ABSTRACT SUBMISSION AIC 2016: #39

1. **Title:**

Validity of various measures to assess compliance of school canteen menus

2. **Authors:**

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3. **Key words:**

validity, healthy eating, schools, measurement tool

4. **Abstract**

a. **Background and Aims**

Across Australia a number of state-endorsed healthy canteen policies have been developed to help combat childhood obesity. At a population level there is a need for valid and low cost tools to quantify and monitor policy impact. The aim of this study is to describe the development of measures to assess policy compliance and assess their validity compared to the 'gold standard' of direct observations.

b. **Methods**

All primary schools (principal and canteen managers) in the Hunter New England region of New South Wales were approached to participate in a 20-minute telephone interview, where they reported on compliance to the healthy canteen policy. Schools also provided menus where two methods of menu audits (low and high intensity) were undertaken to assess for compliance. The agreement between principal and canteen manager self-report, the high intensity and low intensity menu audit against direct observations was calculated along with time taken and associated costs.

c. **Results**

Of the 50 schools randomly selected for observations, 38 schools consented and participated (76% consent rate). The agreement between the menu audit methods and observations was substantial for low intensity (kappa= 0.68 kappa), and moderate for high intensity (0.42 kappa). Both self-report methods resulted in poor agreement with the gold standard.

d. **Conclusions**

A low intensity menu audit tool can give an acceptable estimate of schools compliance to a healthy canteen policy. Evaluation tools that can be applied at scale are essential to improve school environments.