OBJECTIVES

- To establish a healthy eating environment in Alberta Health Services (AHS) facilities.
- To promote healthy eating to help AHS leaders, staff, Physicians, patients, Volunteers, and visitors reach their health potential.

PRINCIPLES

AHS leadership is committed to the development of a healthy eating environment in AHS facilities to support health, wellness, chronic disease prevention and management, and AHS’ mission and strategic direction.

Healthy eating environments shall be achieved through, but are not limited to, implementing the following strategies:

- raising awareness of the benefits and strategies for creating a healthy eating environment;
- establishing and supporting the role of AHS leaders, staff, and Physicians in leading and facilitating changes to improve the eating environment;
- engaging with key stakeholders, including providing information, advising, and collaborating, to inform planning and implementation of the policy;
- developing priority actions and targets for the implementation of a healthy eating environment in AHS facilities;
• continually improving and promoting the availability of healthy food choices to meet the needs of diverse populations accessing AHS facilities;

• promoting adherence to the Nutrition Guidelines for Foods and Beverages in AHS Facilities and the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines in retail operations and vending machines;

• providing space and equipment that enable healthy eating;

• maintaining fiscal accountability by delivering healthy food choices within operating budgets; and

• evaluating healthy eating environment strategies for ongoing improvement and learning for the development of evidence and best practice.

APPLICABILITY

Compliance with this document is required by all Alberta Health Services employees, members of the medical and midwifery staffs, Students, Volunteers, and other persons acting on behalf of Alberta Health Services (including contracted service providers as necessary).

ELEMENTS

This policy applies to all food and beverages sold in cafeterias, vending machines, auxiliary or volunteer run operations, and third party retail operations in AHS facilities. It also applies to AHS-funded activities including catering, fundraising, and celebration activities.

All AHS leaders, staff, and Physicians are encouraged to be leaders in promoting healthy eating environments within their role and scope of influence.

1. Responsibilities

1.1 Within their role and in their area of influence, AHS leaders are responsible for:

a) promoting, endorsing, and facilitating the establishment of a healthy eating environment in AHS facilities. This includes offering healthy food choices at AHS-funded activities, such as catering and fundraising;

b) advocating for food sold in retail operations and vending machines and provided at meetings to align with nutrition guidelines, and sharing their experience with other leaders;

c) providing direction and timelines for implementation of healthy eating environment strategies within their area; and

d) working with staff, auxiliaries, foundations, and trusts to encourage and implement healthy eating environment strategies.

1.2 All AHS staff, within their role and scope of influence, are encouraged to support a healthy eating environment in AHS facilities.
1.3 AHS Workplace Health and Safety is responsible for the integration of a healthy eating environment into health and wellness strategies for AHS.

1.4 AHS Nutrition and Food Services, Contracting, Procurement and Supply Management (CPSM), Legal Services, and Capital Management shall facilitate achievement of a healthy eating environment when working with, but not limited to, contracts, facility design, or retail operations in AHS facilities (e.g., vending, gift shops, and third party operators).

1.5 In collaboration with other key AHS stakeholders, Nutrition and Food Services is responsible for leading the development and evaluation of tools and resources to support healthy eating environment strategies, and the creation of healthy eating environments within their retail operations.

1.6 The Healthy Eating Environment Steering Committee is responsible for:

   a) establishing priorities and promoting healthy eating environment strategies; and

   b) monitoring the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the policy.

2. Food Safety

2.1 AHS shall continue to comply with the Public Health Act (Alberta), the Food Regulation (Alberta), the Food and Drugs Act (Canada), and other applicable legislation and industry standards with respect to food preparation and handling.

DEFINITIONS

Alberta Health Services (AHS) facility means any facility, property, or ground owned, operated, leased or funded by AHS.

Healthy eating means a way of eating that emphasizes healthy food choices, variety and portion sizes consistent with Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide.

Healthy eating environment means the infrastructure and decision-making context that promotes making healthy eating choices. Infrastructure refers to all AHS owned or operated facilities, spaces or equipment involved in food preparation, distribution or consumption. Decision-making context refers to the procedures, values, norms and leadership that influence or direct food-related activities in AHS.

Healthy food means food and beverages listed in the Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide, which emphasizes vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, nuts, seeds, dairy, meats, fish, and poultry. These foods are prepared and served in a way that aligns with national and provincial recommendations for sugar, sodium and fats.

REFERENCES

• Alberta Health Services Governance Documents:
- **Trans Fats Policy (#1104)**

- **Alberta Health Services Resources:**
  - *Healthy Eating Environment in AHS: Gift Shops*
  - *Healthy Vending Toolkit*
  - *Nutrition Guidelines for Foods and Beverages in AHS Facilities*

- **Non-Alberta Health Services Documents:**
  - *Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Adults* (Alberta Health)
  - *Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth* (Alberta Health)
  - *Eat Smart Meet Smart* (Alberta Health)
  - *Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide* (Health Canada)
  - *Food and Drugs Act* (Canada)
  - *Food Regulation* (Alberta)
  - *Public Health Act* (Alberta)
  - *Sugars Intake for Adults and Children Guideline* (World Health Organization)

**VERSION HISTORY**

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