



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.¹ “Healthy Eating Nova Scotia”² 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.³
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.⁴

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. ⁵

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
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