

## **Economic analysis of three interventions of different intensity in improving school implementation of a government healthy canteen policy in Australia: costs, incremental and relative cost effectiveness**

Almost a quarter of children around the globe are living with overweight or obesity, making this a major public health concern. As more than half of these children will carry excess weight into adulthood, and healthcare spending on obesity comprises 0.7% - 2.8% of total healthcare budgets, it is important to reduce obesity from both an economic and healthcare standpoint. While many countries have developed national guidelines for school meals, research in both the United States and Australia has shown not all schools follow these policies. The purpose of this study was to both “determine the cost and cost-effectiveness of each of the three interventions in improving school implementation of a government healthy canteen policy and ... determine the relative cost-effectiveness of the three interventions in improving school implementation of such a policy.”

The 195 participating elementary schools in New South Wales, Australia were separated into control, high, medium, and low intensity groups. “The point estimate ICERs [Incremental Cost-Effectiveness Ratios] for the three interventions versus usual support were \$2982 (high intensity), \$2627 (medium intensity) and \$4730 (low intensity).” Additionally, the high intensity intervention was not statistically more successful than the medium intensity. The medium intensity intervention was conducted over a shorter period than the others, but measurements were scaled up to accommodate this.

Reference: Reilly, K.L., Reeves, P., Deeming, S. et al. Economic analysis of three interventions of different intensity in improving school implementation of a government healthy canteen policy in Australia: costs, incremental and relative cost effectiveness. *BMC Public Health* 18, 378 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-018-5315-y>