

Southern Grampians & Glenelg Community Food Security Needs Assessment

FACT SHEET



By the *Food Security Working Group*

Southern Grampians & Glenelg Primary Care Partnership

'Food security – access and supply' is one of five health promotion priority areas of the Southern Grampians & Glenelg Primary Care Integrated Health Promotion Plan 2009-2012.








Food Security is defined by VicHealth as “the state in which all persons obtain nutritionally adequate, culturally acceptable, safe foods regularly through local non-emergency sources”.

There are three key dimensions of food insecurity:

Availability	Physical availability & affordability of food, i.e. prices, location
Access	Economic and physical access to food, i.e. income, transport
Use	Dietary intake, knowledge, skills, food preferences, lifestyle, time

Member agencies of the Southern Grampians & Glenelg Primary Care Partnership formed the *Food Security Working Group* to research and address local food insecurity issues. The group conducted a local community food security needs assessment across the catchment over 2009 and 2010.

Seven research methods were conducted:

-  Discussion paper
-  Community profile
-  Food & nutrition program audit (49 initiatives)
-  Victorian Healthy Food Basket Survey (10 stores)
-  Food Access Survey (536 households)
-  Focus groups (58 people)
-  Mapping of food outlets & public transport

Residents vulnerable to food insecurity experiences include: people living in small outlying or isolated towns not serviced by a supermarket, people without access to a car, people living in large households, people with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, single parent households with young people, young people at risk of homelessness, older people living alone, low-income earners, people living in government or rented accommodation and areas of marked socio-economic disadvantage.

Food availability

Quality and variety of food in supermarkets in major towns is adequate. However, fresh food sold at general stores in smaller outlying towns is less available and sold at higher prices and not all small towns have a food outlet.

Food access

Households with limited financial resources are vulnerable to food insecurity. Households residing in areas of relative socio-economic disadvantage are at particular risk, including pockets of Portland, Heywood and Merino in Glenelg Shire, and Hamilton and Glenthompson in the Southern Grampians Shire. Transportation limitations can restrict shopping frequency and access to food, especially for community members with low mobility, disability, large distances to food outlets and difficulty carrying shopping home.

Food use

Households with food insecurity managed by reducing their intake of fresh fruit, vegetables and meat, eating energy dense, pre-packaged or take-away foods and eating cheap meals such as toast or noodles. Other households cut down on the size of meals or skipped meals. Some people lacked the knowledge and skills to budget, shop and cook healthy foods.

Emergency food relief

Not everyone at risk of food insecurity knows how and where to access emergency food relief services. Referral pathways, stigma and embarrassment are common deterrents to accessing these services.

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For more details download the report - *Southern Grampians and Glenelg Community Food Security Needs Assessment*, available at www.sggpcp.com



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