

YEAR 7 HEALTH CHECK

The Year 7 Health Check (Y7HC) is part of the ACT Government's commitment to improving the health of young people.

Secondary school represents a time in children's lives where significant life transitions are made such as adjusting to a new school, study schedules and social structures while navigating developmental and socio-emotional changes associated with becoming adolescents.

By detecting health and wellbeing issues early, we are better able to support young people to access appropriate help to become healthier adults.



HOW YOUR FEEDBACK MADE A DIFFERENCE

Government and non-government stakeholders were involved in developing the initial Y7HC program model.

We then consulted with the public, including students, to collect feedback on the proposed model. The public consultation took place from 27 February to 3 April 2019 through the YourSay online consultation website.

Some of the consultation results indicated areas of the Y7HC program model that required further consideration and development.

Feedback included:

- Concerns that the body mass index (BMI) measurement component of the health check could potentially contribute to body image issues, eating disorders, low self-esteem, bullying or depression.
- Concerns that data would be identifiable and that health check results would be linked to children's health records.
- Current services for nutrition, emotional wellbeing, overweight and obesity management for this age group (11-14 years of age) being at capacity or having limited availability.
- The need to re-focus funding to population level health and wellbeing programs.
- The potential that an opt-in consent model could limit participation rates.
- Reliability of children's responses since they would know that results would be provided to their parents.

You can read the [Y7HC consultation report](#) for a full report on the consultation findings.



THE OUTCOME

We have taken all feedback from the consultation on board. The feedback has helped us make changes to the current Y7HC program model.

The new Y7HC program model:

- Retains the health and wellbeing survey which will run alongside the School Satisfaction Survey each year. The health and wellbeing survey questions will aim to complement the current health and wellbeing information collected by the ACT Government.
- Does not include the BMI measurement component that was proposed in the initial program model.
- Will report findings at a population level (not individual level) and findings will be made available to the public each year via the ACT Health website.
- Will help inform, develop and expand population-based health and wellbeing programs.

The ACT Government will also continue the ACT Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey (ACTPANS) in ACT primary schools. ACTPANS has been collecting BMI and healthy lifestyle data since 2006. The next ACTPANS survey is scheduled for 2021.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The pilot of the Y7HC survey took place from 13 August to 11 September 2019 across ACT public schools. Findings of the Y7HC pilot will be made available to schools and the public in late 2019.

For more information and updates on the Y7HC program model, please visit www.health.act.gov.au/about-our-health-system/population-health/epidemiology.