

REACH FOR THE STARS



Case study

Supermarkets and customers Reach for the Stars!

Latrobe Community Health Service and Latrobe Health Assembly launched the flagship healthy supermarket project, 'Reach for the Stars' in 2022. Phase 2 – Scale-up commenced in April 2023, expanding to five local independent supermarkets.

Reach for the Stars makes it easier for customers to find healthy foods in the supermarket.

“The supermarket is the perfect place to promote fresh and healthy foods. It is where we decide which foods we buy, and therefore what we eat. Almost everyone shops at the supermarket,” said Laura Duff, Public Health Nutritionist, Latrobe Community Health Service.

Reach for the Stars uses a range of interventions based on the Australian Dietary Guidelines and Health Star Rating system – a quick, easy and standardised way to compare packaged foods. The more stars, the healthier.

Eye-catching Reach for the Stars materials including posters, banners and shelf tags are displayed in-store:

- All fresh fruit and vegetables are 5 stars!
- Health star rating shelf tags (on products 4 stars and above)
- Healthy recipes.

An eight-week trial of Reach for the Stars was held April - June 2024 in five local IGA supermarkets; Moe, Morwell, Glengarry, Rosedale and Stratford.

Alongside the in-store changes, there was an extensive promotional campaign to increase awareness of the project and the health star rating system. The campaign included press release, radio ads, social media, website, and activation and launch events. The campaign was hugely successful with an estimated reach of forty-five thousand people.

A key strength of Reach for the Stars is co-design. The project is co-designed with LCHS, LHA, Latrobe community members and, most importantly, with participating supermarkets.

“We held co-design workshops with each of the participating supermarkets. The workshops provided an opportunity to get feedback on the pilot and create new action ideas.

“The co-design process allowed us to bring together different perspectives and skill sets. This increases engagement, ownership and sustainability of the project. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts,” Ms. Duff said.

Reach for the Stars will continue with co-designed healthy eating nudges, like healthier drink fridges and end-of-aisle displays trialled in 2024.

There are early signs of success. The supermarkets, customers and community alike loved Reach for the Stars. “I have noticed a positivity through the customers baskets are much more filled up with four or five stars, rather than three and a half stars, which is good. Full points go to customers,” said one of the IGA owner and operators.

Surveys show sixty-four percent of customers noticed the healthy eating stars and almost 2 in 5 (38% n45) felt it influenced their purchases. There is strong community support for the campaign with 95% of customers agreeing supermarkets should continue to promote healthy eating.

“Reach for the Stars is a simple way to help shoppers make healthy food choices. Placing healthy labels and resources in store is a strategy designed with the Latrobe Valley community to support healthy eating, which leads to good health overall’ says Latrobe Health Assembly Chair, Tanya Rong.

Reach for the Stars is a Latrobe Health Innovation Zone initiative with funding from Latrobe Health Assembly in partnership with the Victorian Government.

