

I can't be-leaf how boring this is!

A-dressing salad recipes for a better inpatient meal experience.



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Introduction

Consumer feedback has consistently raised salads at The Canberra Hospital (TCH) as needing improvement. Consumer complaints highlighted dry, tasteless and repetitious salads. The salad recipes had been modified to reduce allergens, but this had resulted in salads with a reduced number of ingredients, offering only one base recipe with a rotating additional meat component. Dressing was offered separately, however this was not always clear to consumers and it was not always ordered when desired.

Canberra Health Services (CHS) has endorsed the Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI) Nutrition Standards for Adult Inpatients¹. These standards require one Band 1 or Band 2 salad (with prescribed minimum requirements for protein, energy and ingredient variety, and maximum limits for sodium and fat) to be offered to consumers at least once per day. While the general diet menu at TCH met this standard, other commonly requested diets such as gluten-free, vegan and vegetarian did not.

Aims

To offer salads at least once per day meeting the following criteria to consumers on general, vegetarian, vegan, and gluten free diets at TCH:

- > ACI Band 1 or 2
- > Achieving overall consumer satisfaction ratings of >4.0/5

Methods

Consumers were surveyed about existing salads and their feedback was used to inform the development of new salad recipes. 6 new salad recipes were developed and trialled by TCH stakeholders including food service and nutrition staff. Their feedback was used to narrow the final selection to 3 salads. Recipes were reviewed and adjusted the recipes before final salads were prepared for consumer trials. Minor adjustments were made based on consumer feedback.

Results

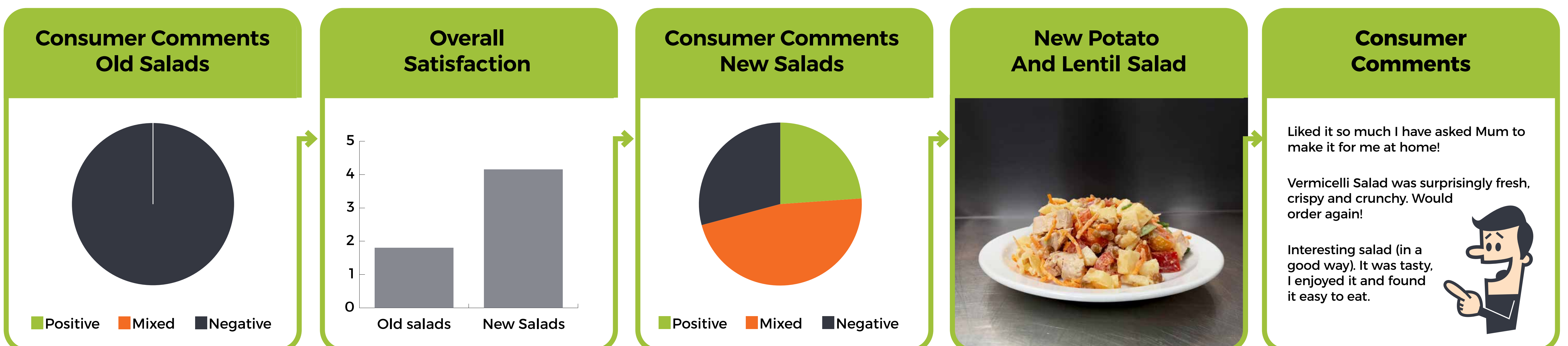
Original salads achieved an overall consumer satisfaction rating of 1.8/5. 100% of comments received were negative or contained suggestions for improvement, with no positive comments received.

New salads achieved consumer satisfaction ratings of 4.15/5 overall. 79% of comments contained positive feedback.

Three new base salads are now offered on the menu- a vermicelli salad with an Asian-style dressing; a creamy potato and lentil salad; and a roasted vegetable salad. The new salad recipes remained low allergen,

with all salads free from milk and eggs. Two salads are offered on the gluten free diet; suitable gluten-free dressing ingredients could not be obtained for the vermicelli salad but will be sourced if they become available in the future. All salads can be ordered either with meat or with a plant-based protein source. All salads are now tossed with dressing prior to serving to consumers.

Salads are regularly audited to ensure they are prepared to standards and correction processes implemented where required.



Conclusion

Consumers receiving general, vegetarian, vegan and gluten free diets are now offered a Band 1 or Band 2 salad twice per day.



Significance

New salads on the menu meet the ACI Nutrition Standards. The new recipes also contribute to CHS meeting National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards by ensuring that menu planning at TCH provides safe, acceptable food that meets consumers' needs.

Reference

¹ACI Nutrition Network, Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI). Nutrition standards for adult inpatients in NSW hospitals. 2011. Chatswood, NSW. Available at: https://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/160555/ACI_Adult_Nutrition_web.pdf

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