**University of Wollongong - Faculty of Health and Behavioural Science - Public Health Department**

**Describe the type and amount of food and beverages which are available through vending machines in Wollongong and Innovation campuses as well as in shopping areas in selected suburbs from the Wollongong district.**

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**Abstract**

The food environment is fundamental to peoples’ decisions about their diet, and therefore can impact the health outcomes of people. Access to vending machines increases the availability of food and beverages in a variety of places for consumers. This is seen in places such as schools and colleges, health care centres, hotels and motels, restaurants, bars, shopping centres and train stations. This study aims to explore the impact and place of vending machines within Wollongong, by looking at the type of vending machines at the University and suburban shopping centres. The study will describe the type and amount of food and beverages which are available through vending machines in two campuses of university of Wollongong: Innovation and Wollongong as well as in shopping areas in selected suburbs from the Wollongong district. The study was conducted through gathering primary data, which was collected by using the survey tool to collect the data on: i) how many slots of food and beverages in vending machines; ii) number of machines on campuses and the selected shopping areas; iii) product costs; iv) water fountains available. The study was restricted to all vending machines, water fountains or free water bubblers present in the buildings on Wollongong campuses as well as which present in shopping areas in the most nearby suburbs around the campuses. Six suburbs and five shopping centres in those suburbs were selected. Within the study area fifty five vending machines were available. Two locations had the higher percentage of vending machines; they were Wollongong campus with 43.6% and Warrawong shopping centre with 29%. From the overall vending machines are available, 61.8% was for cold beverage, 20% for snack, 10.9% for confectionary and 7.3% for gum vending machines. The results found that there was a significant lack of healthy options available for food and beverage products across vending machines, both at the University and in suburban shopping centres

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