- An individual's health is influenced by many interconnected factors. Therefore, efforts to promote employee health must take a comprehensive healthy workplace approach that addresses as many of these factors as possible.
- A corporate healthy workplace culture responds to the diverse and unique needs of employees within individual departments.
- Participation by employees at all levels is key to successfully creating a sustainable, healthy workplace.

## Definitions

### **COMPREHENSIVE HEALTHY WORKPLACE APPROACH<sup>1</sup>**

An effective healthy workplace excellence approach to defining, implementing and sustaining a healthy, safe and supportive workplace that has three key elements:

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<sup>1</sup>The Nova Scotia Government has adopted the National Quality Institute's comprehensive healthy workplace approach. The National Quality Institute is an independent, not-for-profit organization committed to enhancing Canada's national well-being and global leadership through the adoption of management principles and practices that reinforce and sustain excellence and healthy workplace environments.

- **Individual health and lifestyle practices**, such as mental health, physical activity, eating habits, sleep habits, smoking, alcohol and drug abuse.
- **Workplace culture and supportive environment**. This includes, but is not limited to, work/life balance, the organization and design of work, a sense of control over one's work, positive and respectful relationships with co-workers, supervisors and clients, adequate training, a sense of fairness and fun at work, and access to support during difficult times.
- **Physical environment and occupational health and safety**. This refers to the quality of the physical work environment which impacts the health and well-being of employees. It includes elements such as noise control, air quality and ergonomics, and involves working in partnership with occupational health and safety programs.

#### **DEPARTMENT**

Any department, office or public service entity established by the Government of Nova Scotia, as identified under Category I in Appendix I-A of the Management Manuals Policy.

#### **DEPUTY HEAD**

The deputy minister or designate of a department or the senior administrative officer of a government agency not reporting through a deputy minister.

#### **EMPLOYEE**

Employee refers to

- an employee as defined in the *Civil Service Act*
- an employee as defined in the *Corrections Act*
- an employee as defined in the *Highway Workers Collective Bargaining Act*, or
- any other person directly employed by the Province of Nova Scotia.

#### **HEALTHY WORKPLACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

An interdepartmental committee, chaired by the Public Service Commission and reporting to the Public Service Commissioner, which provides advice to government on a comprehensive healthy workplace approach and supports departments as they develop their own healthy workplace initiatives.

## **Policy Objectives**

- To encourage individual employee health practices that enhance physical and mental health and well-being.
- To promote and sustain a healthy and supportive organizational culture across government.
- To provide a safe and healthy physical work environment for all employees.

## **Application**

This policy applies to all civil servants whose terms and conditions are set out in accordance with the *Civil Service Act* and regulations and other direct employees of the provincial government, including all bargaining unit employees.

## **Policy Directives**

- Departments will support the interdepartmental Healthy Workplace Advisory Committee by identifying an appropriate staff member to actively participate on the Committee and assist the Committee in its role to promote, advise and report on performance in the development of a corporate comprehensive healthy workplace.
- Departments will demonstrate their support for workplace health by establishing coordinated active healthy workplace programs, supported by a committee structure, that are responsive to the expressed needs of their employees and consistent with the Government of Nova Scotia's Healthy Workplace Policy.
- Departments will be required to report their progress on establishing healthy workplace initiatives and the outcomes and impacts of those initiatives. Progress reports will be submitted to the PSC on a regular basis in a manner to be determined and communicated by the PSC.

## **Policy Guidelines**

- The principles of this policy and impacts on workplace health should be considered by all departments in their management decision-making, day to day operations, and human resource practices.
- To identify meaningful and effective healthy workplace initiatives for their workplaces, and to determine the effectiveness of initiatives once implemented, departments should conduct an employee needs assessment on a periodic basis that addresses all three elements of a comprehensive healthy workplace. This will help to ensure that initiatives implemented are responsive to the needs of employees. Survey instruments and focus group sessions are examples of approaches to conducting a needs assessment.

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- An individual department's healthy workplace program should be comprised of a variety of elements tailored to the needs of its employees. These elements could include, for example, Joint Occupational Health and Safety (JOHS) Committees, healthy workplace committees, recognition programs, information sessions on topics such as healthy eating, physical fitness or stress management, a strategy to ensure effective internal communications, and training plans for employees to help them develop the skills and knowledge they need to confidently carry out their work.
- In implementing healthy workplace programs, departments and their departmental coordinating committees are encouraged to seek advice and guidance from the Public Service Commission, as well as from the Healthy Workplace Advisory Committee, which can share information about the comprehensive healthy workplace approach that has been adopted, as well as healthy workplace activity that is underway corporately and within other departments.
- Costs associated with departmental healthy workplace programs will be managed from within departmental budgets and/or through voluntary participation by employees in initiatives for which they may have a particular interest, such as a healthy eating program.

## **Accountability**

### **PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

The Public Service Commission is responsible for providing guidance to departments on their healthy workplace programs. The PSC is also responsible for coordinating regular progress reporting on healthy workplace activity across departments. In addition, the PSC will seek input from departments and make recommendations on corporate healthy workplace programs.

### **HEALTHY WORKPLACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Healthy Workplace Advisory Committee is responsible for promoting, guiding and informing government's healthy workplace initiative. The Committee provides support to departments as they implement healthy workplace programs, monitors progress and makes recommendations to the Public Service Commissioner on how to sustain a corporate healthy workplace culture.

### **DEPUTY HEADS**

Deputy Heads are responsible for ensuring their departments are compliant with this policy. Deputy Heads are also responsible for integrating the guiding principles of this policy within their department's operations and ensuring the implementation of the policy's directives within their departments.

## **MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS**

Managers and supervisors are responsible for modelling the guiding principles of this policy and operationalizing healthy work practices within their own work units.

## **EMPLOYEES**

Employees are responsible for taking reasonable care and precaution to protect their health and safety and that of others in their workplace, while contributing to a supportive and respectful work environment. Employees are encouraged to participate in available and supported healthy workplace programs that meet their needs and interests.

## **Monitoring**

The Public Service Commission is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness and consistent application of this policy. The Public Service Commission may periodically conduct audits of departmental practices and request access to data maintained by departments with respect to this policy.

## **References**

*Civil Service Act*

*Corrections Act*

*Highway Workers Collective Bargaining Act*

Management Manuals Policy

National Quality Institute Healthy Workplace Progressive Excellence Program Criteria

## **Enquiries**

Strategic Support Services, Public Service Commission (902) 424-7660

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# Capital Health

## HEALTHY EATING

### Position Statement

**EMT Approved June 2005**

#### INTRODUCTION

The Healthy Eating Initiative is linked to the strategic direction of creating a healthy workplace (HWP). A goal within this strategic direction is to adopt a comprehensive approach to healthy eating at Capital Health that aims to assist employees, physicians, volunteers and visitors to improve their nutritional health. **Note:** the term “healthy food choices” used throughout this position statement refers to both food and beverages.

#### FRAMEWORK TO ACTION

- 1.0 Capital Health supports healthy food choices district-wide and will:
  - 1.1 Offer and promote healthier choices, including vegetables and fruit, in restaurants, caterings, vending machines and retail areas
  - 1.2 Promote and provide point of purchase and nutrition education programs (example: nutrition labeling, inventory of nutrition education programs district wide, lunch & learn nutrition information sessions)
  - 1.3 Develop guidelines for healthy food choices offered in restaurants, caterings (internal and external), vending machines and retail areas
  - 1.4 Support locally grown and produced healthy food products when possible.
- 2.0 The departments of Food & Nutrition Services and Healthy Workplace are the leaders of the Healthy Eating Initiative.

#### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1. Increased accessibility and affordability (excluding price subsidization) of healthy food choices within Capital Health facilities, as measured by on-going food service and retail audits.

2. Increased satisfaction of employees, physicians, volunteers and visitors regarding choice and access to healthy foods, as measured by on-going surveys and/or focus groups.
3. Increased availability and access to nutrition education programs for employees, physicians, volunteers and visitors.
4. Increased knowledge and awareness of healthy food choices available within Capital Health among employees, physicians, volunteers and visitors, as measured by on-going surveys and/or focus groups.
5. Increased healthy food selection among employees, physicians, volunteers and visitors at Capital Health, as measured by on-going surveys and/or focus groups.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

1. Good nutrition is essential for health and general well being. Evidence supports the importance of nutrition in the promotion of health, as well as the prevention of specific chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and certain cancers.<sup>1</sup> “Healthy Eating Nova Scotia”<sup>2</sup> has identified accessibility and affordability of healthy food choices as an area of concern for Nova Scotians and indicates that making healthy food choices is more difficult now than ever before. Capital Health, being one of the largest employers in Nova Scotia, can have an impact on the health and well-being of the employees, physicians and volunteers who work here, and visitors.
2. Worksite health promotion programs have been successful in attracting and retaining staff, reducing absenteeism, enhancing productivity, improving both staff morale and the public image of the employer.<sup>3</sup>
3. The Healthy Eating Strategy will be based on best available evidence.
4. Health promotion action principles (Ottawa Charter, 1986) will guide the work of the Healthy Eating Project Team: build healthy public policy, create supportive environments, strengthen community action, develop personal skills, and reorient health services.
5. Retail and restaurant operations are run as business ventures, following recognized accounting principles. Fiscal accountability means the best responsible price to support healthy food choices, but does not include price subsidization.

## **DEFINITIONS**

A **healthy diet**, as outlined in Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating, includes patterns of selecting foods to meet energy and nutrient needs, promote health, and minimize the risk of nutrition-related chronic disease.<sup>4</sup>

**Healthy eating** incorporates the principles outlined in Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating. It also includes the fact that all foods, in moderation, can be a part of a healthy diet. <sup>5</sup>

**Accessibility**, as referred to in this position statement, pertains to pricing, product and promotion (i.e. pricing of healthy food choices compared to their less healthy counterpart, promotion of healthy food choices over their less healthy counterpart, and the availability of healthy food products).

## **RELATED CAPITAL HEALTH DOCUMENTS**

Project Statement Healthy Eating: *Revised* February 2005

## **REFERENCES**

1. GPI Atlantic (October 2002). The Cost of Chronic Disease in Nova Scotia
2. Healthy Eating Nova Scotia (January 2005). Healthy Eating Action Group, Nova Scotia Alliance for Healthy Eating and Physical Activity
3. Mirolla, M. (2004). *The Cost of Chronic Disease in Nova Scotia*. Retrieved February 23, 2004, from <http://www.gpiatlantic.org/pdf/health/chroniccanada.pdf>
4. Health Canada. Office of Nutrition Policy and Promotion Retrieved February 21, 2005 from [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpfb-dgpsa/onpp-bppn/revision\\_food\\_guide\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpfb-dgpsa/onpp-bppn/revision_food_guide_e.html)
5. Nutrition Resource Centre (June 2002). Guide to Nutrition Promotion in the Workplace. p 90

## **SIGNIFICANT DATES**

Date EMT Approved June 2005

Date to be reviewed June 2007