

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION AIC 2016: #50

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1. **Title:**

Online school canteens: System-wide innovation for public health nutrition?

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3. **Key words:** cross-sectional survey, school principals, online canteens, feasibility

4. **Abstract text:**

a) Background and aims: School canteens are an important setting for interventions to improve public health nutrition given their wide population reach, the prolonged student exposure, and variable nutritional quality of available items. Online school canteens are increasingly prevalent in Australian schools. Such systems have the potential to deliver effective consumer nutrition intervention strategies, with fidelity, and at scale, for relatively low cost. However, as yet the feasibility of doing so has not been investigated. This research assesses awareness, usage rate, and barriers to use on online canteens, as well as the acceptability of intervention strategies that could be delivered through online canteen systems.

b) Methods: 123 primary school principals from the Hunter New England Region (NSW) participated in a telephone survey (September-November 2014).

c) Results: Most principals were aware of online canteens. Although larger schools were more likely to be aware of, or to use online canteens than smaller schools, there were no differences in awareness or usage by school rurality or socioeconomic advantage. Parent internet access was cited as the most frequent barrier to online canteen use, and the majority of principals agreed that it would be acceptable use online canteens to implement a range of consumer behaviour strategies.

a) Conclusions: As such, online canteens may represent an opportunity to deliver nutrition interventions at scale given they have the potential to reach a large proportion of school communities in the future, across geographical and socioeconomic divides, and that the nutrition interventions which they have the capacity to deliver are considered acceptable.