NHPA Research Task

OBESITY!
By Naomi and Stacey
What is the condition?

- Obesity is a condition that refers to the presence of the body’s excess fat tissue. This is according to the body max index (BMI), and that is more than 30% of body fat.
Why is this a National health priority area?

• Obesity and being overweight is a major National Health Area because it currently is a huge issue that urgently needs to be tackled.

• This issue recieves much attention because the nation needs to be educated about how obesity and being overweight can effect your life and how it massively decreases life expectancy.

• In 2003 high body weight was responsible for about 7.6% of total burden of disease in Australia.

• In 2005 obese people cost the country $4 billion dollars to cater for these people.
What are the risk factors for getting this condition?

• Biological- Genetics can be a risk factor to becoming obese as some people can be or may be more prone/likely to gain weight, as it could run in the family.

• Behavioural- Having a unhealthy diet is a risk factor that contributes to obesity, poor or unhealthy food consumption results in gaining more body weight overall. Another behavioural factor that contributes to this condition is physical inactivity- having the lack of energy expanded and not being physically active also results in obesity.
Environmental risk factors that may cause someone to be more prone to becoming obese is that people may live in rural/remot e areas resulting in less access to recreational facilities including gyms, pools etc.
What are the costs of the condition?

- Direct costs to the individual- Medication: for example if there high body weight has affected their overall health it may have lead to another condition such as a ‘heart condition’ so they need to pay money for medication to control this.

Being overweight can cause other costs to pay such as if the person was always ill because of being overweight, they may need to invest in ambulance cover.
• Indirect costs to the individual- A person with obesity may find it difficult to complete day to day tasks because of their body weight, so indirect costs may be to pay a cleaner to clean their house, pay a childcare professional/babysitter to take good care of their kids. And also indirect costs could include medical visits if they become really ill because of their weight.

• Intangible costs to the individual- may be the person may develop depression over time and loose self-esteem/confidence because of the way they look.
• Direct costs to the community- this would include the Government spending approximately $4 Billion dollars to cater for obese people for example- this money can be spend on obese people that are not fit enough to work, therefore we award these people will ‘the doll’ payments.

• Indirect costs to the community- GP time, hospital and emergency services time, people with this condition can take away from people with a more serious condition that is not as preventable as obesity.
• Intangible costs to the community- these costs would include loss of member of the community if life expectancy is lower because of the condition resulting in less people in society. Pain or suffering of other would also be an intangible cost to the community.
What can people do to prevent/improve this condition?

• To being this condition, people should have a better healthier diet, and food consumption should be thought out, and individuals should take the time to exercise daily at least for 60 minutes each day.
What health promotion initiatives are there to improve this area?

- There are health promotion programs out there to decrease the risk of obesity; these are:
  - GO 4Life – Habits for Healthy Kids
    this provides practical information for parents on certain areas of health including: healthy eating, regular exercise, speech and language, etc.
  - The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden National programs
    this shows children how to grow and cook fresh food.
  - Go for you Life! - Community and School Grand Programs
  - How do you Measure up