

Reducing the sugar intakes of children in Aotearoa

Development of sugar reduction targets for packaged foods and beverages in NZ



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**MEDICAL AND
HEALTH SCIENCES**

Background

- **High sugar intakes associated with overweight, dental caries, cardiovascular disease**
- **NZ children:**
 - 3rd highest obesity in OECD
 - 50% early dental caries
 - 124g (31 tsp) total sugar per day
 - Striking inequalities
- **Packaged foods and beverages major contributor to sugar intakes**
- **No Government-led, environmental policies aimed at improving children's diets**



Aim

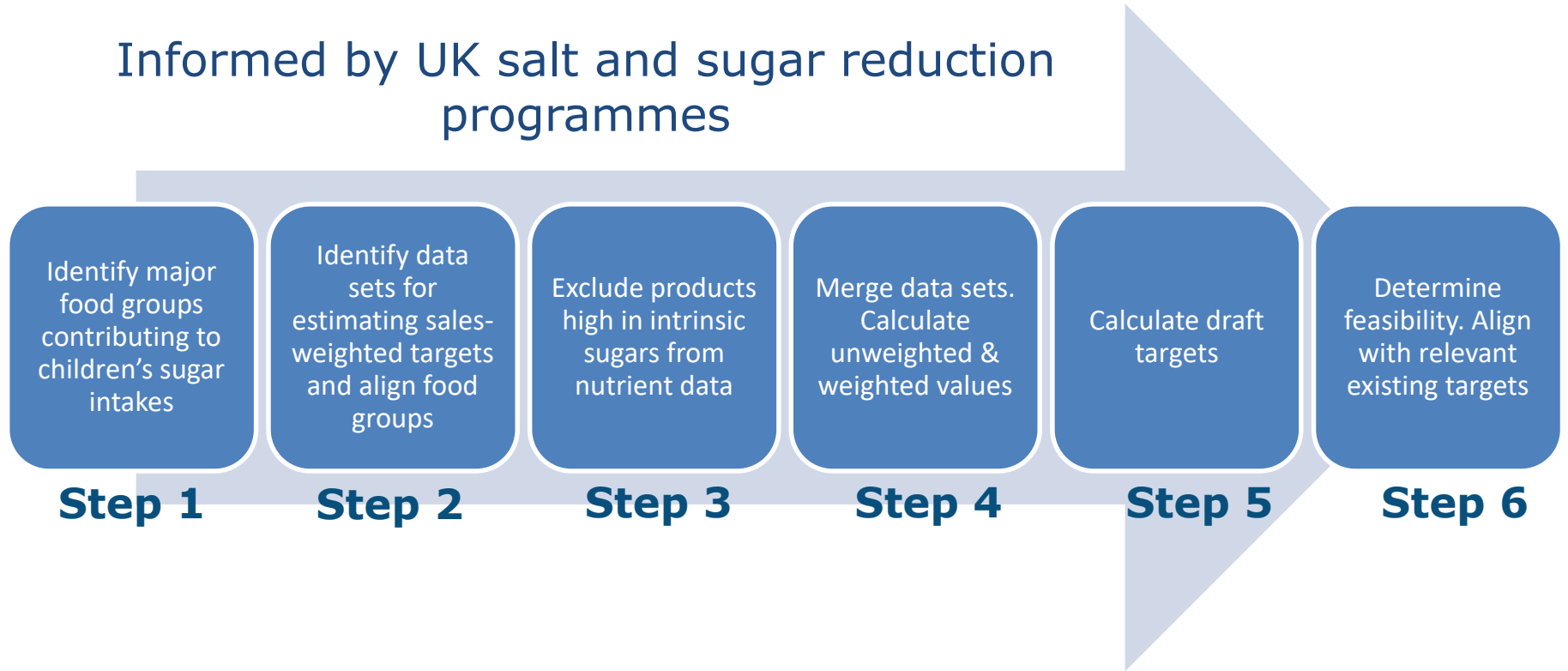
Develop feasible sugar and pack size targets* which would reduce, by ~20%, the total sugar contents of packaged food and beverage products commonly consumed by children in Aotearoa



*single serve products

Methods - overview

Informed by UK salt and sugar reduction programmes



Major food groups contributing $\geq 2\%$ to children's sugar intakes

#	Food group
1	Beverage mixes ¹
2	Cordials ¹
3	Electrolyte drinks ¹
4	Energy drinks ¹
5	Soft drinks ¹
6	Flavoured water ¹
7	Fruit juices and fruit drinks ¹
8	Sugar confectionary ²
9	Chocolate confectionary ²
10	Flavoured dairy milk ³
11	Flavoured other milk ³

#	Food group
12	Yoghurt and yoghurt drinks ⁴
13	Ice cream ⁴
14	Biscuits ⁵
15	Cakes ⁶
16	Breakfast cereals – hot ⁷
17	Breakfast cereals – ready to eat ⁷
18	Cereal bars ⁷
19	Fruit bread ⁸
20	Fruit spreads ⁹
21	Savoury spreads and sauces ⁹
22	Sweet spreads and sauces ⁹

1-9 ranked by contributor in Children's Nutrition Survey

Data for estimating targets



- **Nutritrack food composition database (2018)**

- Web-based
- All packaged foods and beverages with NIP (~15,000 per year)
- 4 Auckland supermarkets
- Photographs entered, categorized and quality checked

- **Nielsen Homescan® panel (2018)**

- ~2,500 New Zealand households
- Scan all items purchased for use in the home
- Demographically representative and reflects retailer share



Calculation of targets

1. Unweighted and weighted mean sugar and pack size

- Nutritrack + Homescan®

2. Draft targets

- Sales weighted mean - 20%

3. Feasibility of draft targets

- ~33% of existing products meet target
- Too high or too low align with 33% value

4. For consistency and to encourage reformulation

- Align with Heart Foundation and UK sugar targets + HSR



Results

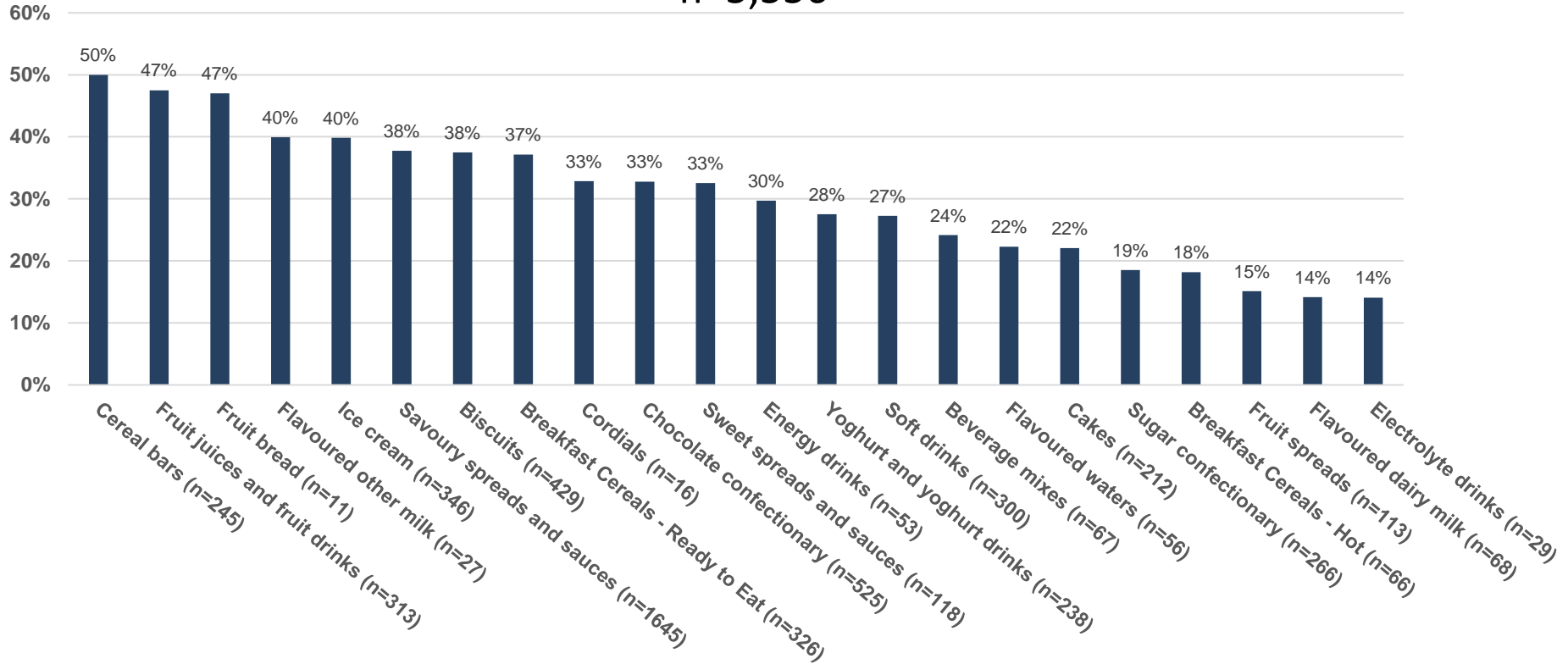
% reductions to meet targets in key food groups

Food group	% reduction sugar &/OR	% reduction pack size*
Electrolyte drinks	25%	27%
Energy drinks	22%	23%
Soft drinks	12%	28%
Ice cream	21%	4%
Flavoured dairy milk	20%	5%
Chocolate confectionary	12%	8%
Sugar confectionary	11%	19%
Biscuits	24%	32%

*single serve products, where 5+ in category

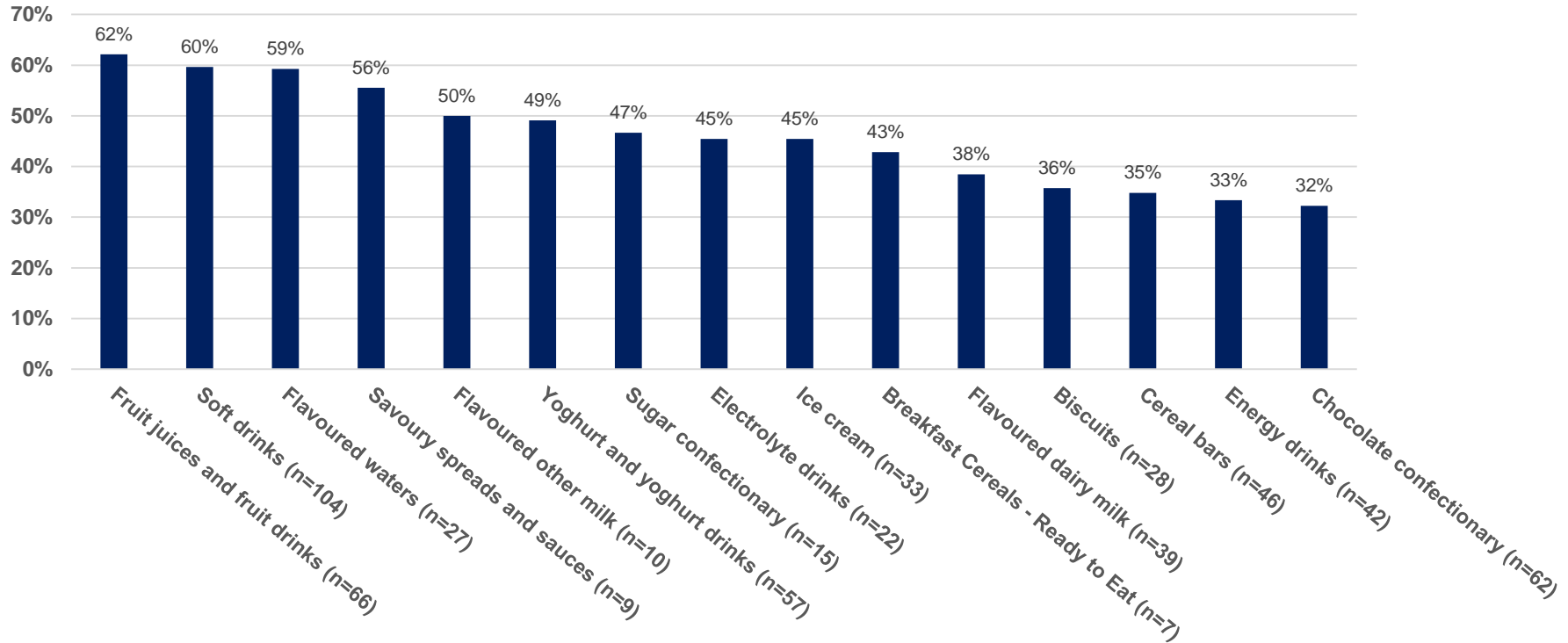
Results

% existing products meeting sugar targets (2018)
n=5,556



Results

% existing products meeting pack size targets (2018)
n=583



Conclusions & Recommendations

Potential reduction in children's sugar intakes

- If all products in three major contributing categories met targets (non-alcoholic beverages, confectionary, flavoured milk) sugar intake reduced by ~3 tsp (12 g) (from 31 tsp/124 g) per day
- Greater reductions if more widespread reformulation achieved

Recommendations

- Targets implemented as part of a wider reformulation programme to improve population health in Aotearoa

Acknowledgements

Collaboration



Kathy Trieu, Yannan Jiang,
Bruce Neal, Boyd Swinburn,
Lisa Te Morenga, Tony Blakely,
Cliona Ni Mhurchu

Funding



Programme grant # 13/724
and 18/672

**Published paper planned
for second half 2019**

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