

National Heart Foundation wins Supreme Health Innovation Award

A ground-breaking health initiative from the National Heart Foundation has won the Supreme Award at the 2008 New Zealand Health Innovation Awards (HIA).

The Foundation's Project Target 450 – Reducing sodium in bread, won the Excellence in Prevention Award, and was declared the overall winner of the HIA.

The awards, a joint endeavour of the Ministry of Health and ACC, have run annually since 2003. They are an opportunity to showcase some of the cutting-edge developments and improvements within the health service.

The Foundation worked with New Zealand's two major bread manufacturers to lower the amount of sodium (salt) in certain breads.

The programme came about after a study by the Foundation revealed that some lower cost, high volume, packaged breads had a higher sodium level than more expensive alternatives. Eating too much salt has strong links with high blood pressure, a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease.

In 2007 a pilot programme began with the aim of reducing the amount of sodium in low-cost and high-volume breads to 450 milligrams per 100 grams. In some cases, this meant a reduction of 100 milligrams of sodium per 100 grams of bread.

The reduction of sodium in bread has not affected sales, and feedback from manufacturers suggests that consumers have not noticed the difference. By the time the project has been fully implemented, the Heart Foundation expects that 100-150 tonnes of salt will have been removed from the bread supply.

Judges described the programme as "An impressive initiative, conceived, managed and implemented very effectively and achieving outstanding results."

The full list of HIA winners are:

- **Supreme Award Winner:** The National Heart Foundation of New Zealand; Project Target 450 – Reducing sodium in bread.
- **Excellence in Prevention:** The National Heart Foundation of New Zealand; Project Target 450 – Reducing sodium in bread.
- **Excellence in Rehabilitation:** Ministry of Social Development; PATHS – Providing Access to Health Solutions.
- **Excellence in Process Improvement:** West Coast District Health Board; Alternative Pathways for New Patients.
- **Excellence in Primary Health Care:** ProCare Network North & Ngati Whatua Nga Rima o Kaipara; Te Awaroa Lifestyles – A manawhenua & mainstream PHO partnership.
- **Excellence in Quality Improvement:** Canterbury District Health Board; Developing an acute non-invasive ventilation service at Christchurch Hospital.
- **Excellence in Innovation:** Hawke's Bay District Health Board; Incubator programme – health careers in schools.
- **Glenys Baldick Memorial Award for emerging leaders in health:** Lorna Murray, CEO of Connect (previously known as Action for Mental Health Society or AMHS).
- **Finalists' Choice:** Hawke's Bay District Health Board; Incubator programme – health careers in schools.

Twenty finalists chosen from nearly 130 entries competed for a win in their category and for the Supreme Award. Finalists presented their ideas during an expo at Wellington Town Hall before the awards ceremony.

The Supreme Award winner receives \$13,000 while category winners receive \$4000. The Finalists' Choice winner also receives \$4000.

CONTACT:

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