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| **Government by example – leading the way in creating more supportive food environments** |
| **Setting/problem:** New Zealand diets, eating patterns and portion sizes have changed over the last few decades. These changes have contributed to increased weight across the population with 1.2 million adults now obese, and two-thirds of our adult population overweight.The public service is a large employer in New Zealand. Government agencies showed leadership by becoming smoke free prior to a legislative requirement. They demonstrated that it could work.  The Ministry of Health are applying a similar approach to improve food choices and portion sizes by working with central government agencies – starting with ourselves.  **Intervention:** The National Healthy Food and Drink Policy was developed collaboratively by the Ministry and District Health Boards (DHBs) in 2016. The Policy aims to make healthy eating the easier choice for DHB staff and hospital visitors through practical advice and, guidance for caterers and food providers. All DHBs have adopted the National Healthy Food and Drink Policy or introduced a policy that aligns with it.Positioned and promoted as a health and safety initiative to support staff wellbeing, the *Government by example* initiative aims to influence change starting at head offices of central government agencies.Based on its own experience of adopting the Policy and work with the Network supporting DHB adoption and implementation, the Ministry has identified two important elements for the initiative. These are:* 1. the need for ‘in-house champions’ to lead the adoption and implementation; and
	2. availability of/access to technical expertise in nutrition, food service and workplace health promotion.

The presentation will outline the steps undertaken and progress to date along with learnings and next steps.**Outcomes:** Adopting the Policy demonstrates a government organisation’s leadership and commitment to:* the health and wellbeing of staff and visitors
* ‘walking the talk’
* normalising healthy food and drinks environments, increasing demand for healthy food and drinks and establishing more appropriate portion sizes for other foods.

**Implications:** Implementing a shared healthy food and drink policy across government agencies is not yet common internationally. We aim to demonstrate New Zealand’s commitment to, and leadership in, the area of healthy eating and staff wellbeing. **Preferred presentation format: Oral** |