

TASKFORCESUBMISSION: submission

NAME: Toni Lacey

POSITION: Clinical Nurse

ORGANISATION: Queensland Health

SUBMISSION1: I have read through the document "Australia: The Healthiest Country by 2020." I have worked at ATODS (Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Service) as a Clinical Nurse employed within Queensland health for the past 2 years and previous to this 4 years in The Townsville Hospital, Emergency Department. I would like to identify an omission and a clarification in this document.

The omission is in the measuring of performance indicators. Tier 1 Health Outcomes: there should be a measure of babies born with fetal alcohol syndrome, low birth weight, SIDS related deaths due to cigarette smoking and alcohol consumption. For each of the medial problems there is sufficient evidence to relate to the cause being smoking or alcohol, consumption.

There are physical signs that can be measured and a diagnosis be confirmed at birth. Fetal alcohol syndrome is not always diagnosed at birth. Diagnosis may be made later, when the child is having problems with learning or behavior, or the condition may never be diagnosed. The effects of this syndrome last for life.

http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Foetal_alcohol_syndrome
accessed on the 18/12/2008

These symptoms affect the child through all life stages and costs in medical, social and economic terms. Prevention is the only answer.

Tier 2 Determinant of Health: a measure could be the proportion of pregnant women smoking cigarettes and/or drinking alcohol.

The clarification I seek is in regard to what is used for brief interventions in primary health care settings. This was mentioned in the document for obesity, smoking and alcohol in Tier 3 Health and Health-related System Performance. Is the brief intervention for obesity a BMI (Body Mass Index) calculation and percentage measure on the graph of normal population? What is the brief intervention for smoking and alcohol? The brief intervention for smoking that I am aware of is the 5 A's (Ask, Assess, Advise, Assist and Arrange follow up) by Queensland Health. (Helping Smokers Quit: A Health Professional's Guide to Brief Intervention, Queensland Health 2006) The brief intervention for alcohol that I am familiar with is the AUDIT Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test. (Brief Intervention for Hazardous And Harmful Drinking Babor and Higgins-Biddle WHO 2001)

If these are the ideal brief interventions that are considered then why not use these brief interventions in other settings? These interventions could be achieved and helpful, within schools, workplaces, shopping centres, community centres and hospitals. Utilized by secretaries, allied health, teachers, occupational health and safety officers.

PRIVACY: yes

SUBMIT: Submit