

## *Munch & Move* Healthy Menu Planning Workshop Evaluation

### Report

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# Executive summary

*Munch & Move* is a state-wide initiative of NSW Health that supports the healthy development of children from birth to five years of age attending NSW early childhood education and care (ECEC) services by promoting physical activity, healthy eating behaviours and reduced small screen time. The program provides training, resources and ongoing support to staff working in ECEC services – including providing ECEC service cooks with professional development through the provision of Healthy Menu Planning (HMP) workshops across NSW.

The NSW Office of Preventive Health (OPH) commissioned Kantar Public Division to investigate the effectiveness of the HMP workshops. This research sought to:

- Evaluate the impact of the HMP workshops on the knowledge, understanding, awareness and confidence of ECEC service cooks and leaders around healthy menu planning and the tools and resources designed to support this.
- Identify potential improvements to the HMP workshops.
- Identify whether there is any intention to change menus following attendance.
- Identify the barriers and facilitators to implementing menu changes.

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. This included a pre and post workshop survey administered at six HMP workshops. The pre workshop survey was completed by n= 82 workshop participants and the post was completed by n=76 (this equates to a 76% and 70% response rate respectively). Following the workshops, a total of n=30 qualitative interviews were conducted, with interviews taking place ~2 weeks after each workshop. Fieldwork was conducted from September to December 2019.

A summary of findings from this research is set out below.

## 1.1 Summary of findings

### Perception of the workshop following attendance

There was an overwhelmingly positive response to the workshop, with both cooks and lead educators expressing their appreciation at having the opportunity to attend training to increase or validate their knowledge and skills around providing healthy and nutritious meals for children in ECEC. Nearly all (97%) attendees found the workshop content 'relevant/very relevant', with interview participants indicating they were impressed with the breadth and depth of the information covered in the workshop. Participants spoke highly of the workshop presenters – with 87% of participants indicating they felt the presenter had 'excellent' knowledge, while the remaining 13% felt their knowledge was 'good'. The presenters were also praised for establishing a supportive environment in which participants could learn and share their thoughts, ideas and concerns. Participants felt that the workshop resources aided the delivery of the workshop content - with 76% of them saying they were 'very useful' while 24% said they were 'useful'. Given the overwhelmingly positive response to the workshop – in terms of its relevance, usefulness, aptitude of the presenters and quality of the resources – the majority of participants felt the workshop exceeded their expectations. Almost three quarters (73%) of participants gave this response, with 29% indicating that it did so 'greatly'.

### **Impact of the workshop on perceived importance of healthy menus**

Recognising the importance of providing healthy and nutritious food to children in care underpins the disposition and resolve of cooks and educators to provide healthy menus. It is therefore highly encouraging to observe increases in workshop participants' understanding of why providing healthy menus is important. Prior to the workshop, 68% of participants felt they had very good knowledge of why healthy eating is important for children, which increased to 75% following the workshop.

### **Impact of the workshop on knowledge, understanding and skills**

The workshop also resulted in a significant increase in participants' knowledge, understanding and skills around healthy menu planning, including in terms of:

- The National Healthy Eating Guidelines, *Munch & Move* key messages and service requirements
- The five food groups and recommended serving sizes
- Technical understanding to support the provision of healthy food and drink
- Menu planning
- Infant feeding requirements
- Knowledge of support

The only topic where participants knowledge did not increase significantly was basic food safety and hygiene, however there was still an improvement in those who rated their knowledge 'very good' as a result of the workshop.

### **Impact of the workshop on awareness and knowledge of tools and resources**

Prior to the workshop, the stated awareness of both the *Caring for Children – Birth to 5 years (Food Nutrition and Learning Experiences)* resource and the *Nutrition Checklist for Menu Planning* tool were already considerably high (79% and 72% respectively). Nonetheless, participants indicated that the workshop was a timely reminder that these resources are available and designed to assist them in their role. In particular, participants spoke highly of the *Nutrition Checklist for Menu Planning* tool with most of the interview participants referencing use of this tool since the workshop.

Overall, participants indicated that *Munch & Move* resources are known for being high quality, purposefully designed and validated.

### **Impact of the workshop on confidence in menu planning**

The workshops had a positive impact on participants' confidence in being able to influence the menu planning process at their service. The proportion of participants who felt 'very confident' increased significantly as a result of the workshop, from 31% to 50%.

### **Impact of the workshop on intention to make changes to the service menu**

The workshops were successful in increasing intention to make service menu changes. The proportion of participants thinking about making changes – either to their menu or nutrition policy – increased significantly from 57% prior to 95% following the workshop.

## **Impact of the workshop on influencing positive behaviour change**

Almost all interview participants indicated they had completed or were in the process of reviewing their service menus with the intention to make improvements as a result of attending the workshop. Those who had already completed their menu reviews, or were in the process of doing so, revealed that any changes tended to be minimal (i.e. focusing on particular elements or food groups) rather than wholesale, as their menus were generally thought to already be performing well.

In addition to changes to the menu, many participants also spoke of the cook becoming more involved in sharing food experience with the children to encourage the children's curiosity in new foods and develop healthy habits around food.

## **Barriers to implementing menu changes**

From the interviews, two main categories of barriers to healthy menu planning were identified:

- **Functional and practical constraints**, including time, restrictive budgets, limited experience and skill, as well as lacking a sense of agency to affect change at their ECEC services.
- **Children's food preferences and dietary requirements**, which are thought to complicate the menu planning process and limit the healthy options available.

## **Potential improvements to the HMP workshop**

This research identified a range of potential enhancements to the HMP workshops, including.

- Allowing for additional time during workshops for digestion, reflection and discussion
- Allowing for additional interaction with presenters
- Holding sessions more frequently
- Increasing attendance of, and relevance to, educators
- Providing additional recipes

## **1.2 Conclusions**

The results of this review clearly demonstrate the beneficial role that the HMP workshops are playing in educating cooks and early childhood educator and care leaders around how to plan healthy menus in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services. The research reveals highly positive impacts for workshop attendees across a range of key knowledge, attitude and behavioural indicators. While there are some potential areas for process improvement, research findings suggest that the workshops are largely achieving their intended outcomes, and supporting the provision of healthy food and drinks to children.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Background

*Munch & Move* is a state-wide initiative of NSW Health that supports the healthy development of children from birth to five years of age attending NSW early childhood education and care (ECEC) services by promoting physical activity, healthy eating behaviours and reduced small screen time. The program provides training, resources and ongoing support to staff working in ECEC services. Cooks do not require a formal qualification to inform the provision of nutritious meals to children in care to work in a NSW ECEC service. The *Munch & Move* program addresses this gap by providing ECEC service cooks with professional development through the provision of Healthy Menu Planning (HMP) workshops across NSW. These workshops are based on the *Caring for Children: Birth to 5 years resource*, which provide practical information for cooks, directors and educators to meet the food and nutrition needs of children attending ECEC services in line with the *Australian Dietary Guidelines (2013)* and *Infant Feeding Guidelines (2012)*. Service leaders (directors or nominated supervisors) are encouraged to attend with the cook to increase the likelihood of menu changes being implemented at the service. The workshops are delivered by the Early Childhood Training and Resource Centre (ECTARC), who are an early childhood registered training organisation. The HMP workshops were developed by NSW Office of Preventive Health (OPH) and ECTARC. To date, ECTARC have delivered 89 HMP workshops across NSW, training 1,584 service staff, including 929 cooks across 1,156 services.

### Research objectives

The OPH commissioned research to investigate the effectiveness of the HMP workshops. Specifically, this research sought to evaluate the impact of the HMP workshops against six intended outcomes for participants:

- Increased perceived importance of providing healthy menus;
- Increased knowledge, understanding and skills regarding healthy menu planning, specifically in relation to the objectives and learning outcomes of the HMP workshops;
- Increased awareness and knowledge of tools and resources to support healthy menu planning;
- Increased confidence in ability to plan healthy menus;
- Increased intention to make changes to their service menu to support the provision of healthy food and drinks to children; and
- Short term menu or behavioural changes that support the provision of healthy food and drinks to children.

The research also aimed to identify:

- Facilitators and barriers to implementing menu changes that support the provision of healthy food and drinks to children; and
- Potential improvements to the HMP workshops to enhance their effectiveness in increasing participants' skills, knowledge and resources in relation to nutrition and healthy menu planning.

The research findings will be used to inform quality improvements to and the future direction of the HMP workshops.

## 2.2 Research methodology

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used to assess the effectiveness of the HMP workshop. An outline of the research methodology is included below.

### 2.2.1 Quantitative research

Pre and post paper surveys were administered in-person by ECTARC at the beginning and end of the workshop, with time allocated for completion included in the workshop agenda. This meant, pre-surveys were completed and collected prior to the workshop content being delivered, and post surveys were completed once the workshop content was finalised. The evaluation was conducted at six HMP workshops, representing a mix of metropolitan and rural/regional locations, between 3<sup>rd</sup> September and 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2019. Surveys captured feedback on workshop specifics as well as changes in participant knowledge, understanding and intended behaviour as a result of content delivered. Surveys were developed by Kantar, in consultation with OPH and provided to ECTARC to disseminate. A copy of the surveys are included in Appendix A and B. Workshop locations, attendance and survey response rates are outlined below.

Workshop location	Workshop date	Workshop attendees (n=)	Pre-survey completes (n=)	Post-survey completes (n=)
<b>Southern NSW (Goulburn)</b>	3/9/2019	8	8	8
<b>Western Sydney (Rooty Hill)</b>	5/9/2019	20	14	13
<b>South West Sydney (Liverpool)</b>	10/9/2019	21	19	19
<b>North Sydney (Chatswood)</b>	18/9/2019	13	13	12
<b>Hunter New England (New Lambton)</b>	15/10/2019	28	23	19
<b>Sydney (Ashfield)</b>	7/11/2019	18	5	5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>108</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Response rate</b>			<b>76%</b>	<b>70%</b>

As outlined in the table overleaf, the respondent profile included 60% cooks and 40% non-cooks, of which 20% were Directors, 9% were nominated supervisors, and 11% were educators (pre survey). This is closely aligned with the workshop registration data, where 61% of workshop participants indicated they were cooks, while 32% were in a non-cook role.

	Workshop attendance profile		Respondent profile (pre-survey)	
	n=	%	n=	%
<b>Cooks</b>	66	61%	49	60%
<b>Non-cooks</b>	35	32%	32	40%
Directors	23	21%	16	20%
Nominated supervisors	2	2%	7	9%
Educators	10	9%	9	11%
Other	7	6%	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	108	100%	81*	100%

*\*n=1 participant did not nominate their position*

All figures included in this report represent both cooks and non-cooks, unless otherwise specified.

### 2.2.2 Qualitative research

Following participation in the HMP workshops, workshop participants (who indicated a willingness to participate) were recruited to take part in an in-depth telephone interview. A total of n=30 interviews were conducted, with 51% of participants who initially indicated interest opting to participate. Interviews took place approximately two weeks after the workshop (fieldwork ran from the 17<sup>th</sup> September to the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019) and were ~45-60 minutes in duration. These interviews focused on self-assessed short-term change resulting from attendance at the workshop, determining barriers and facilitators to change and obtaining qualitative feedback about the HMP workshops to identify improvements that could be made. The discussion guide was developed by Kantar in consultation with OPH (Appendix C). Participants were given an \$80 eftpos gift card as a reimbursement for their time. A tally of the interviews conducted per location is outlined below.

Workshop location	Workshop date	Interviews
<b>Southern NSW (Goulburn)</b>	3/9/2019	3
<b>Western Sydney (Rooty Hill)</b>	5/9/2019	5
<b>South West Sydney (Liverpool)</b>	10/9/2019	5
<b>North Sydney (Chatswood)</b>	18/9/2019	5
<b>Hunter New England (New Lambton)</b>	15/10/2019	10
<b>Sydney (Ashfield)</b>	7/11/2019	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30</b>

### 2.2.3 Recruitment and selection of participants

All cooks, directors, nominated supervisors and educators from NSW Early Childhood Education Centres attending the nominated HMP workshops were eligible and invited to participate in the research.

Following workshop recruitment by Local Health District (LHD) representatives and registration by ECTARC, Kantar were provided with workshop registration details. Kantar then notified all participants of the research via email prior to their attendance at a workshop. This included an explanation of the purpose and process of the evaluation, and outlined relevant considerations pertaining to ethics surrounding the research.

At the HMP workshop, ECTARC provided further explanation of the research, reiterating the purpose of the research and what participation involved. ECTARC administered the pre- and post-workshop paper surveys, and along with LHD and OPH representatives present, provided clarification and assistance to support survey completion.

Participants who completed both the pre- and post- workshop survey were eligible to participate in the in-depth interviews. Participants were given the opportunity to indicate their interest in participating in the in-depth interviews by providing their written consent to be contacted by Kantar on the post-workshop survey.

Following the HMP workshops, Kantar then contacted all consenting participants via telephone and email to confirm participation in interviews and arrange an interview time (approximately 2 weeks after the workshop). As part of the recruitment process, participants were reminded of interview purpose and logistics, such as length of interview.

#### **2.2.4 Informed consent**

The research purpose and procedures were explained to participants prior to and during the workshop so that informed consent to participate in the research could be gained. This included disclosure of any identified risks, and the acknowledgement that there may be a risk which has not been foreseen by the researcher. As part of this process, Kantar emailed registered workshop participants a Participant Information Sheet form prior to the workshop within the study invitation email, then at the workshop ECTARC provided participants with hard copies of the Participant Information Sheet and a Consent Form. Participants were required to sign the Consent Form prior to participating in the research.

As part of the in-depth interview, participants were again informed of the research purpose and process, including specific reference to the interview process. Prior to the interview commencing, verbal consent was obtained.

The process of consenting was ongoing throughout the research, and it was made clear to participants that they were able to withdraw or opt out of the research at any time.

#### **2.2.5 Inclusive research strategies**

All research instruments and communications were designed with consideration of the factors that might inhibit participants' understanding of the purpose and experience of participating in the research: i.e. cultural, intellectual or linguistic barriers which might inhibit their understanding. Strategies to minimise barriers included using simple language, support staff to answer questions and assist participation, conducting face to face interviews when requested, and employing multiple means of communication (i.e. written and verbal).

#### **2.2.6 Confidentiality and privacy**

Steps taken to uphold participant confidentiality and privacy is outlined overleaf.

During the research:

- Individually identifiable information (PII) was collected on the post workshop survey to facilitate contacting participants who expressed an interest in participating in the follow-up in-depth interviews.
  - PII was removed from hard copies of the surveys (by blacking out the participant details on the post-workshop surveys) once participant contact details were transferred to a recruitment log.
  - All PII was omitted from the quantitative data as part of data processing.
- No personally identifiable information was included in the analysis and reporting. Furthermore, all results are presented in aggregated form to prevent any participants being identifiable.
- During the fieldwork/analysis stages, any files containing personally identifiable information (including sample files, recordings and response data) were maintained in password protected files by Kantar.
- The transfer of consent forms from ECTARC to OPH/Kantar and survey data from ECTARC to Kantar for storage and analysis occurred via secure file transfer systems (electronic copies) and registered post (hard copies).

Following completion of the research:

- Hard copies of signed consent forms will be stored in a locked filing cabinet at OPH in Liverpool Hospital.
- Electronic versions will be stored on a password-protected server of the South Western Sydney Local Health District
- OPH were provided with all de-identified hard copy surveys from Kantar via registered post.
- OPH were provided with all interview recordings from Kantar securely (e.g. via secure file transfer).
- Kantar destroyed their copies of data after received by OPH.
- All data and documentation will be stored by OPH for seven years following completion of the study in line with National Health and Medical Research Council guidelines. Following this, electronic files will be deleted, and hardcopy files destroyed.

### **2.2.7 Data analysis**

The analytical approach consisted of an iterative approach to ensure each data source was given consideration separately, before being considered in conjunction with each other. The quantitative data processing and analysis included:

- Data preparation and tabulation: Upon completion of the quantitative fieldwork, data from the paper surveys underwent basic data preparation (inclusive of checks for data integrity and hole-counts). Tabular results of the data were then prepared using Q-Software.
- First level analysis: Survey data was analysed using standard uni- and bivariate techniques (i.e. frequencies and relevant cross-tabulation).

- Statistical significance: All comparisons were subjected to rigorous statistical testing (95% confidence level) to assess change as a result of the workshop. A Two Proportion Z-test (unpooled) was used to test the significance of the results. This test is also referred to as the 't-test for independent samples. The formula to do this is outlined below:

$$z_1 = \frac{\hat{p}_1 - \hat{p}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{\hat{p}_1(1-\hat{p}_1)}{n_1} + \frac{\hat{p}_2(1-\hat{p}_2)}{n_2}}}$$

Kantar use a bespoke tool developed by their Marketing Science Division for this testing.

The qualitative analysis incorporated the following elements:

- Thematic coding:** Interview recordings were reviewed against an analysis framework which was informed by the research objectives and aligned with the discussion guides used for interviewing. This framework assisted in dividing the data into thematic clusters or ideas, which showed the similarities or differences in thoughts and experiences for participants. This was done on an individual basis by moderators for the interviews they personally conducted.
- Theorising:** As a second stage, the team then began the process of theorising – identifying, from the codes, common themes and the potential implications of these themes. This is a comparative approach and is undertaken as part of a formal analysis session. This involved the team comparing, discussing and reworking hypotheses that emerged from the thematic coding.

Once analysis of individual data sources was undertaken, all data was considered concurrently, and the report was compiled. This included:

- Integration:** The theories and codes were considered alongside the results from the quantitative surveys to ensure a consistent story- one that takes into consideration the totality of the evaluation components.
- Audit and review:** Data checks conducted by a third-party researcher who has not been involved in data analysis to ensure data accuracy.

## 2.2.8 Limitations of the research

Several potential limitations of the evaluation have been identified and are outlined below:

- Participants were not compelled to take part in the research, they agreed to participate voluntarily and were able to refuse to participate. As a result, it is possible that the sample achieved is skewed towards those with a specific attitude/specific experiences which predispose them to participating in research – meaning that they are not representative of the pool of participants as a whole. While skews are possible, the high opt in rate, broad profile of participants and high levels of engagement suggests that issues with sample skews did not eventuate.
- Self-reporting bias is inherent in any primary research – however, steps were taken to minimise any potential impact by using mixed methods.
- There is potential that some participants had lower awareness / knowledge of the certain jargon, terms and concepts (for example, 'discretionary foods') when responding to the pre-survey, which were clarified in the workshop. Similarly, some participants may also have inflated pre-survey

scores under the assumption that they knew more than they did. As a result, this may have skewed results.

- As with any research, there is the potential for interview bias to influence the results. Steps were taken to minimise this, including using multiple researchers/moderators, employing individual and collective analysis, and the use of analysis frameworks.
- The research focused on short term behaviour change, i.e. that which was self-reported to have occurred in the ~2 weeks since attending the workshop. While it is hoped that positive changes made during this time would be sustained, it is not possible to assess the long-term impact of the workshops.

**Approval to conduct the research was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee in South Western Sydney Local Health District and carried out in accordance with ethics conditions.**

**All research was carried out in accordance with ISO 20252 industry standards.**

## 3. The workshop context

### 3.1 Workshop attendees

The workshop was attended by both cooks and educators, with many services choosing to send representatives from both positions. According to the workshop attendance data (outlined below), 61% of workshop participants were cooks, while 32% were in a service leader / 'educator' role – of which 21% were directors, 2% nominated supervisors, and 9% educators. Six percent of attendees identified their role as 'other'.

Workshop attendance profile	n=	%
Cooks	66	61%
Director	23	21%
Nominated Supervisor	2	2%
Educator	10	9%
Other	7	6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on the interviews, it was evident that the cooks who attended the workshops had a diverse range of experience and expertise, both within the profession and the ECEC setting specifically. Some workshop attendees had years of experience working in their role and counted themselves as proficient and expert. Some were new to the role of ECEC service cook with no prior experience, while others had experience cooking in a range of professional settings catering for adults but had limited experience feeding children. Despite their position or level of experience, however, it was felt that the workshop catered to everyone.

When cooks and educators were able to share the workshop experience, it helped to ensure they were both on the same page regarding the provision of healthy menus for children in care – and were supporting each other in the process. What's more, having educators attend helped to increase their understanding of the cook role, highlighting some of the challenges faced and the importance of a united team to affect positive change.

### 3.2 Awareness of workshop

Attendees most commonly found out about the workshop through their centres' engagement with the *Munch & Move* program more broadly. This included being notified via email correspondence, advertising on the *Munch & Move* website, or their LHD representative providing them with workshop details. Interview participants who were in an educator role or had been working in the ECEC industry for an extended period were familiar with the program and its objectives. In contrast, some cooks, particularly those that were new to the role or the sector, were understandably less familiar with the program or support available. In these cases, cooks were enrolled to attend by managers/directors.

### 3.3 Workshop accessibility

Several participants indicated that the **convenient locations and times** facilitated their attendance as there was minimal interruption to their day. It was noted however, that holding the workshop outside of the cook's regular hours often required them to give up their own time to attend, which could inhibit widespread attendance.

### 3.4 Reasons for attending the workshop

Participants shared a range of reasons for why they attend the workshops, which subsequently underpinned their expectations for the session. At a high level, participants wanted pragmatic information and support to inform their menu planning. Underpinning this broader objective were a number of more specific, tailored reasons, including:

- An interest in **ongoing professional development and an eagerness to learn**. Some participants indicated that *you can never have too much information* – and the workshops were an easy way to learn new information that underpins their role. The workshops were also thought to provide a valuable reminder of information that they may have forgotten.

*“I go every time they offer a service to keep a finger on the pulse of change, materials, recommendations ... I think it's healthy to always be on the ball when it comes to nutrition, and I will always take an educator or cook with me when I do” – Director*

*“I don't think you can ever have too much awareness, or learn enough, to keep yourself updated, that's why I went” – Cook*

- Wanting to stay abreast of food/nutrition trends and changes to requirements.
- An opportunity to **validate what they already knew** and receive confirmation that they were doing the 'right thing'.
- Wanting to **understand the practical application of the National Healthy Eating Guidelines**, bridging any gaps in their theoretical knowledge to ensure menus were complying with the requirements.

*“To grasp the guidelines and be able to follow them. I had the information, but wanted to put it in context” – Cook*

- Receiving **new, fresh ideas** that they could implement to ensure that their menus did not become stale, boring or out of date. Participants were also interested in learning about how to increase the inclusion of certain foods in a way that would appeal to children or how to overcome challenging food aversions, for example exciting ways to introduce more vegetables, or how to include more fish on the menu. Several participants indicated that they were currently updating their menus and wanted access to new ideas, resources and information to help them do this.
- Hands on, **practical assistance with menu planning** and improvements, that was tailored to their service's menu. There was an emphasis on being able to get information and advice that would allow them to provide healthy and nutritious food options that *children will like*, and that adhere to the Guidelines and accommodate the range of dietary requirements or cultural sensitivities that ECEC service menus must cater for.
- An **opportunity to interact and converse with other cooks or educators** to see what they were doing at their respective centres. There was an interest in being able to learn in a collaborative setting by sharing and receiving tried and tested ideas, discussing frustrations or challenges and having access to an 'expert' who can weigh in on discussions and share their expertise.

## 4. Perception of the workshop following attendance

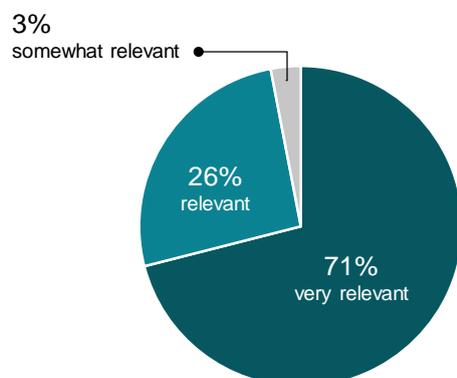
Across the workshops, participants spoke highly of the training. Both cooks and educators were overwhelmingly positive about their experience. They were appreciative for the opportunity to attend training to increase or validate their knowledge and skills when it comes to providing healthy and nutritious meals for children in care.

*“We just want to thank the facilitators and again, express my thanks for Munch & Move to organise free workshops like this. It’s helping early childhood education to really embrace healthy eating and giving our children the right amount of nutrition when they are under our care. And that’s really good of Munch & Move to take this initiative. The passion to care for the future generation is in everybody’s heart, and that’s awesome” - Director*

### 4.1 Workshop content

Nearly all (97%) participants found the workshop ‘relevant’, with 71% indicating it was ‘very relevant’. The remaining 3% of participants indicated that the workshop was ‘somewhat relevant’. This result attests that the workshop was of benefit to attendees regardless of their level of experience, prior knowledge or position.

**Figure 1: Relevance of workshop content**



Q1 (post). How relevant did you find the workshop content? (n=76)

From the interviews, participants were impressed with the breadth and depth of the information covered in the workshop. It was clear from these interviews that participants appreciated the range of topics covered, and that this range helped to diversify the benefit of the workshop. It also meant the workshop addressed their reasons for attending, resulting in it meeting or exceeding their expectations.

*“There was definitely a bit more to it than I thought there would be. I definitely learnt some very valuable information without it being too overwhelming” – Cook*

*“I learnt lots of things. With the service of food for the children, reminded me of healthy eating, reminded me how to care for children, that they need to have a healthy immune system so that they can grow up” – Cook*

Despite the diversity of attendees' roles and experience, interview participants frequently acknowledged that they learnt something new as a result of attending the workshop. This is particularly notable for more experienced participants, who often didn't expect this to be the case.

*"The other cook at the centre came along with me and she – she's a middle-aged lady, she's very set in her ways and she was determined she wasn't going to learn anything – and even she came away from it really happy" – Cook*

*"I thought I knew more than I did, and once I did the course I realised there was a lot more to know" – Nominated Supervisor*

Most frequently acknowledged as being new information were:

- How to read and interpret food labels;
- The nutritional value of food, and the need to couple certain foods together to maximise their nutritional value (e.g. Coupling Vitamin C sources with non-meat based iron sources);
- Changes to Guidelines; and
- The current trends guiding food choices.

This information was also still top of mind for attendees' multiple weeks after the workshop, indicating the high degree to which this information resonated.

In addition to providing new information, participants also welcomed the extent to which the workshop acted to refresh their awareness and understanding of information they were already familiar with. On the one hand, the reiteration of this information helped to validate what they thought they knew, reassuring them that their current approach was suitable. On the other hand, this reminder reinforced the importance of the information, reinvigorating their likelihood to implement it in their practice if they weren't already doing so.

*"It was really relevant, really useful, helpful – because we are human and we need someone to remind us to do this or do that, or this is the right thing to do" – Cook*

*"I heard that stuff before, but hearing it again made it... it's always a different level of refreshment of information" – Director*

*"I thought it was great. It refreshed my mind, I wanted to know whether I was doing a good enough job, and I think I am" – Cook*

## 4.2 Workshop facilitators

Participants spoke highly of the workshop presenters – with 87% of participants indicating they felt the presenter had 'excellent' knowledge, while the remaining 13% felt their knowledge was 'good'. Interview participants spoke highly of the presenters. In addition to valuing their level of knowledge, it was also felt that they were confident presenters; they were able to cover a large amount of information in a relatively short amount of time; they spoke clearly; were personable; and skilfully facilitated interaction among participants and created an open environment where attendees felt they could share their queries and concerns or seek further clarification.

*"It was a really nice environment - it felt like everyone was listened to, it was comfortable to your hand up and there was time given to say 'I am not sure about that'" – Director*

*"So I know that some of the services were maybe not following healthy eating to probably the standard that it needed to be, but they felt like they were in a safe enough environment to be able to share their menu and get ideas from other people with no judgement and I think that that was all in terms of how the facilitator guided the course. Because she made it really open, like it's a very*

*safe space because we're all here to help on another and we can share information and ideas” – Director*

*“They had really good ideas. They brought ideas to the table that you wouldn't necessarily think of and they also had strategies for making that work. So, I know a lot of centres were saying ‘well our kids just don't eat vegetables’, and so the facilitator was like ‘I understand that, however, this is what you can do to encourage that’” – Director.*

**Figure 2: Assessment of presenter's knowledge**

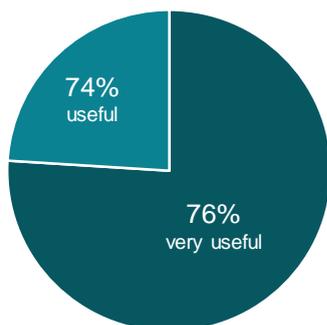


Q4 (post). How would you rate the presenter's knowledge of the content? (n=76)

### 4.3 Workshop resources

Participants also indicated that the workshop resources helped to support the delivery of the workshop content, including the presentation, workbook, and *Caring for Children* tip sheets. All participants indicated that these resources were useful – with 76% of them saying they were ‘very useful’ while 24% said they were ‘useful’.

**Figure 3: Usefulness of workshop resources**



Q3 (post). How would you rate the workshop resources (presentation, workbook, Caring for Children tip sheets)? (n=76)

Participants who provided feedback on the workshop presentation deck and workbook were positive about this resource:

- They felt that the workshop slides provided a clear visual overview of what was being delivered verbally and looked professional.
- They appreciated that they were able to take the workbook home and that this provided a comprehensive overview of the workshop to refresh their knowledge when needed.

*“I think that is Munch & Move’s strength, the quality of their resources and the way they deliver their resources... The resources they gave out on the day I have referred to quite a bit in the last couple of weeks. They are user friendly, easy to read, and are really comprehensive – they have all the information you need, and you can access it very quickly”- Director*

*“Really good, they are really well written, they were helpful, they were colourful, and they were easy to pass on to other staff, I was really happy with that” – Nominated Supervisor*

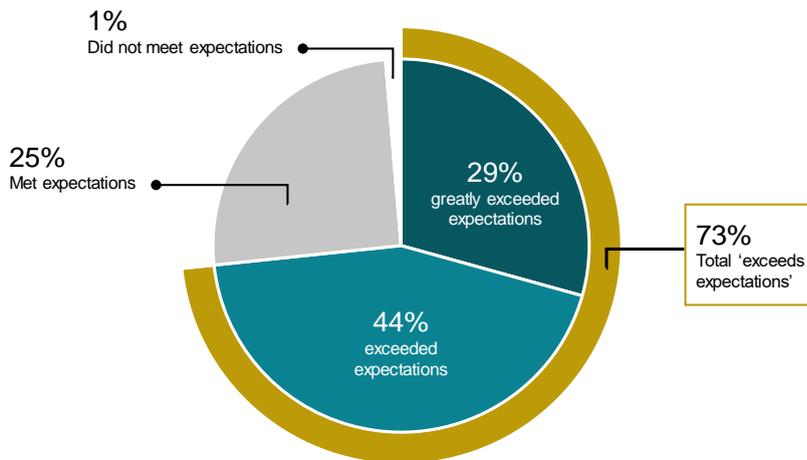
*“I love book they give you. There are a few recipes in there. It’s like my little diary now – I use it a lot” – Cook*

Feedback on the other workshop resources (namely the *Caring for Children* resource and the *Nutritional Checklist for Menu Planning Tool*) is detailed in section 6.

#### 4.4 Assessment of the workshop

Given the overwhelmingly positive response to the workshop – in terms of its relevance, usefulness, aptitude of the presenters and quality of the resources – the majority of participants felt the workshop exceeded their expectations. Almost three quarters (73%) of participants gave this response, with 29% indicating that it did so ‘greatly’. A further 25% of participants felt that the workshop met their expectations, while only 1% felt that the workshop did not do so.

**Figure 4: Expectations of the workshop**



Q10. To what extent did the workshop meet your expectations? n=75

When asked to explain why the workshop exceeded their expectations, participants largely attributed this to the workshop being informative. In particular, they were impressed with the amount of information covered, including the breadth of topics and the depth of information provided. Furthermore, they felt the information was appropriate, well-explained and clearly delivered, and that it helped to build their confidence in planning and providing healthy options for children in their care. Further feedback on the workshop content and delivery is included in the following chapters alongside the assessment of the workshops impact.

*“I really liked it because they answered all my questions. It’s really challenging the amount of food I need to make, and sometimes I feel there is not enough vegetables for all the kids, the main purpose of me going was to ask questions, and she answered them properly and I learnt some new things as well” - Cook*

*“It was good. It had some really good practical ideas to get us started and get us moving and be motivated enough to share it with the staff as well so that everyone is on board. We both walked away saying that it was really worthwhile. We had to get different staff in [to cover them] but it was definitely worth it” – Nominated supervisor*

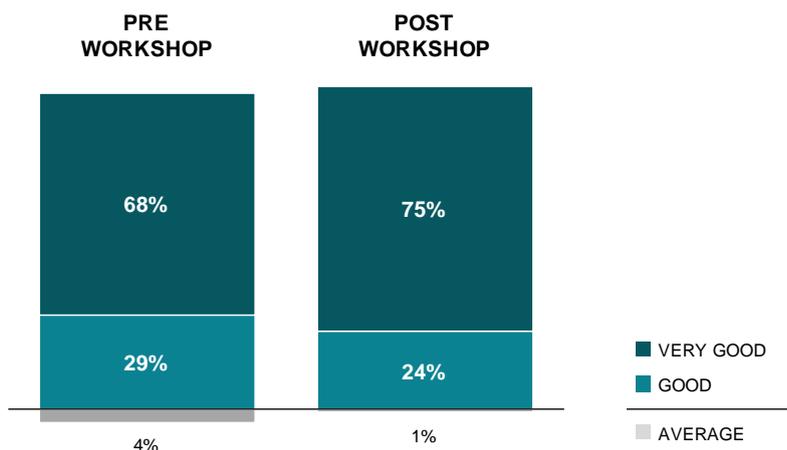
## 5. Impact of the workshop on perceived importance of healthy menus

This section of the report evaluates the impact of the HMP workshop on the perceived importance of providing healthy menus within early childhood education and care services. Understanding attitudes towards healthy menus, both prior to and as a result of attendance, is critical as recognition of the importance of providing healthy and nutritious food to children in care underpins disposition and resolve to do so. This section draws on data from the pre and post survey, as well as the qualitative interviews to assess attendees' understanding of the importance of healthy eating and the provision of healthy menus. While the pre and post survey did not explicitly capture the impact of the workshop on attendees' attitudes, a shift in attitude and intention to make changes has been used as a proxy to evaluate this objective.

It was clear from the interviews that the ability to provide healthy and nutritious menu options for children attending ECEC was of considerable importance to workshop attendees. While it was acknowledged that this is not always easy and that a number of barriers exist in trying to do this (as outlined in section 10), both cooks and educators were interested in learning more or validating their current approach to ensure they are consistently providing healthy food options.

The pre survey indicated that nearly all participants were already aware of 'why healthy eating is important for children', with 68% indicating they had 'very good' knowledge, while 29% said they had 'good' knowledge. Positively, this increased over the workshop with 74% of attendees indicating they had 'very good' knowledge in the post survey. While this increase is not significant, it is still indicative that the workshops positively influenced views on the importance of providing healthy menus.

**Figure 5: Impact of the workshop on knowledge of why healthy eating is important**



Q2 (pre) / Q9 (post). Using the scale below please place a tick in the appropriate box to indicate your current knowledge of... (pre n=82 / post n=76)

The qualitative interviews also highlighted how the workshops increased participants' understanding of *why* focusing on health and nutrition is important and helped to dispel any misconceptions around what constitutes 'healthy'.

Furthermore, a clear willingness to evolve service menus to improve their healthiness reinforces the evident belief in the need to provide healthy and nutritious food and drink to children in care, and the understood responsibility in ensuring this happens.

*"It really brought home the importance of the consideration of the dietary guidelines when we are planning our menu. Sometimes we get a bit excited and think we need to make things that are really tasty and don't consider how healthy they are" - Director*

## 6. Impact of the workshop on knowledge, understanding and skills

This section of the report evaluates ***the impact of the HMP workshop on knowledge, understanding and skills regarding healthy menu planning, specifically in relation to the objectives and learning outcomes of the HMP workshops***. The pre and post surveys included a battery of statements designed to assess change in knowledge as a result of workshop attendance. This battery of statements aligns with the objectives and learning outcomes of the HMP workshops. For reporting purposes, these statements have been grouped into six key content areas. This includes:

1. National Healthy Eating Guidelines, *Munch & Move* key messages and service requirements
2. The five food groups and recommended serving sizes
3. Technical understanding to support the provision of healthy food and drink
4. Menu planning
5. Infant feeding requirements
6. Knowledge of support.

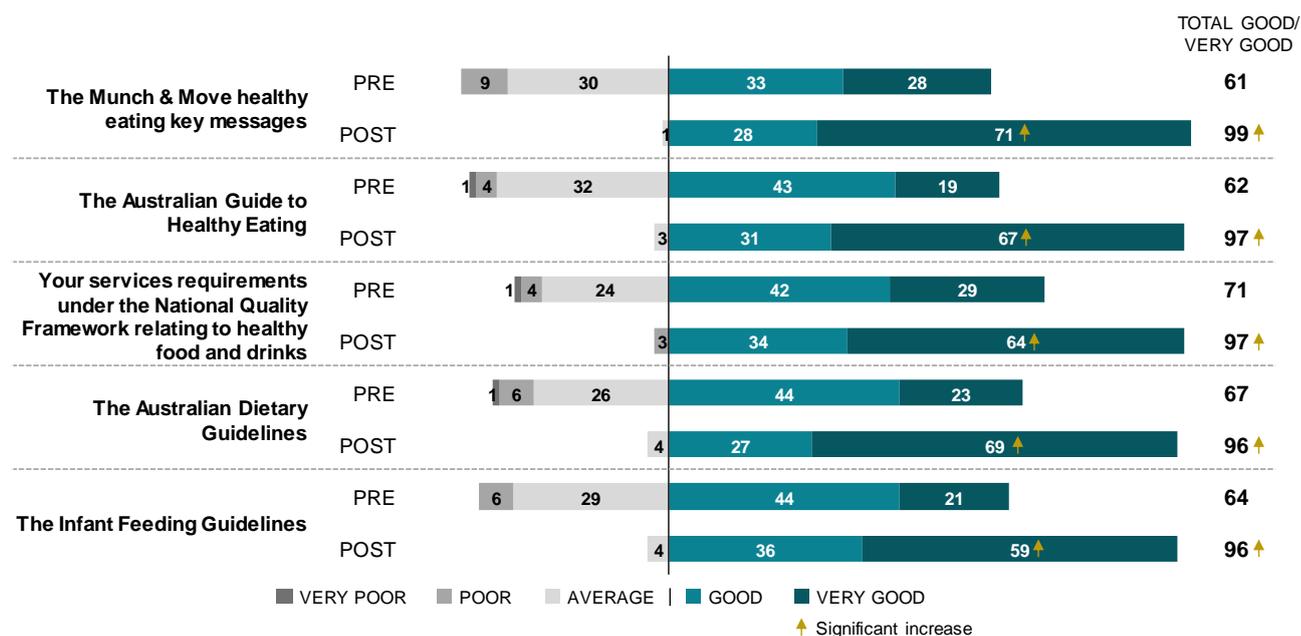
It is clear that attendance at the workshop had a highly positive impact on participants' understanding of how to plan a healthy menu, and the contextual and technical knowledge that feeds into this. The research revealed significant increases in the self-reported knowledge of workshop attendees across all of these key areas, with the overwhelming majority of participants rating their knowledge of these issues either 'good' or 'very good' following the workshop.

### 6.1 Knowledge of the National Healthy Eating Guidelines, *Munch & Move* key messages and service requirements

Participants' self-reported knowledge of the various healthy eating guidelines increased as a result of attendance at the workshop. These guidelines inform best practice and underpin the requirements of the National Quality Framework. Figure 6 below shows that, across all measures, the proportion of participants who felt their knowledge was 'good/very good' increased significantly across the workshop. Perhaps more noteworthy, however, is the significant increase in the proportion of attendees who felt their knowledge was 'very good' following the workshop:

- For the *Munch & Move* key messages, 'very good' knowledge increased from 28% to 71%.
- For the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating, from 19% to 67%.
- Service requirements under the National Quality Framework relating to healthy food and drink, from 29% to 64%.
- For the Australian Dietary Guidelines, from 23% to 69%.
- For the *Infant Feeding Guidelines*, from 21% to 59%.

**Figure 6: Knowledge of National Healthy Eating Guidelines, Munch & Move key messages and service requirements (%)**



Q2 (pre) / Q9 (post). Using the scale below please place a tick in the appropriate box to indicate your current knowledge of... (pre n=82 / post n=76)

## 6.2 Knowledge of the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating* five food groups and recommended serving sizes

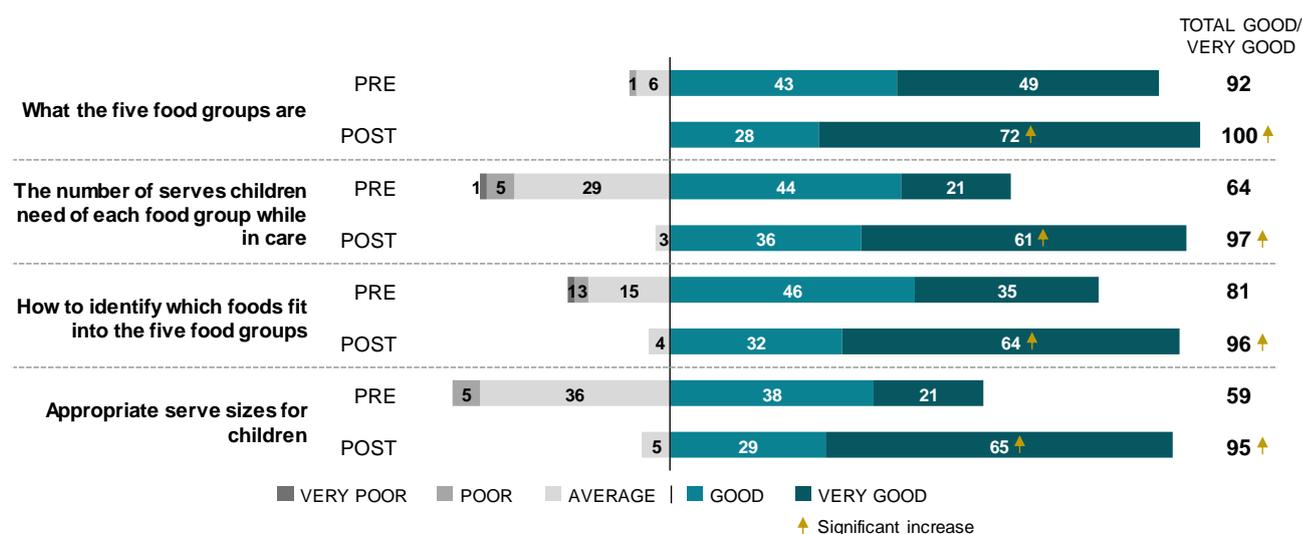
As illustrated in Figure 7, despite relatively high knowledge of the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating* five food groups prior to the workshop, participants' awareness of what these are and knowledge of how to identify which foods fit within each group improved significantly across the workshop:

- Prior to the workshop, 92% of participants felt they already had good/very good knowledge of the five food groups, with 49% indicating their knowledge was 'very good'. At the end of the workshop, knowledge (good/very good) increased significantly to 100% of participants, with 72% feeling they had 'very good' knowledge (also a significant increase).
- Similarly, 81% of participants felt they could identify which foods fit into each group ahead of the workshop, of which 35% felt their knowledge was 'very good'. This increased significantly to 96% who could classify foods into the groups following the workshop, of which 64% felt their knowledge was 'very good' (also a significant increase).

The workshop also contributed to a significant increase in participants' knowledge of serving sizes and required serves for children in care.

- Across the workshop, the proportion of participants who felt they had 'good/very good' knowledge of appropriate serving sizes for children increased from 59% to 95%, with those who felt their knowledge was 'very good' increasing from 21% to 95%.
- Similarly, the proportion of participants who felt they had 'good/very good' knowledge of the number of serves of each food group children need, increased from 64% to 97%, with those who felt their knowledge was 'very good' increasing from 21% to 61%.

**Figure 7: Knowledge of the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating* five food groups and serve**



**sizes (%)**

Q2 (pre) / Q9 (post). Using the scale below please place a tick in the appropriate box to indicate your current knowledge of... (pre n=82 / post n=76)

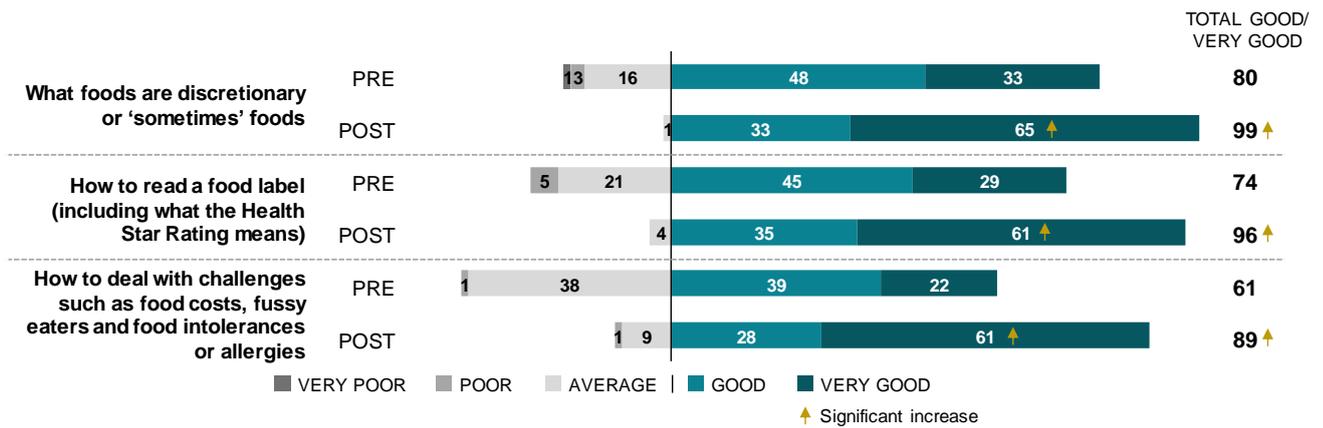
**6.3 Knowledge to support the provision of healthy food and drink**

Positively, attendance at the workshops also appeared to strengthen participants’ knowledge of how to address some of the common barriers to healthy eating for children. In particular, it helped to address how to deal with challenges such as food costs, fussy eaters and food intolerances. This was one of the key reasons that participants wanted to attend the workshop – to learn more about how to address these concerns - and two in five (39%) participants felt their knowledge as average or below prior to attending. Following the workshop, 89% of participants indicated they had ‘good/very good’ knowledge dealing with challenges, significantly more than those who felt they had this level of knowledge at the start. What’s more, participants who felt they had ‘very good’ knowledge increased significantly, from 22% to 61%.

Understanding what foods count as discretionary or *sometimes* food was also an area of significant improvement. Almost all workshop participants (99%) indicated they had ‘very good’ knowledge of which foods are ‘sometimes’ foods following the workshop, significantly more than the 80% who felt they had this level of knowledge at the start. Furthermore, the proportion who felt they had ‘very good’ knowledge increased significantly from 33% to 65%. This is an important improvement, as it was acknowledged that this can be an area of confusion, and that limited understanding or an unwillingness to comply with recommendations can mean that ‘sometimes’ foods continue to be included in some ECEC services repertoires – for example cakes or muffins.

Additionally, understanding of how to read food labels was another area of significant improvement. A number of participants commented on this in their interviews – indicating they were surprised that this type of information was included, and that they had previously been unaware of how to compare foods based on the labels. Around one in four (26%) felt they had limited knowledge of this (average or below) before commencing the workshop. The workshop significantly improved knowledge, with those who felt they had ‘good/very good’ knowledge increasing significantly from 74% to 96%, while those who felt they had ‘very good knowledge’ went from 29% to 61%.

**Figure 8: Knowledge to support the provision of healthy food and drink (%)**



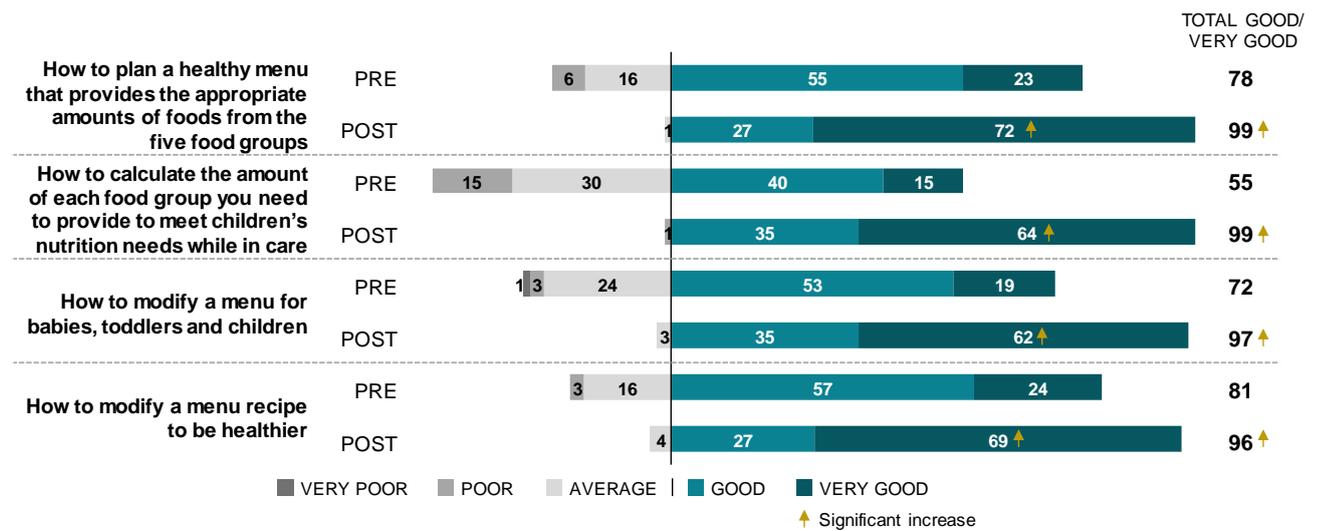
Q2 (pre) / Q9 (post). Using the scale below please place a tick in the appropriate box to indicate your current knowledge of... (pre n=82 / post n=76)

#### 6.4 Knowledge to inform menu planning

The research indicated that learning how to plan and modify menus to ensure they are complying with Healthy Eating Guidelines is the overarching driver for attending the workshop. Not surprisingly then, many participants felt there was room to improve their knowledge around menu planning, including how to modify menus for different ages, how to make menus healthier, and how to include appropriate amounts of food from each food group. Positively, attendance at the workshop appeared to significantly improve knowledge and understanding across each of these topics. After attending the workshop, there was a significant increase in attendees who felt they had 'good/very good' knowledge. Additionally, following the workshop:

- 72% of participants felt they had very good knowledge of how to plan a healthy menu that provides the appropriate amount of food from the five food groups, up from 23%.
- 69% of participants felt they had very good knowledge of how to modify a menu recipe to be healthier, up from 24%.
- 62% of participants felt they had very good knowledge of how to modify a menu recipe for babies, toddlers and children, up from 19%.
- 64% of participants felt they had very good knowledge of how to calculate the amount of each food group you need to provide to meet children's nutritional needs while in care, up from 15%.

**Figure 9: Knowledge to inform menu planning (%)**

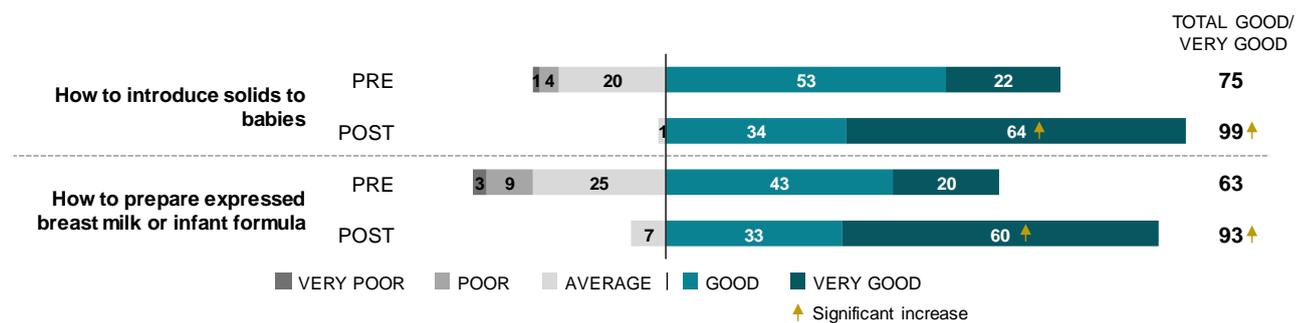


Q2 (pre) / Q9 (post). Using the scale below please place a tick in the appropriate box to indicate your current knowledge of... (pre n=82 / post n=76)

### 6.5 Knowledge of infant feeding requirements

While some participants acknowledged that managing infants' food and nutrition requirements was not part of their current role, they still showed interested in this information and found it worth knowing, even if they weren't going to use it at the current time. Some participants also acknowledged that the information they did have on this drew from their personal experience as a parent. Over the workshop, knowledge on infant feeding requirements increased significantly, with 64% of participants acknowledging they had very good knowledge following the workshop (up from 22%), while 60% felt they had very good knowledge of how to prepare expressed breastmilk or infant formula (up from 20%). Some noted, however, that even when there are babies at their services, bottle feeds are the responsibility of the educators, and it is generally not something they have involvement with.

**Figure 10: Knowledge of infant requirements (%)**



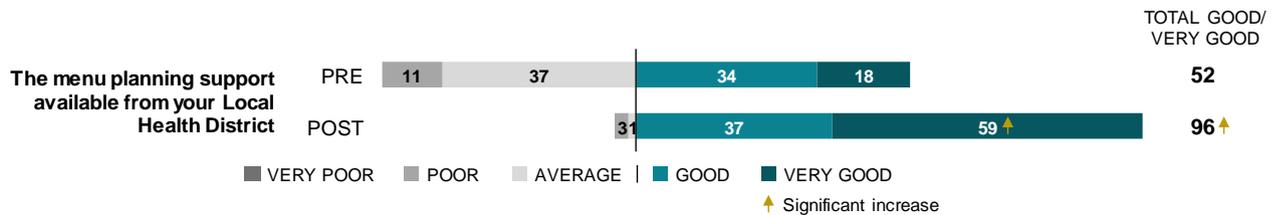
Q2 (pre) / Q9 (post). Using the scale below please place a tick in the appropriate box to indicate your current knowledge of... (pre n=82 / post n=76)

### 6.6 Knowledge of support

A similarly positive result was observed around knowledge of available support for menu planning through the Local Health District. Prior to attending the workshop, nearly half (48%) of the participants were unaware of this service (average or lower knowledge). Following the workshop, awareness

nearly doubled, with some 96% of participants indicating they had good/very good knowledge of the support they could access (up from 52%). Further to this, many participants also acknowledged that following the workshop they were planning to share their menus with their *Munch & Move* representative to have them reviewed and to seek further help and support around improving their current menu offering.

**Figure 11: Knowledge of available support (%)**

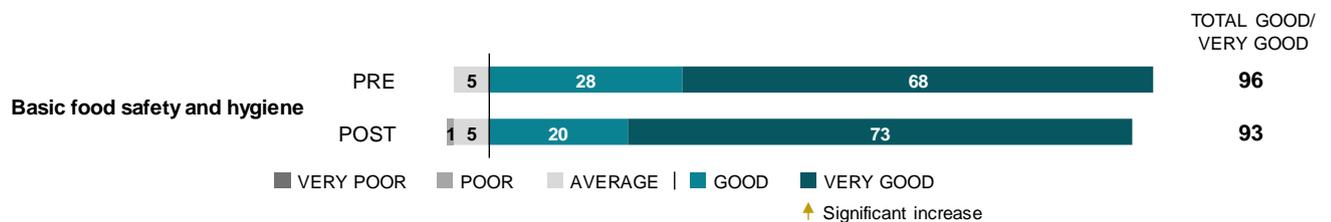


Q2 (pre) / Q9 (post). Using the scale below please place a tick in the appropriate box to indicate your current knowledge of... (pre n=82 / post n=76)

### 6.7 Knowledge of basic food safety and hygiene

The only area that did not see a significant improvement as a result of attendance at the workshop was knowledge around basic food and safety hygiene. Given this is one of the areas where cooks require certification to work in their position, existing levels of knowledge were already very high. While there was a small upward shift in knowledge following the workshop, it is unsurprising that the increase was not more pronounced.

**Figure 12: Knowledge of basic food safety and hygiene**



## 7. Impact of the workshop on awareness and knowledge of tools and resources

This section of the report evaluates the **impact of the HMP workshop on awareness and knowledge of tools and resources to support healthy menu planning**. This is particularly in relation to *The Caring for Children – Birth to 5 years resource* and the *Nutrition Checklist for Menu Planning tool*. The pre survey assessed knowledge and use of both resources, while the qualitative research provided an opportunity to discuss awareness and use of these resources since the workshop.

Prior to the workshop, the stated awareness of both the *Caring for Children – Birth to 5 years (Food Nutrition and Learning Experiences)* resource and the *Nutrition Checklist for Menu Planning tool* were already considerably high. Among those that were aware of the resources, the workshop was a timely reminder that these resources are available and designed to assist them in their role. Overall, participants indicated that *Munch & Move* resources are known for being high quality, purposefully designed and validated. Feedback on each resource is outlined below.

### 7.1 The Caring for Children – Birth to 5 years resource

Before the workshop 79% of attendees were aware of the *Caring for Children – Birth to 5 years (Food Nutrition and Learning Experiences)* resource. Of those who are aware of the resource, 71% indicated they had used it, and 62% indicated they were familiar with its content (22% very good / 40% good). Only 9% of those who were aware of the resource indicated their knowledge of it was poor. Following the workshop, 94% of all attendees indicated they felt confident using the *Caring for Children – Birth to 5 years (Food Nutrition and Learning Experiences)* resource to help plan their service menu. Of these, 43% indicated they felt very confident.

While the workshop provided participants with a reminder of this resource, interview participants who had prior awareness of it largely indicated that it was a resource that they would access if / when they needed it, but that it was not something they use frequently once they are familiar and comfortable with their role.

Other participants who had not previously accessed this resource indicated that following the workshop they sought it out and having reviewed it, have found it to be particularly useful.

*“I didn’t know that I had the yellow book at the centre, so I went and found it after. It was really helpful for me because I found the book and saw lots of recipes” – Cook*

Participants also indicated that they appreciated the *Caring for Children’s* tip sheets they were given in the workshop as these succinct resources can be easily shared with colleagues and with families.

### 7.2 The Nutrition Checklist for Menu Planning tool

Similar to the *Caring for Children* resource, 72% of attendees had heard of the *Nutrition Checklist for Menu Planning tool*. Of those who are aware of the resource, 77% indicated they had used it, with

17% rating their knowledge of very good, while 48% thought it was good (65% total). 11% of those who were aware of the tool indicated their knowledge of it was poor.

This resource was widely referenced in the interviews. Participants spoke highly of this tool – both in terms of the activity within the workshop where they got to ‘test it out’ and also the subsequent use of this tool in their menu planning / review conducted since the workshop. In particular, participants felt that the *Nutrition Checklist for Menu Planning* tool:

- Assists them to assess and make changes to their menus;
- Provides a clear visual indication that their menus are effectively delivering the nutritional requirements to meet the guidelines;
- Allows them to be more strategic in how they cover off nutritional requirements across the menu; and
- Assists with communicating the menu for review/approval between cook and service management.

*“Yes, we have used the checklist, just to check that you have everything in there because it is really precise. The checklist makes it easier, because you can double check that you’ve got what you need in there” – Nominated Supervisor*

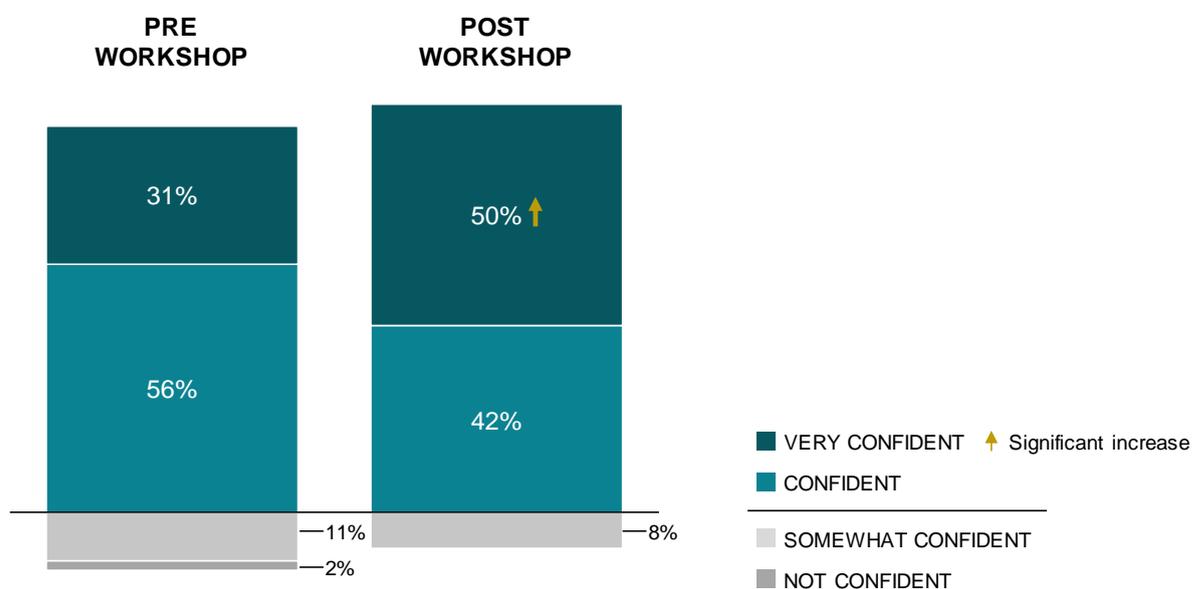
## 8. Impact of the workshop on confidence

This section of the report evaluates **the impact of the HMP workshop on increasing confidence in ability to plan healthy menus**. This section uses data from the pre and post survey to assess change, along with insight from the interviews to unpack how the workshop influenced the results.

The workshops had a positive impact on participants' confidence in being able to influence the menu planning process at their service. The proportion of participants who felt 'very confident' increased significantly as a result of the workshop, from 31% to 50% (

Figure 13).

**Figure 13: Confidence in influencing menu planning process**



Q4 pre / Q8 post. How confident do you feel about being able to influence the menu planning process at your service? (pre n=82 / post n=76)

For those who indicated they had low confidence following the workshop – this was largely attributed to feeling they lacked agency. This included feeling they lack authority to change the current menu, that the provision of healthy meals is not solely the responsibility of the cook but requires support from all staff, or they were new to their role so felt additional experience is needed before they felt more confident.

A number of interview participants indicated that their confidence with the menu planning process had improved in part as a result of the menu planning activity in the workshop. This activity helped them to put the theoretical information that they were learning into practice. The activity was hands-on, and they could seek guidance and reassurance from the ECTARC presenters and LHD representatives. This meant they could test out ideas in a collaborative environment. As such, many indicated this activity was a highlight of the workshop.

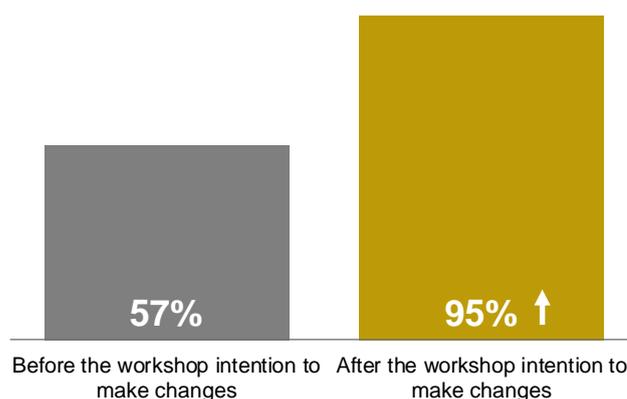
Interview participants also indicated that their confidence in speaking with parents had increased. They were able to share information with them about what constitutes healthy eating. They were also able to justify to them the approach taken within their service.

## 9. Impact of the workshop on intention to make changes to service menu

This section of the report evaluates ***the impact of the HMP workshop on increasing intention to make changes to their service menu to support the provision of healthy food and drinks to children***. This section largely focuses on claimed intention to make changes to the service menu before and after the workshop.

The workshops were successful in increasing intention to make service menu changes. The proportion of participants thinking about making changes – either to their menu or nutrition policy – increased significantly from 57% prior to 95% following the workshop (Figure 14 below).

**Figure 14: Intention to make changes to their menu**



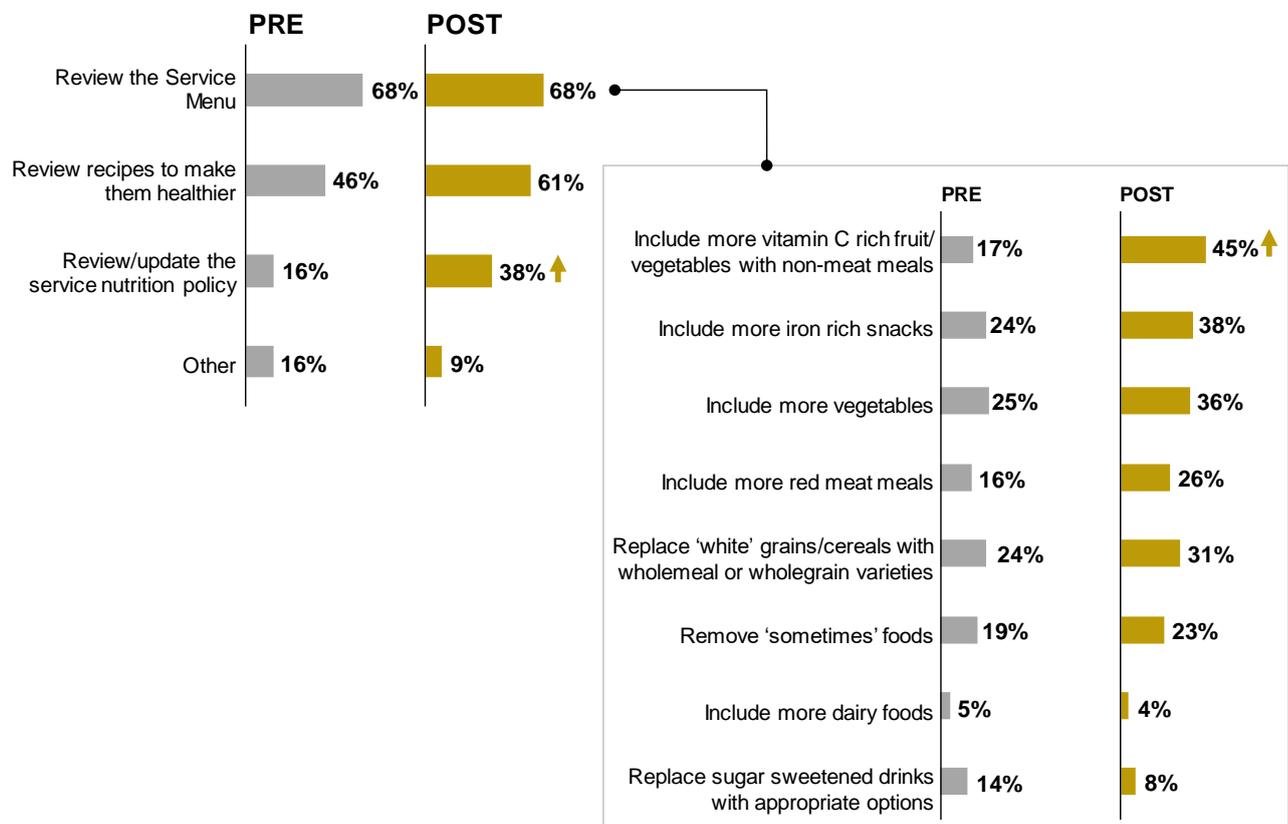
Q7 (pre). Are you currently thinking about making changes to your service menu or nutrition policy? (n=82) / Q12 (post). Please describe any changes you plan to implement back at your service as a result of attending the workshop (n=76)

Before the workshop 17% of attendees indicated they would not be making changes, while 26% indicated they were unsure. This shift in attitude is a testament to the increase in knowledge and awareness the workshop facilitated.

As outlined in figure 15 overleaf, the majority of participants intended to review their service menu (68%). While this result did not change over the course of the workshop, this result is not surprising given many interview participants stated that this was one of the reasons why they were initially interested in attending the workshop. What did change, however, was the types of menu changes they were intending on making. In particular, the intention to include more Vitamin C rich fruit and/or vegetables with non-meat meals increased significantly from 17% to 45% – and directly correlates to workshop content, which many noted as being ‘new’ information. Similarly, while not significant, there was also a sizable increase in the proportion of participants who intend to include more iron rich snacks (+14%), more vegetables (+11%), more red meat (+10%) and replacing white grains/cereals with wholemeal or wholegrain varieties (+7%).

In addition to reviewing their service menus, attendees also indicated an increase in the intention to review their recipes to make them healthier from 46% to 61% and a significant increase in the intention to review/update their service nutrition policy from 16% to 38%.

**Figure 15: Intended changes**



Q7 (pre). Are you currently thinking about making any changes to your service menu or nutrition policy? If yes, please indicate what changes you are thinking about making... (n=82) / Q12 (post). Please indicate any changes you plan to implement back at your service as a result of attending the workshop? (n=76)

# 10. Impact of the workshop on influencing positive behaviour change

This section of the report evaluates ***the impact of the HMP workshop on short term menu or behavioural changes made to support the provision of healthy food and drinks to children.*** The qualitative interviews were designed to capture self-assessed short-term change resulting from attendance at the workshop. In these interviews, participants were asked to detail any changes that they had made in the two weeks since they attended the workshop. Across these interviews it was clear that the workshops had an immediate impact in driving change – both to service menus and more broadly to behaviours that support children adopting positive habits around healthy food and drink.

## 10.1 Menu changes

Almost all interview participants indicated they had completed or were in the process of reviewing their service menus with the intention to make improvements as a result of attending the workshop. Those who had already completed their reviews or were in the process of doing so revealed that changes tended to be minimal rather than wholesale. That is, there wasn't any significant 're-writing' of entire menus, just small tweaks. In the majority of cases, this was because **their menus were generally thought to already be performing well.**

*"We felt really confident in the fact that what we were offering and what we continue to offer is nutritional. But we also came away with a bit of added information and great information to share with our families, which is important, because it's hard to source those things from somewhere that's a reliable source" – Director*

*"I had written some stuff out before the workshop for my menu and I went back over that after the workshop and changed a few things to follow guidelines and add in more iron things, red meat and white meat and I benefitted because I wouldn't have known that otherwise... I am more confident now that I have done it" - Cook*

*"We've incorporated the extra red meat. We've switched from white bread to wholemeal bread on sandwich days. We now provide the children with an exclusive vegetable platter, so that way they don't see the fruit and ignore the veg. We are a little bit more cautious with our fruit servings now, because we were probably overdoing the fruit. We've stopped the 'sometimes' food. The dips were another one, we were using sour cream to make our dips – we've now started making those with Greek yoghurt. Lots and lots of changes" – Director*

Changes made to menus then largely preserved existing routines and approaches, and tended to focus on:

- **Substituting ingredients with healthier alternatives**, for example using wholemeal or whole grain options instead of the white varieties, such as brown rice or whole grain bread.
- **Reducing 'unhealthy' additives included in recipes**, for example decreasing/eliminating the amount of salt or sugar added.
- **Increasing the volume/variety of vegetables** (and reducing how much fruit) is offered. It was noted that this included both adding more vegetables to snack platters in place of fruit as well as including more vegetables in the main meals.

*“Yeah we are in the process of it. For this week gone, we did a big review, looked at the amount of fruit our children are eating and we noticed it was excessive. So, we sent an email to our families to consider leaning towards bringing more vegetables than fruit - as a result, we have noticed a huge increase in the vegies eaten by our children. And also eating more wholemeal” - Director*

- **Reconsidering the inclusion of certain foods** identified in the workshop as ‘sometimes foods’, for example dried fruit.
- **Coupling certain foods together to maximise nutritional value**, for example ensuring Vitamin C rich foods are served with non-meat meals.

*“Lots of changes have already started, a bit less fruit and a bit more veg, on the vegetarian days making sure we are using iron rich food that are not overcooked – because that is something else we didn’t realise we were doing, serving iron rich food but cooking them too much. There has definitely been changes to the menu already” – Director*

- **Considering the nutritional value of their menu across an entire day**, not just focusing on individual meals. This was thought to be a more sensible way to approach menu planning, reducing pressure that children have to eat certain meals, and facilitating increased opportunities for children to consume their daily nutritional requirements.

Among these participants, it was felt that the workshop equipped them with the knowledge and skills to make these changes. Participants felt empowered to promote healthy menus and had increased confidence to justify menu decisions to other staff and parents. This was particularly important for participants who had limited experience working in early childhood education and care – and was most notable among cooks new to their position.

As previously mentioned, rather than identifying issues, for some the workshops acted to validate their current practices. In these cases, the workshop helped to increase confidence that their menus were ‘up to standard’, being both healthy and appropriate. In some cases, participants **prioritised ease** so were hesitant to make significant changes that would require additional time, cost or were perceived to be too difficult to introduce. In these cases, their existing menus were in part a result of being easy and efficient to prepare, and they were hesitant to change what was working.

Those who had not reviewed their menu, or did not intend to do so, felt that their menu did not need changes, indicating that the workshop had acted to validate their current practices. It is worth noting, however, that some of these participants had added new recipes to their repertoire which they had acquired as a result of attending the workshop, from the facilitator or via interaction with other attendees.

## 10.2 Other behaviour changes

In addition to menu changes, a number of participants spoke of changes to their practice as a result of attending the workshop. This largely involved being more ‘hands on’ when it comes to encouraging the development of healthy habits around food with the children. Many participants shared that the workshop had inspired them to create opportunities to share the preparation and cooking experience with the children.

*“We’ve all got direction now, like the cook going into the classrooms and doing cooking activities, incorporating food into learning and into the classroom and making it more than just ‘this is what happens in the kitchen’” – Director*

*“I have made changes such as – we did... my cook has involved children in cooking, talked to them about what ingredient she is using. She involves them. Another thing – how we can involve and how we can promote healthy eating among the children and families. We were discussing involving parents like we do with the children” – Nominated Supervisor*

In addition to this, some cooks indicated that the workshop has encouraged them to be a little more daring in the foods that they serve, acknowledging that it is important for children to be exposed to a variety of different foods and that it is quite natural for children to take time to try and like new tastes.

*“I decided myself, I really want to work on the things they don’t like to have. I want to ask the teachers because they have more understanding of the kids, so maybe if they don’t like chicken, add some tomato paste or something. Before, I didn’t hear from anyone or have a plan to change anything” - Cook*

*“Once I get myself organised, I’d like to go out amongst the children – even to have a little bit of a taste with the different foods. Like a coconut, something they probably haven’t been exposed to. Something like a bit of an activity tasting” – Cook*

Sharing information and resources learnt in the workshop with colleagues and families is an important way to advocate for menu and behavioural changes that support children learning about healthy attitudes and behaviours. Having the whole community (staff and parents) onboard and working towards the same objective, especially when it requires that changes be made, helps to safeguard ongoing success. Following the workshop, 68% of participants intended to share the workshop’s information at the next staff meeting and a further 72% stating they would share it with families and staff at their service. Typically, this was driven by directors or nominated supervisors, whilst many cooks who attended the workshop by themselves rarely spoke of initiating this knowledge transfer themselves. When these cooks were asked about why they have not shared or did not intend to share information, a ‘lack of authority’ or a feeling that it ‘wasn’t their place to do so’ informed their decision.

*“It’s hard, I am in the kitchen by myself most of the time. There is no time to talk to anyone, they’re just in and out” - Cook*

*“I have a meeting every Monday and, on our agenda, Munch and Move healthy planning is included and after the seminar, I updated my room leaders in relation to our menu planning” – Director*

As mentioned previously, having both cook and non-cook representatives from the same service attend the workshop helped overcome this barrier, as it helped to facilitate a sense of solidarity between cook and non-cook staff.

# 11. Barriers to implementing menu changes

This section of the report **identifies facilitators and barriers to implementing menu changes that support the provision of healthy food and drinks to children**. This section of the report draws on feedback shared in the qualitative interviews. Participants were asked to share potential barriers they foresaw in their own service - and at other services in general - that might frustrate attempts to improve healthy eating amongst children and overall healthy menu planning efforts. While these insights are not specifically related to the workshop content, they highlight areas where additional information, resources or support could be of value.

From the interviews, two main categories of barriers to healthy menu planning were identified:

1. Functional and practical constraints; and
2. Children's food preferences and dietary requirements.

## 11.1.1 Functional and practical constraints

The function and practical constraints identified as potentially inhibiting the implementation of menu changes include:

- **Preparing healthy food can be time consuming:** Cooks are often busy, with limited time to prepare food. This is especially common for those who work part-time. Some participants felt that the workshops create an expectation of additional effort being needed to prepare healthy food over their existing menus. They suggested that services may not adopt best practice due to time limitations or that they may become complacent in time reverting to previous less healthy menus. Some identified time restraints as a barrier to having children involved in preparing meals or cooks leaving the kitchen to interact with children, despite widespread appeal among workshop participants.

*"My main challenge would be the produce, because we usually have this much budget and so we can't do more. I need to discuss this with the owner to maybe stretch the budget a bit more than it is now. It is a challenge and I don't know how I am going to work on it" - Cook*

- **Preparing healthy food is thought to be more costly:** Some services are constrained by a budget which was thought to restrict menu choices. Like with time, there was a perception among some participants that healthier menu items require more costly ingredients. Where cost was identified as a barrier increasing the amount and variety of fresh fruit and vegetables, as well as including lean meat options were thought to be unfeasible. In addition to purchasing more/different healthy food options, the risk of food waste resulting from changes to the menu was also an area of financial concern. With a limited budget, cooks are less willing to experiment with new/different menu options.

*"The challenge is I don't want any waste. If the trolleys come back with not much food left, I've won... I don't like when it comes back with heaps of food, I hate that. That's the challenge getting them to try things" - Cook*

- **Some cooks lack skill and experience:** Despite attendance at the workshop, it was felt that some inexperienced cooks (or cooks with limited experience catering for children) can lack the ability to implement this learning effectively. For example, they may find healthier recipes difficult to prepare, lack knowledge about the ingredients they should be using, or struggle calculate the portion sizes required for children to get their daily nutritional requirements.
- **Some cooks have limited ability to influence change:** It was felt that at times cooks lack agency to implement significant change. This may be because they have limited opportunities to influence the menu, or there is a lack of support from other staff to implement changes. As cooks are often not present during meals, changes to the menu were thought to potentially impact other staff, for example encouraging children to try new/different food can require an increased effort and extended commitment.
 

*“It’s hard because I’m not one of the educators in the room, I’m in the kitchen. I can’t be with them to tell them to smell the food, and so on. It’s completely up to the teachers to do that” - Cook*
- **Some services use external caterers and therefore lack control over the menu:** Where using caterers, the cook’s influence is limited to requesting set menus or items. They do not have the ability to create their own menus or obtain their own ingredients. The role of the cook is simply to prepare pre-cooked meals and provide snacks.

### 11.1.2 Children’s food preferences and dietary requirements

Food preferences and dietary requirements often increased the difficulty of menu planning. Catering to preferences and dietary requirements was thought to limit the range of healthy menu items services and cooks could choose from or led to extra effort in getting children to try new food. Examples might include accounting for a range of allergies and/or religious requirements (e.g. halal meats, or Hindu friendly meals). Finding, or adapting, recipes that can be eaten by all children, and that fit healthy eating Guidelines, was often described as a constant struggle, and one of the biggest challenges faced by cooks.

*“It’s everchanging allergies and intolerances. We probably have 4 or 5 children here who are hospitalised every 6 months to see if there intolerances have changes and whether they can add more to their diet, so its keeping up with those things... it’s been a changing trend for the last 30 years, before it might have be different milks, whereas now its whether they can have egg as the 4<sup>th</sup> ingredient in a recipe. Stuff that requires a lot more research, and you have to be very careful throughout the day” – Director*

Similarly, managing fussy eaters and/or getting children to try new food they might not necessarily have had exposure to at home is also considered a significant barrier to healthy menu planning. This was particularly notable at centres with children from culturally diverse backgrounds.

*“I think the difficulty is your fussy eaters. That is probably your biggest challenge and that is always going to be your biggest challenge. I think the workshop focused on how to really work through that without creating any anxiety around it and making food fun and enjoyable” – Director*

The combination of these two barriers was often cited as one of the main reasons for attending the workshop, with cooks keen to get information and advice on how to best overcome these challenges while still meeting the nutritional guidelines.

Another barrier raised by participants was the influence educators at the service have on children’s eating habits. Some participants detailed that the way the prepared food is discussed and described by educators to the children can help or hinder the likelihood of the food being eaten. Depending on the service, some cooks felt that due to their role lacking authority compared to say a director - they had little to no say on how educators communicate the food to the children.

# 12. Potential enhancements to the HMP workshop

This section of the report ***HMP workshops to enhance their effectiveness in increasing participants' skills, knowledge and resources in relation to nutrition and healthy menu planning***. This section of the report primarily focuses on qualitative feedback about the HMP workshops to identify improvements that could be made. In addition to this, it also draws on verbatim responses from the post survey. Overall, most participants stated the workshops were well run, informative and helpful, and relevant to their service and role. With this in mind, any suggested improvements were often minor in scale.

This research has identified a range of potential improvements to the HMP workshops. These are listed below, then detailed in the following subsections.

- Allowing additional time during workshops to process, reflect on and discuss content
- Allowing for additional interaction with presenters
- Holding sessions more frequently
- Increasing attendance of and relevance to educators
- Providing additional recipes

Each of these potential improvements is detailed in the following subsections.

## 12.1 Allowing additional time during workshops to process, reflect on and discuss content

By far the most common feedback from the workshops was that the sessions felt 'rushed', in that it was felt there was a lot of content being covered in a relatively short period for each section of the workshop. As a result, most participants felt that there wasn't enough time to digest, reflect or discuss with other participants. Participants, however, didn't want to see any content dropped from the workshop in order to better accommodate for time.

Many participants also felt that the workshop should be longer to allow for a few minutes of discussion after each section of the workshop, or to just better accommodate the amount of content needing to be covered.

*"The presenters were good – no problem – but slow it down a bit. I am a slow note taker so suppose the answer was something, I can't follow because I can't write and listen at the same time" – Cook*

*"It was really helpful, the only thing that I could improve the workshop was the at the time was really short. They couldn't stay on a topic and go into more detail about it... I think it was really useful, but could have been more useful if the time was a bit longer than it was"- Cook*

*"There's so many questions for us, I don't think 3 hours is enough. A whole day would be good" – Cook*

*“The workshop was 3 hours and we had no time for questioning or talking or reflection – it was just go go go” – Cook*

Based on the interview, it appears that workshops with smaller attendance, did not feel that timing was as strong of an issue – this could suggest that one way to overcome issues with timing is to have smaller sessions, that better allow for facilitators to manage questions and collaborative activities, thus minimising time lost from the ‘logistics’ of the workshops.

## **12.2 Allowing for additional interaction with presenters, and between participants**

Many cooks and directors who attended the workshops, initially expected the workshops to offer more of a networking opportunity with other cooks in order to share menus and experiences with each other. With many participants finding the workshop already stretched for time, it was felt there wasn't enough of an opportunity to do this. Many noted the value they got from momentary interactions with their peers, and thus wished that they had more of an opportunity to do so.

*“Other educators get a chance to talk to other educators, whereas a cook is a standalone position, so a change for cooks to talk to other cooks is important from a social perspective and a professional development perspective” - Director*

Similarly, many participants were under the expectation that they were to receive an opportunity to speak with a *Munch & Move* Support Officer to review and talk through their menu, or ask questions more specific to their individual service. Some respondents felt that it would make the workshops more worthwhile if there was an opportunity to speak with a *Munch & Move* Support Officer for any individual questions and concerns, instead of addressing them to the entire workshop.

As mentioned, many cooks were not previously aware that they can reach out to *Munch & Move* Support Officer directly for support. This presents an opportunity for *Munch & Move* Support Officer to not only work with educators, but to proactively extend their support services to cooks so that they are aware of support available.

## **12.3 Holding sessions more frequently**

For many respondents, this was their first *Munch & Move* session on healthy menu planning, or indeed their first ever *Munch & Move* professional development opportunity. As a result, many expressed how much they got out of the workshop and thus felt that more workshops should be held and/or more often.

Many participants felt that by doing so, cooks can keep on top of the latest dietary and nutritional information, and as a way to keep refreshing their knowledge on healthy eating Guidelines.

Directors also supported this idea as a means to better upskill their staff, improve the quality of their service, and assist with their re-accreditation.

## **12.4 Increasing attendance of and relevance to educators**

As discussed earlier, many participants discussed the role and impact that educators have on healthy eating behaviours in children at the service and predicted that services could be better served if more educators attended the sessions. This was seen as a way to get around any hierarchy concerns in particular centres, thus creating ‘buy-in’ from staff on any menu initiatives, whilst still ‘educating the educators’ on healthy eating for children.

Some respondents did note however that the content was specifically aimed at service cooks, and highlighted that by opening the sessions up to more educators, that content covered in the workshops might need to be tailored for this new audience, e.g. removing the sections specifically around the importance of continuously updating menus, which educators might not be involved in. Many of the Directors expressed a strong interest in having most, if not all, of their educators attend such workshops. It is important to note that this idea aligns with the *Munch & Move* 'whole-of-service' approach to support a healthy ECEC environment, which already includes targeted professional development provided to other service staff and educators that captures some of the suggestions referenced.

*"I'm thinking, not only the cook, but this kind of workshop with educators also. This is also very important. The cook does the cooking and goes home, the educators need to know healthy eating habits and how to promote these to the children" - Nominated Supervisor*

## **12.5 Providing additional recipes and menu ideas**

One of the most common suggested improvements was providing more example menus and/or recipes to use or to draw inspiration from. More specifically, cooks expressed an interest in recipes and/or menus that demonstrate how to meet the nutritional requirements for dietary needs, for example recipes or menus that provide iron-rich foods for vegetarian children, and that can be easily adapted to suit services of various sizes. Given that participants (cooks and non-cooks) often feel time poor, it was felt that this type of practical resource would assist them to make positive changes with minimal effort. It is worth noting that resources of this nature already exist as part of the *Munch & Move* program, namely in the *Caring for Children* resource. Despite many participants indicating they are familiar with this resource, it may be beneficial to further support Cooks/Service Leaders to locate this information, or to find different ways to package this information to promote its use.

*"For me, it would have been more helpful to have some more practical suggestions, so maybe giving a few more sample recipes" – Director*

# Appendix

**Pre workshop survey:**

7. Are you currently thinking about making changes to your service menu or nutrition policy?

- Yes  No  Not sure

If you selected YES, please indicate what changes you are thinking about making (tick all that apply):

- Reviewing the menu
- Reviewing recipe to make them healthier
- Review/update the service nutrition policy
- Including more red meat meals
- Including more iron rich snacks
- Including more dairy foods
- Including more vegetables
- Including more vitamin C rich fruit and/or vegetables with non-meat meals
- Replacing white breads, cereals, rice, pasta or flour with wholemeal or wholegrain varieties
- Replacing sugar sweetened drinks with appropriate options (i.e. water and plain milk)
- Removing 'sometimes' foods
- Other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_

8. Using the scale below please rate how interested you are in learning more about the following topics, by placing a tick in the appropriate box.

	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not very interested	Not at all interested
National Healthy Eating Guidelines				
Nutrition for infants and toddlers (Birth to 24 months)				
Children's nutrition (2 to 5-year olds)				
Practical advice for food preparation and healthy menu planning				

9. What is the main thing you hope to get out of this workshop?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for completing this survey!**

## Pre-Workshop Evaluation

Thank you for attending today's *Munch & Move* Healthy Menu Planning Workshop.

Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions about your own understanding and confidence in planning a healthy menu.

**All responses are strictly confidential.** Your answers will be combined with all other responses and will not be linked to you or your organisation in any way.

Workshop date: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop location: \_\_\_\_\_

Your position: (please select **one** response only)

- Cook
- Director
- Nominated Supervisor
- Educator
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_



1. Using the scale below please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements, by placing a tick in the appropriate box:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
Meal planning at my service focuses on providing healthy food choices for the children						
Meeting national frameworks and guidelines for healthy menu planning is a priority for our service						
Sometimes providing children with healthy food options takes too much time and effort						
My service makes it easy for me to plan healthy menus						
It's ok to provide unhealthy meals for children sometimes						
Most services struggle to provide healthy meal options to the children they care for						
I believe my service plans and prepares meals that meet national healthy eating guidelines for infants and children						

2. Using the scale below please place a tick in the appropriate box to indicate your current knowledge of:

	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
Why healthy eating is important for children					
The <i>Munch &amp; Move</i> healthy eating key messages					
The <i>Infant Feeding Guidelines</i>					
The <i>Australian Dietary Guidelines</i>					
The <i>Australian Guide to Healthy Eating</i>					
What the five food groups are					
How to identify which foods fit into the five food groups					
The number of serves children need of each food group while in care					
Appropriate serve sizes for children					
What foods are discretionary or 'sometimes' foods					
Your services requirements under the National Quality Framework relating to healthy food and drinks					
How to read a food label (including what the Health Star Rating means)					
How to plan a healthy menu that provides the appropriate amounts of foods from the five food groups					
How to calculate the amount of each food group you need to provide to meet children's nutrition needs while in care					
How to prepare expressed breast milk or infant formula					
How to introduce solids to babies					
How to modify a menu for babies, toddlers and children					
How to modify a menu recipe to be healthier					
How to deal with challenges such as food costs, fussy eaters and food intolerances or allergies					
Basic food safety and hygiene					
The menu planning support available from your Local Health District					

3. How confident are you in your ability to plan a healthy menu for your service?

Very confident  Confident  Somewhat confident  Not confident  Not sure

If you selected 'Somewhat confident', 'Not confident' or 'Not sure' please provide your reasoning below.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. How confident do you feel about being able to influence the menu planning process at your service?

Very confident  Confident  Somewhat confident  Not confident  Not sure

If you selected 'Somewhat confident', 'Not confident' or 'Not sure' please provide your reasoning below.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Have you ever heard of the *Caring for Children - Birth to 5 years (Food, Nutrition and Learning Experiences)* resource?

Yes  No  Not sure

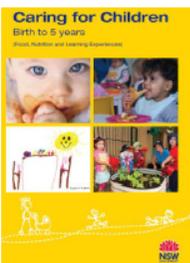
If you selected 'YES'

Have you ever used the *Caring for Children - Birth to 5 years* resource to help you plan healthy menus?

Yes  No  Not sure

How would you rate your knowledge of the content in the *Caring for Children - Birth to 5 years* resource?

Very good  Good  Average  Poor  Very poor



6. Have you ever heard of the *Nutrition Checklist for Menu Planning* tool?

Yes  No  Not sure

If you selected 'YES'

Have you used the *Nutrition Checklist for Menu Planning* tool to help you plan healthy menus?

Yes  No  Not sure

How would you rate your knowledge of the *Nutrition Checklist for Menu Planning* tool?

Very good  Good  Average  Poor  Very poor



**Post workshop survey:**

11. How do you plan to share the information from the workshop? *(tick as many as apply)*
- Discuss at staff meeting  
  Conversations with staff and families  
  I do not intend to share the information  
  Other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_

12. Please describe any changes you plan to implement back at your service as a result of attending the workshop *(tick as many as apply)*
- I will not be making any changes  
 Review the service menu (please tick the relevant response/s below):
- Include more red meat meals
  - Include more iron rich snacks
  - Include more dairy foods
  - Include more vegetables
  - Include more vitamin C rich fruit and/or vegetables with non-meat meals
  - Replace white breads, cereals, rice, pasta or flour with wholemeal or wholegrain varieties
  - Replace sugar sweetened drinks with appropriate options (i.e. water and plain milk)
  - Remove 'sometimes' foods
- Review recipes to make them healthier  
 Review/update the service nutrition policy  
 Other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_

13. Do you have any other suggestions on what would improve the workshop in the future?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you very much for completing this survey**

Kantar are looking to talk to workshop participants in more detail about their experience with the workshop. The purpose of these interviews is to explore in greater detail your perception of the workshop, how it could be improved, and any changes you plan to make to your menus. Interviews are expected to take 45 - 60 minutes and will be conducted via telephone. As a thank you for participating, we are able to provide you with an \$80 pre-loaded debit card. Your participation in this research and your responses will be kept strictly confidential.

If you would like to participate, please provide your name, contact phone number and email address below, so that you *may* be contacted to arrange an interview.

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Page 4

## Post-Workshop Evaluation

Thank you for attending today's *Munch & Move* Healthy Menu Planning Workshop.

Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions about the workshop.

**Your responses are strictly confidential.** Your answers will be combined with all other responses and will not be linked to you or your organisation in any way.

Workshop date: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop location: \_\_\_\_\_

Your position: *(please select **one** response only)*

- Cook  
 Director  
 Nominated Supervisor  
 Educator  
 Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_



1. How relevant did you find the workshop content?  
 Very relevant    Relevant    Somewhat relevant    Not relevant    Not at all relevant

2. Please specify any workshop content that was unclear/difficult to understand.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. How would you rate the workshop resources (presentation, workbook, *Caring for Children* tip sheets)?  
 Very useful    Useful    Somewhat useful    Not useful    Not at all useful

4. How would you rate the presenter's knowledge of the content?  
 Excellent    Good    Average    Poor    Not sure

5. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the delivery of the workshop?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

6. Using the scale below please rate by placing a tick in the appropriate box how useful to your learning (knowledge and understanding) you found each sections of the workshop:

	Very useful	Useful	Somewhat useful	Not useful	Not at all useful
Introduction – National Healthy Eating Guidelines, overview of the <i>Caring for Children</i> resource					
Section 1 – Nutrition for Infants and Toddlers (Birth to 24 months)					
Section 2 – Children's Nutrition (2 to 5 year olds)					
Section 3 – Food Preparation and Menu Planning					
Section 4 – Making it Happen					
Section 5 –Healthy Eating Learning Experiences					

Please provide any further comments on the workshop content below.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

7. How confident do you feel using the *Caring for Children Birth to 5 years* (Food, Nutrition and Learning Experiences) resource to plan your service menu?  
 Very confident    Confident    Somewhat confident    Not confident    Not sure  
 If you selected 'Somewhat confident', 'Not confident' or 'Not sure' please provide your reasoning below.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

8. How confident do you feel about being able to influence the menu planning process at your service?  
 Very confident    Confident    Somewhat confident    Not confident    Not sure  
 If you selected 'Somewhat confident', 'Not confident' or 'Not sure' please provide your reasoning below.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

9. Using the scale below please place a tick in the appropriate box to indicate your current knowledge of:

	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
Why healthy eating is important for children					
The <i>Munch &amp; Move</i> healthy eating key messages					
The <i>Infant Feeding Guidelines</i>					
The <i>Australian Dietary Guidelines</i>					
The <i>Australian Guide to Healthy Eating</i>					
What the five food groups are					
How to identify which foods fit into the five food groups					
The number of serves children need of each food group while in care					
Appropriate serve sizes for children					
What foods are discretionary or 'sometimes' foods					
Your services requirements under the National Quality Framework relating to healthy food and drinks					
How to read a food label (including what the Health Star Rating means)					
How to plan a healthy menu that provides the appropriate amounts of foods from the five food groups					
How to calculate the amount of each food group you need to provide to meet children's nutrition needs while in care					
How to prepare expressed breast milk or infant formula					
How to introduce solids to babies					
How to modify a menu for babies, toddlers and children					
How to modify a menu recipe to be healthier					
How to deal with challenges such as food costs, fussy eaters and food intolerances or allergies					
Basic food safety and hygiene					
The menu planning support available from your Local Health District					

10. To what extent did the workshop meet your expectations?  
 It greatly exceeded my expectations    It exceeded my expectations    It met my expectations    It did not live up to my expectations    It was well below my expectations  
 Thinking about your answer above please provide your reasoning below.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## In-depth interview discussion guide:

### NSW Ministry of Health HMP evaluation

## In-depth interview guide: Attendees of HMP Workshop

**This guide is intended as an outline only.** The discussion may not address all of the topics listed below, and may not cover them in the order described. There will be considerable scope within the discussion for exploring issues as they arise. Questions are indicative only of subject matter to be covered and are not word for word descriptions of the moderator's questions.

### 1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

- **Moderator to introduce self and role of research agency as impartial.**
- **Topic**
  - Explain briefly the nature of interviews; time required (60 minutes)
  - Introduce topic: NSW Office of Preventive Health has commissioned Kantar Public to conduct interviews to obtain feedback on the Healthy Menu Planning workshops – we are speaking to people who attended the workshops across NSW.
- **Procedure**
  - No right or wrong answers
  - Your honest opinions
  - Confidentiality / taping / note taking
  - Privacy and quality assurance disclosure
- **Questions**
  - Do you have any questions you'd like to ask me before we start?

### 2. PARTICIPANT ROLE

5 MINS

- First off, please could you tell me a bit about the service/s where you work?
  - **Type** of ECEC (long-day care/ pre-school etc)
  - **Funding** source? (private, council run, community service/s, other...)
  - **How many children** does it cater for? What age-ranges?
  - How many **staff** are there?
  - How **long** has the service/s been in operation?
  - Which **meals** does the service provide?
- And what is **your role** at the service/s?
  - How long have you been working in the position?

- What are your key **responsibilities**?
- What are your responsibilities around **meal planning/preparation**?
- How long have you been working in **childcare**?
- And how long has your job involved **meal planning/ preparation**? Why/ how did you start working in this area?
- What sort of **qualifications/ accreditation** do you have?

### 3. ATTITUDINAL/ BEHAVIOURAL CONTEXT 5 MINS

Moderator note: Establish attitudinal/ behavioural context for understanding response to the workshop.

- Overall, can you provide an overview of the menu at the service/s currently?
  - Morning tea?
  - Lunch?
  - Afternoon tea?
- How does this vary for **children of different ages**?
- How do you decide **what** to serve? What are your main **considerations**? **Who/ what** inputs into this decision?
- What would you say is most **challenging** about planning meals for the children at your service/s? Why would you say this is challenging?

### 4. DRIVERS & PRECURSORS 5 MINS

Moderator note: Explore drivers to attendance at the workshop, and key aims/objectives.

- Can you tell me which **Healthy Menu Planning Workshop** you attended?
- How did you **hear** about the workshop?
- And why did you decide to **go along**?
- What were you hoping to **get out** of the workshop?
- What did you think it was going to **cover**?
- What were the main things that **appealed** to you about it?

### 5. WORKSHOP PROCESS 15 MINS

Moderator note: Focus on perceptions of the workshop in terms of content and delivery – probing on key sections. Ensure assessment of relevance, understanding and helpfulness of each.

- What did you think of the workshop overall? LEAVE OPEN, then probe... in terms of:
  - **Content** – or the topics that were covered?

- What did you think of the **range of topics** that were covered generally?
  - How **relevant** were they to you/ your service/s?
  - How **helpful** were they? What did you think was most helpful? Least helpful?
  - Was any of the information **new** for you? What specifically was new? Probe: why healthy eating is important, infant feeding guidelines, Australian dietary guidelines, ECEC services requirements used under the NQF..
  - What were the key messages or '**take-aways**' for you?
- **Delivery?**
  - What did you think about the way it was **presented**? How clear was it? How **engaging**? Probe: The **facilitators**? The **tone** and **pace** of the session? **Audience interaction/ participation** through the session?
- PROBE FOR **SPECIFIC COURSE SECTIONS**... So now thinking about the specific stages of the session, what did you think of... (probe as above for each)
  - Introduction – *National Healthy Eating Guidelines, overview of the Caring for Children resource*
  - Section 1 – *Nutrition for Infants and Toddlers (Birth to 24 months) (which looked at introducing solids, texture progression. Modifying menus for babies and toddlers).*
  - Section 2 – *Children’s Nutrition (2 to 5 year olds) (which discussed the five food groups including the number of serves to provide to children).*
  - Section 3 – *Food Preparation and Menu Planning (Which explored how to apply this to menu planning at your service)*
  - Section 4 – *Making it Happen (Which highlighted the importance of continuously improving menu planning practices at your service)*
  - Section 5 – *Healthy Eating Learning Experiences (Which discussed ways cooks can step out of the kitchen and involve children in preparing and cooking meals at the service).*

## 6. SUPPORTING RESOURCES

10 MINS

Moderator note: Explore perceptions of the supporting resources – relevance/ helpfulness – but also ongoing use?

- And what were your views of the supporting resources (presentation, workbook, Caring for Children tip sheets)? How helpful were these? Probe for each resource:
  - How **relevant** was this for you? How **useful**? How **clear/ easy to understand**? **Easy to use**?
- Have you referred to these **since the workshop**? Which specifically? What prompted you to refer to them? What were you trying to find out?
  - Probe for **Caring for Children Birth to 5 years** (Food, Nutrition and Learning Experiences) resource and Nutrition Checklist for Menu Planning? Have they have used these? Do they intend to use these to conduct a review of their menu? Have you used this since the

workshop? What for? How useful have you found this? How easy/ difficult is it to use?  
Explore...

- If they haven't referred to these, will they intend to use these resources?

## 7. WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

15 MINS

Moderator note: Focus on workshop impact: did attendance at the workshop result in knowledge/ attitudinal or behavioural change? Why/ why not?

- Overall, would you say that the workshop lived up to your **expectations**? Explore.
- What, overall, would you say you got out of the workshop?  
Prompt with the following:
  - Have they conducted a menu review?
  - Have they shared the information from the workshop? (e.g. at a staff meeting, with other staff or families)
  - Have they, or do they intend to contact their Local Health District Munch & Move support officer for support with menu planning? Did they know they had a support officer who could assist with menu planning before attending the workshops?
- To what extent would you say you **learnt anything new** from attending the workshop?
  - What did you learn? Anything else?
  - Probe: reading food labels, understanding food groups (names, what foods fit into which core food group and what foods are discretionary), menu-planning, serving sizes (how many serves of the food groups need to be provided to children aged 2-5 while in care and what size are the serves), preparing breastmilk/ formula, modifying menus for infants/ toddlers/ children, making recipes healthier, dealing with challenges, food safety, support from Local Health District, why healthy eating is important, the *Munch & Move* healthy eating key messages, the *Infant Feeding Guidelines*, the *Australia Dietary Guidelines*, the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*, your service requirements under the *National Quality Framework*
- To what extent did attending the workshop make you **think or feel differently** about meal-planning at the service/s?
  - Did it prompt you to think differently about the **food you serve**? In what way?
  - Did it prompt you to **consider different things** when you are planning menus? When you are preparing food?
  - Did it have any impact in terms of how **confident** you feel in planning healthy menus/ preparing meals at the service/s?
- Did you **intend to make any changes** to the menu at the service/s after attending the workshop?
  - If so, what specifically did you intend to change? Why is that?
  - If not, why was that?

- (If intended to change) .... Do you have a **plan** in place in terms of following through with those changes? What was this? Can you talk me through it?
- And did you end up **making any changes** to the menu as a result of attending the workshop?
  - What specifically? Why this?
  - How easy/ difficult was it to make this change?
  - What was the reaction to this change at the service/s? Amongst staff? Children? Parents?
  - Is this change still in place? Why/ why not?
- IF MADE A CHANGE... **What** were the most helpful things that enabled you to make the changes to the menu?
- IF MADE NO CHANGE... **Why didn't you** end up making any changes to the menu? Are you planning to make this change?
- Would you have liked to have made **more changes to the menu**? What specifically would you have liked to have done?
- What would you say were the **main barriers** to doing this for your service/s? Why are these barriers? What would help reduce these as barriers?

## 8. REFLECTION & FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

5 MINS

Moderator note: Aim here is to collect suggestions for improvements to the workshop

- What do you think could be done to make the workshop more effective overall?
- What could be done to make the workshop...
  - More **relevant** for service/ss like yours?
  - More **helpful/** useful?
  - More **engaging/** interesting?
- What do you think would help or encourage service/ss like yours to **adopt the suggestions** for menu planning put forward in the workshop?
- What other information or resources do you think would be helpful?
- Do you have any further suggestions?

## 9. END

Thank you so much again for sharing everything you have today. Do you have any final thoughts or observations, or do you wish to change any of the answers you provided today?

If you would like to change your answers at a later date you can email us at [Harrison.Walker@kantar.com](mailto:Harrison.Walker@kantar.com)

Thanks again for your time.