

Web Summary: Applied Nutritional Epidemiology

Institution description

The focus of this unit is on “what health departments do”. It examines how the overlap between nutrition and epidemiology can be applied to public health practice rather than to the conduct of original research. What are the special features of food, nutrition and physical activity that need to be considered when describing prevalence in a population? When summarising the literature to make policy decisions? When evaluating a program or intervention? When deciding whether or not to implement a screening program? The focus is primarily around so-called ‘descriptive epidemiology’ and cross-sectional data although aspects of systematic reviews and health economics are also considered. It is assumed that unit participants are/will be working in management or policy positions and will be more likely to contract a specialist to do the work (the literature overview or state-wide survey) than to do the work themselves, i.e. that the goal of the participant is to be an intelligent consumer of other work.

Recommended Pre-requisite & Co-requisite

Prerequisites: Introductory epidemiology unit, Introductory biostatistics unit

Potential Integration with other PHN Subjects

Nutritional Assessment (University of Queensland) would be a suitable topic to be undertaken prior to this course.

APHNAC Peer Review Summary

The topic was considered to be an advanced, in-depth topic particularly suitable for people experienced in the Australian or developed country context. Pre-requisites for the topic were believed essential. Course materials were deemed to be extensive, relevant, good quality, up-to-date and allowed for independent study. The topic was considered to have a high workload and assessment exercises were deemed to be challenging.

Suitability

It is deemed most suitable for a person with a background in Nutrition and Dietetics and who have partly completed an MPH and who work for a government health department. Access to a public health nutrition workforce role is advantageous for some assessment exercises.

Category

This is an advanced level topic.

Topic coordinator/s

Dr Dorothy Mackerras, Menzies School of Health Research