

# CPHD Committee Highlights

**The Consumer and Public Health Dialogue (CPHD) met on 24 March, chaired by FSANZ CEO Dr Sandra Cuthbert. The CPHD provides a forum for two-way engagement and information sharing between FSANZ and consumer and public health representatives.**

CPHD40 was the first meeting of 2026, members came together to discuss key public health and food regulation priorities across both countries.

## **Updates**

Updates to members covered a range of matters, including upcoming consultations, the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's (DHDA) work on [marketing infant formula](#) and trans fats, the New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries' (NZMPI) [digital labelling](#) initiatives, and progress on FSANZ's [Health Star Rating](#) work. Members requested further information from DHDA on trans fats, expected timelines for the Policy guideline on [Prepackaged Food Sold Online](#) and information on publication of [submissions](#) on their website.

## **Discussion**

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) provided an update on the review of the [Australian Dietary Guidelines](#), outlining the scope of the work, the current phase of the review, and indicative timeframes, including plans for further consultation later in 2026. Members welcomed the breadth of the work and discussed how issues such as equity, food security, feasibility, and emerging areas should be considered within the guidelines.

A substantive discussion was held on ultra-processed foods (UPF). The discussion was informed by recent international research published in [The Lancet](#), across a series of three papers. Members considered the health impacts of UPF, their displacement of core foods, potential policy responses, and the challenges associated with defining and regulating these foods.

The discussion highlighted that policy responses in this space must be grounded in equity. For many households, UPFs are a function of cost, accessibility, time, and food literacy. Approaches that focus narrowly on restricting or stigmatising UPFs risk penalising people who have the least choice, without addressing the underlying conditions that shape their diets.

Members were clear that the goal is not to demonise UPFs or the people who consume them, but to shift the food environment in ways that make core foods - those aligned with the Australian Dietary Guidelines - more accessible, affordable, and equitably available across all population groups. The discussion underscored the role of labelling, health literacy, food accessibility and affordability, and the importance of approaches that balance public health outcomes with food security and equity considerations. Members noted that any regulatory or information-based response needs to work for the full diversity of Australian consumers, including those experiencing disadvantage.

It was highlighted that the third Lancet paper emphasised that consumer and public health approaches stress the need to restructure food systems to prioritise health, equity and

sustainability over corporate profits. Members acknowledged this perspective, while noting that FSANZ must continue to fulfil its statutory obligations under the FSANZ Act, which include consideration of the commercial and economic effects of its decisions.

FSANZ presented on its [Review of Commercial Foods for Infants and Young Children](#), outlining scope and purpose, with preparatory work to continue through 2026, and proposal development is anticipated for 2027. Members emphasised the importance of a holistic, systems-based approach that supports clearer guidance for consumers. Presentation slides will be shared with members, and feedback raised during the discussion will be considered as the work progresses.

***Next meeting***

In other business, the [FSANZ Board Communiqué](#) was shared and an update was provided on the [FSANZ Stakeholder Forum](#), to be held in Brisbane on Wednesday 17 June, with tickets now on sale. Members will be contacted regarding attendance at the Forum and potential alignment of the next CPHD meeting. If not aligned, the next CPHD meeting will be held on Tuesday, 18 August 2026.

Members also discussed potential agenda items to include updates on the staggered [FSANZ Roadmap](#) approach, the [National Food Security Strategy](#), the [National Obesity Strategy](#) and the [National Preventive Health Strategy](#).