



Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia (A&AA) Annual Report

1 May 2019 – 30 June 2020

Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia recently changed its financial year from 1 May to 30 April and aligned with the Australian financial year of 1 July to 30 June. This report will include the 1 May 2019 to 30 June 2020, therefore showing 14 months of reporting.

Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia (A&AA) is Australia's leading national patient support organisation for individuals with allergic diseases. As advocates for individuals with allergic disease, we work closely with the peak medical body, the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) to share current, evidence-based information with all Australians managing allergies. We remain: *The trusted charity for allergy support. We listen, guide and educate Australians living with allergic disease. We advocate on their behalf to ensure their voice is heard.*

A&AA continues to progress the National Allergy Strategy (NAS) in partnership with the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) and in collaboration with many key stakeholder organisations.

A&AA has a dedicated Board of Directors who generously share their time, knowledge and expertise to progress our mission and vision. The committed Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia Board continues to have regular meetings to optimise governance and provide strategic advice and direction.

Our Medical Advisory Board (MAB) has both paediatric and adult clinical immunology/allergy specialist representation from across Australia. All on the MAB are members of ASCIA with some being members of ASCIA Council.

A&AA has the equivalent of 4.4 full time staff members with the CEO being the only full-time employee. We have five part-time and two casual staff members. We continue to receive considerable IT support free of charge from EthiSEC. Zoom has joined as a sponsor in 2020, providing a full suite of Zoom products to improve our communication and outreach. Clayton Utz generously continues to be A&AA's pro bono legal advisor. We have a small number of dedicated, very capable volunteers that assist A&AA with various projects.

A&AA continues to receive support from donors and sponsors who generously provide the funding for A&AA to progress its charitable mission. Our sponsors can be found [here](#).

We continue to work toward optimal care of individuals living with allergic disease including but not limited to atopic eczema, allergic rhinitis, allergic asthma, food, insect and medication allergy. We

continue to advocate for improved food allergen labelling, safer food service, access to adrenaline autoinjectors and new medications, and other priority needs.

National Progress

In September 2019 A&AA applauded the Hon Greg Hunt, Minister for Health, and Mr Trent Zimmerman MP on the announcement of a Parliamentary Inquiry into Allergies and Anaphylaxis. A&AA forwarded a [submission](#) to the Standing Committee chaired by Mr Zimmerman and was called to speak at the Public Hearing in Sydney in November 2019. The Inquiry afforded A&AA and more than 250 other individuals/organisations the opportunity to speak to the challenges of life with allergic disease in Australia. A report with some 24 recommendations [Walking the allergy tightrope](#) was presented to Minister Greg Hunt in May 2020 and we are currently awaiting the Ministers response. A&AA has stressed the need for increased A&AA funding to grow our workforce capacity, if we are to assist with implementing the recommendations put forward by Minister Hunt.

Federal Government Funding Support

A&AA continues to receive funding through the Health Peak Advisory Body programme. The three-year agreement with the federal government was extended with no increase (with no consumer price index [CPI] increase) for a further three years beginning 1 July 2019. A&AA has continued to provide required reports detailing performance and outcomes to the Department of Health and Ageing according to the reporting schedule.

National Allergy Strategy (NAS)

A&AA and ASCIA, along with key stakeholders', continue to progress the National Allergy Strategy (NAS - launched in 2015). A&AA CEO remains co-chair of the National Allergy Strategy, as the representative of and advocate for people with allergic disease for this Department of Health funded project. Several consumer representatives are on the NAS Steering Committee and A&AA consumer representatives' co lead the various projects while others are on working groups.

The All About Allergens, Next steps for cooks and chefs free e-training was launched in July 2019. The general course for cooks and chefs and the course for cooks and chefs working in camp locations were added to the suite of training resources already developed for the food service sector. See www.foodallergytraining.org.au. The e-training courses for cooks and chefs were completed by more than 2,500 individuals between launch and close of this reporting period.

A&AA contributed to development of the 250K young adult website contributing content from existing A&AA resources and assisting with development of new content. This included information on management of allergic rhinitis and eczema. See <https://teen.250k.org.au/eczema/> and <https://teen.250k.org.au/hay-fever/>

A&AA through the NAS facilitates online 250K teen allergy support group chats and zoom meetings and 250K young adult support zoom meetings. The NAS is conducting peer mentor training so that young people can support their peers as they approach teen years and up to age 16. We currently have seven peer mentors aged between 16 -25 years in training.

Another 250K camp was held in Victoria in Nov 2019 <https://teen.250k.org.au/camps/merricks-lodge/>. Thirty-four teens with 28 different food allergies attended the two-night, three-day camp. A range of activities to engage, empower and thrill the teens were organised and they also attended information sessions with a dietitian, allergy nurse and allergy specialist to assist them with management of their allergies including the risk of anaphylaxis.

A&AA continues to promote the “Nip Allergies in the Bub” campaign and website encouraging parents to introduce common allergy causing foods at around 6 months when the baby is ready. A support phone line operated by A&AA health professionals assists parents with questions around infant feeding. A&AA continues to distribute bookmarks to hospitals, maternal/child health nurses and medical practices across Australia.

A&AA participated as consumer representatives in the National Allergy Strategy Shared Care Model Scoping Consultation held in June 2019. We also attended an Australian Digital Health Agency meeting day to discuss progression of My Health Record.

A&AA CEO was one of four NAS representatives to present at the Dietitians Association of Australia national conference on the Gold Coast. The presentation centred around safer food service for people with food allergy in healthcare settings.

A&AA has also continued to contribute to other NAS projects including:

- Drug allergy
- Anaphylaxis register
- Food service in Hospitals
- Progress with a Clinical Care Standard for the management of anaphylaxis in health facilities
- ADHA My Health Project
- Shared Care Model

A&AA knowledge and expertise (as advocates for consumers) has provided the basis for the way forward with the NAS keeping the consumer with allergic disease as the focus. A&AA’s network of members, contacts and colleagues has allowed us to draw on the knowledge, expertise and good will of many to progress the Strategy.

More information on the work and outcomes of the National Allergy Strategy is available on the [website](#).

Membership growth

A&AA continues to use its social media following of approximately 58,300, its 1300 telephone helpline, website and member email communication to encourage feedback. This feedback then informs our consultations with the Australian Government. We progress these consultations through A&AA and through National Allergy Strategy (NAS) initiatives. Areas of consultation include: - optimal care of patients living with allergic conditions including atopic dermatitis, allergic rhinitis, allergic asthma, food, insect and medication allergy, food allergen labelling, COVID-19 care of those living with allergies, access to in-date adrenaline autoinjectors, access to an alternative adrenaline autoinjector, food allergy prevention, severe allergy management in teens and other priority needs.

As at 30th June 2020

Members	5,549 (16.0% annual growth)
Facebook	52,930 (12.7% annual growth)
Instagram	3,535 (growth of 12%)
Twitter	1,847 (9.0% annual growth)
LinkedIn	A&AA now has a profile with 136 followers

Membership remains free and resources and support services remain open to all Australians. A simple subscriber model is being developed and will be operational in October 2020.

Member NewsFacts newsletter

A&AA continues to share quarterly electronic newsletters with our membership. Once the subscriber option is activated, subscribers will also receive our newsletter and there will no longer be a member only section on the website. We include news items, research, important updates, new resource information, member stories, recipes and more. The open rate for our emailed member newsletters during this period averaged 36%.

Food Allergy Week (FAW)

FAW 26 May – 1 June 2019

A&AA surveyed members and social media followers on health professional diagnosis, information and support, community awareness and timely referral to A&AA in readiness for Food Allergy Week (FAW) 26 May – 1 June 2019. The results of the survey were used in a media release to highlight the need for improved food allergy knowledge in the community. The media release can be seen on our website <https://allergyfacts.org.au/news-alerts/latest-news/urgent-need-for-improved-food-allergy-knowledge-29-may-2019>

A&AA CEO attended a two-hour awareness raising activity for Woolworths Head Office staff in Sydney during FAW. Approximately 100 people attended the event over two hours with many seeking information and resources on food allergy and its management. A&AA also organised an information stand in Martin Place, Sydney. Approximately 40 consumers sought advice and resources.

People across Australia engaged with us and their local communities to raise awareness of food allergy.

FAW 24 - 30 May 2020

A&AA made the decision to raise awareness via social media only and not progress the usual FAW campaign because of Covid-19. This decision was made in March 2020 due to the great uncertainty around the impact of COVID on the Australian community, at the time.

During FAW 2020, A&AA had two interactive online question and answer sessions. The hour-long meetings (one day-time and one evening) were recorded and have been placed on A&AA website as a resource. See:

i) <https://allergyfacts.org.au/resources/webinars/food-allergy-management-q-and-a-webinar-25-may-2020>

ii) <https://allergyfacts.org.au/resources/webinars/food-allergy-management-q-and-a-webinar-28-may-2020>

A short video from The Wiggles promoting food allergy awareness was shared via social media during Food Allergy Week (FAW) 2020. The Wiggles also shared the video on their Facebook site reaching more than 580,000 followers world-wide.

Short videos promoted during Food Allergy Week 2020 featured clinical immunology/allergy specialist Dr Brynn Wainstein who advised consumers:

- to see their GP/medical practitioner during COVID-19
- about the difference between sensitisation to an allergen and true allergy
- how Skin Prick Tests are done and what the results mean
- how to prepare for their first clinical immunology/allergy specialist visit.

Coronial investigations

A&AA continues to communicate with families who have lost loved ones since the 1990's. We provide information and support when people lose loved ones because of anaphylaxis from all causes. Almost all families are motivated to do what they can to prevent another family from going through what they have gone through.

Coroners' reach out to A&AA for comment when progressing investigations into the cause of death. During this reporting period A&AA provided one report to a coroner in Victoria. Coronial investigations, whether with or without inquest, continue to assist us in educating the wider community.

A&AA CEO attended the funeral of Richelle Townsend. Richelle had anaphylaxis as a result of a meal purchased from a restaurant in Newtown NSW in 1991. Due to hypoxic brain injury, Richelle lived in a nursing home with 24-hour care for 28 years and died in October 2019. Richelle was 32 years old when she had the anaphylaxis and had 2-year-old and 6-month-old daughters. She died aged 61 years.

Food Industry

As the advocate for Australians with food allergy A&AA works to improve food labelling and increase safer food choices. We also strive to improve consumer understanding around food label reading and implementation of safer practises when the allergen is in the home and when eating away from home.

A&AA represents consumers on the Allergen Collaboration, which is a collaboration between Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ), retailers, food manufacturers, food service organisations, NSW Food Authority, the Allergen Bureau, the Food and Beverage Importers Association, consumer organisations and other bodies. It meets to explore non-regulatory measures that can improve the management of food allergens and help direct Australians to credible online resources. A&AA is consulted on issues specific to food allergen labelling and food allergy management in food service.

As the peak consumer organisation for people with food allergy, A&AA attended and presented at the Food Allergy Management Symposium (FAMS) in Melbourne on food allergen labelling and the impact on consumers with food allergy – 13-16 May 2019. The CEO also presented on the challenges for consumers with food allergen labelling at the combined Centre for Food Allergy and Research (CFAR)/FAMS workshop. Food industry, legislators, consumers, food scientists, analysts and health professionals were in attendance.

A&AA continues to alert consumers with food allergies of food recalls and changes in allergen content (food alerts) when manufacturers alert us to them. More than 40 food recalls and at least 14 food alerts were sent to our membership during the reporting period. Food recalls because of food allergy remain the leading reason for food recalls in Australia. A&AA spent considerable time and effort communicating with food manufacturers, importers, regulators, food scientists and analysts and consumers with food allergy in relation to the many pesto recalls late in 2019 and into the first months of 2020.

The Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology (AIFST) invited A&AA to have a stand displaying resources at their virtual exhibition in June 2020. Information shared with attendees of the virtual AIFST convention included information on eating out with food allergy, food allergy training for food service staff, chef cards for people with food allergy and the A&AA Signs & Symptoms and How to give EpiPen® animations.

A&AA forwarded [submissions](#) to Food Standards Australia New Zealand and Codex Alimentarius Commission during the reporting period. A&AA wrote to the Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation about the inclusion of food allergen safety in the Review of Food Standards Code chapters 3 and 4 - Food Safety Management requirements.

Covid-19

Working alongside ASCIA and as a partner of HealthDirect, A&AA shared information on Covid-19 with our members and social media followers. We assisted ASCIA and Health Direct as needed as Australia went into lockdown in March/April 2020. Information for the community was placed on our website including the Health Direct Symptom Checker.

Covid-19 brought challenges to people with food allergy because foods meant for people with dietary needs were in short supply and there were limits placed on food products such as milk, pasta and flour. A&AA worked with manufacturers and retailers to improve food access during the critical period where food hoarding and restrictions were enacted. We regularly shared current information with members and social media followers to assist them with access to required foods and medications that were in short supply. See <https://allergyfacts.org.au/news-alerts/latest-news/access-to-food-medication-product-update-24-march-2020>

A&AA encouraged people to be vigilant about management of risk of anaphylaxis and to treat according to instructions on their ASCIA Action Plan despite fear of Covid-19 and the need for hospitalisation. A&AA encouraged people to maintain usual health appointments if possible and gave people guidance on use of telehealth.

A&AA shared information on eczema management as some people's eczema was exacerbated because of increased hand washing and wearing of masks. People with allergic disease needed to be reassured that they were not immunocompromised and that they needed to take all medications as prescribed, including for asthma and allergic rhinitis. We also shared information on the influenza vaccine and people with egg allergy.

A&AA assisted returning travellers living with severe food allergies in possibly acquiring hotel quarantine exemptions because of the risk of being served food containing allergens. Those with more difficult to manage food allergies (e.g. milk, egg, wheat), those with multiple food allergy and those with food allergy and other health conditions were assisted in applying for apartment accommodation with a kitchen. Others in hotel quarantine were also assisted so they could obtain appropriate food and safer care while in quarantine. A&AA advised various state government hotel quarantine teams about appropriate management of people with severe food allergies soon after hotel quarantine was announced. A&AA assisted up to 20 individuals and families during the reporting period. The task of assisting families needing help has been arduous and time consuming as each state managed returned traveller requests differently. We have provided expert advice to some government departments on request. There have been several reported anaphylaxis emergencies in hotel quarantine. Please see the following link for information on how we helped one of these families <https://allergyfacts.org.au/resources/share-your-story/a-positive-covid-19-story>

Medication

Adrenaline Injectors

A&AA continues to advocate for the registration and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) listing of alternate adrenaline autoinjectors in Australia. People at risk of anaphylaxis and their treating doctors should have the ability to choose which device is best suited to their needs. A&AA has been communicating with the manufacturers/distributors of several devices available in the US, Canada and Europe.

Australia continued to have EpiPen® shortages throughout the reporting period with no EpiPen® stock being available for a short period (less than two weeks) late in 2019. A&AA worked closely with key organisations including Mylan, ASCIA, the Therapeutic Goods Administration, the Pharmacy Guild and others during this time. Consumers were rightly very concerned as those that were newly diagnosed and those that had used both of their EpiPen®s could not access replacements until stock with a contaminant arrived in Australia. Importantly, Australia has had no shortage of EpiPen®s since February 2020.

Dupixent® (Dupilumab®)

A&AA has continued to advocate for people with severe atopic eczema through submissions for listing of Dupixent® on the PBS. The huge impact on quality of life was clearly communicated in

submissions to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) and A&AA attended a SOS (Save Our Skin) event in Canberra's Parliament House that was organised by Eczema Support Australia. Despite the PBAC recommending Dupixent® listing on the PBS in April 2020, Australians continue to anxiously wait for the government subsidised medication to become available. A&AA has continued to take an average of three calls/week from desperate adults with severe atopic eczema.

TGA Consultation:

A&AA also made a submission on the Therapeutic Goods Administration consultation titled ***Increased online access to ingredient information***. We have continued to promote information from Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) when approached including information on excipients in medications <https://bit.ly/2YcZbj0>

In June 2020 A&AA informed consumers with cow's milk allergy of a vitamin and mineral supplement that contained undeclared cow's milk following contact from the TGA. The TGA continues to seek advice from A&AA on matters specific to consumers with allergic disease.

Research

A&AA conducted member and social media follower research into eating out with food allergy to gain insights into member experiences, on subject areas for webinars and food allergen labelling. Findings of the research surveys assist A&AA with project development to ultimately help improve the quality of life of Australians with allergic disease.

The organisation often shares information on ongoing research and published research, to benefit people living with allergic disease. A&AA has also shared information on research studies conducted by allergists and other researchers and continues to assist with patient recruitment.

A&AA CEO has been asked to be an associate investigator on several research studies with researchers acknowledging the importance of a consumer advocate being involved in the research project journey. A&AA CEO continues to supervise a PhD student from the University of Western Australia who is doing research on global anaphylaxis registers.

In November 2019 A&AA CEO Maria Said was appointed Adjunct Research Fellow of the University of Western Australia for her ongoing contribution to research in allergic disease.

Advocacy, support and information

A&AA continues to provide support for people that make contact either via phone, email, social media or face to face. On average we receive 1,100 requests for support per month (emails, phone calls, private messages via social media). All requests for information and support are managed by health professionals trained in the management of allergic disease. The majority of our enquiries continue to be focused on food allergy management however we are receiving an increasing number of enquiries on other allergic conditions including eczema, allergic rhinitis, and insect and drug allergy. During this reporting period we answered some 1,145 private Facebook messages.

A&AA continues to provide evidence based, best practise advice and information on living with allergic disease primarily through the website, NewsFacts newsletter and social media platforms - Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

A&AA has conducted many media interviews in this reporting period however media outreach significantly decreased during the bushfire emergency over Nov/Dec 2019-2020 and then the Covid-19 pandemic. As the lead patient support organisation in allergic disease, A&AA is almost always called for comment on news items/articles and new research related to allergic conditions.

A Snapshot of some other important initiatives:

- A&AA was a participant on the Swinburne University of Technology Steering Committee for the re-accreditation of Courses 22303VIC: Course in Verifying the Correct Use of Adrenaline Autoinjector devices and 22300VIC: Course in First Aid Management of Anaphylaxis.
- Promotion of My Health Record to our Facebook following 20/4/2020 and 28/4/2020 <https://bit.ly/2PWkgTt> and <https://bit.ly/3iPYywO>
- Promotion of Privacy Awareness Week in collaboration with the National Allergy Strategy and Australian Digital Health Agency to our Facebook Followers 6/5/2020 and 8/5/2020 <https://bit.ly/3kOHmK5> and <https://bit.ly/2Y90LvE>. These posts aimed to inform consumers with allergies about the privacy of their information in relations to My Health Record.
- A&AA promoted the Medicare Benefits Schedule for Telehealth to consumers with allergies <https://bit.ly/3gYJcFU>.
- A&AA has partnered with the Australian government organisation HealthDirect Australia with the aim of providing accurate, up to date information to consumers in Australia living with allergic disease via the HealthDirect Australia website.
- A&AA became a content partner with the Better Health Channel (Victoria) and completed a major content update on its website information on Anaphylaxis.
- Notified consumers with allergies via EDM and social media of how to access EpiPen® if they were having difficulty obtaining an EpiPen®.
- Promotion of information from Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) about medication for those affected by bushfire crisis 3/1/2020 <https://bit.ly/3iMzQO7>
- Promotion of federal government extension of mental health services during bushfire

Workshops, presentations, consultation, representation and further outreach

- Several presentations to food manufacturers. Some of these occurs after the manufacturer recalled food products because of undeclared allergens.
- A&AA staffed a stand with 4 health educators at the Australasian College of Dermatologists annual scientific meeting in Melbourne (May 2019).
- Consumer Healthcare Products Australia met with A&AA so that we could share knowledge and expertise on food allergen labelling as they move to work with members to label over the counter (OTC) medicines with allergen information.

- A&AA was invited to be on Nestle Health Science Paediatric Allergy Expert panel. Attended a one-day meeting to discuss needs of paediatric allergy healthcare including needs of families and health professionals.
- A&AA was a co-investigator on a University of Western Australia Research Impact Grant titled Safely Preventing Errors and Complications due to Inappropriate Allergy Labelling. As part of this project we attended a consumer Antibiotic Allergy Community Conversation where consumers met researchers at the Princess Margaret Hospital. A&AA resources were shared at this event.
- A&AA was invited to take part in an Expert Drug Allergy Panel facilitated by Dr Norman Swan at the Australasian Society for Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCI) national conference where members of the public were invited to attend. Approximately 200 Medical professionals were in attendance. The panel discussion was recorded and this podcast is now a resource on A&AA and other websites
<https://allergyfacts.org.au/resources/podcasts/allergy-and-antibiotics>.
- A&AA presented alongside Dr Prathyusha Sanagavarapu at Western Sydney University research symposium that attracted approximately 60 interested, passionate researchers in the area of early childhood education. The presentation title was “Beyond adrenaline: Socio-emotional tales of starting school”.
- Associate Professor Richard Loh and A&AA CEO presented on the progress of the National Allergy Strategy to 26 patient organisations from across the globe at the International Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Alliance meeting in Florence, Italy. Australia was congratulated on the work the NAS, importantly in leading the way for other organisations to follow. Canada, the UK and New Zealand are now progressing with a similar initiative to improve allergy care.
- A&AA presented on National Allergy Strategy 250K youth project at the Australian Association for Adolescent Health Youth Health Conference.
- A&AA staff participated in a Strategic Planning Day which had a focus on how to reach those who are newly diagnosed with allergic disease. A&AA has unsuccessfully applied for grant funding to run a pilot project which will focus on reaching those who are newly diagnosed with food allergy. A&AA continues to look for opportunities to fund this project.
- A&AA was the platinum partner and had a stand and learning area at the first Allergy Show and co-located Free From Show in Australia. A&AA organised the learning area of the show with education sessions from allergists, dermatologists, dietitians and food manufacturing professionals. More than 5,000 consumers attended the show.
- To facilitate A&AA’s consumer voice, the organisation’s staff undertook LinkedIn training and established an A&AA LinkedIn profile as well as individual profiles.
- A&AA presented to NSW TAFE cookery teachers on the topic of “Food Allergy and the Food Service Sector” in June 2020.

- A&AA is represented on a working party for the Children’s Hospital Network in Sydney, to develop a high alerts system to prevent food allergic reactions in children with food allergy whilst hospitalised.
- A&AA CEO presented on learnings from coronial inquests into food allergy deaths at a Brisbane Healthed GP Education Day. 320 GPs were in attendance.
- As co-chair of the National Allergy Strategy (NAS), A&AA CEO, Maria Said presented to 600+ GPs at a Sydney Healthed event on teens and psychosocial aspects of allergy care.
- A&AA CEO presented on food allergy prevention for the NSW Anaphylaxis Education Program educating nurses (40) and GPs (26) in Coffs Harbour, NSW.
- A&AA CEO spoke at National Allergy Strategy's (NAS) breakfast session at the annual Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy conference. The topic was the advocacy work that the NAS has done over the past year.
- A&AA was part of three panel discussions during the ASCIA Conference in Perth. The subject areas of panel discussions were teens, oral immunotherapy and psychological care of people with food allergy.
- A&AA attended Victorian School Nurses Conference and shared resources and increased awareness of the service A&AA offers
- National Nurses Conference – A&AA shared resources with school nurses at a Sydney conference.

Over the past 14-month period, A&AA created, refreshed, updated and distributed the following resources:

- Home alone help sheet <https://allergyfacts.org.au/allergy-management/emergency/alone-anaphylaxis>
- Our hard copy “Preparing for camp with food allergies” was updated and converted to an e-book <https://allergyfacts.org.au/resources/e-books/preparing-for-camp-with-food-allergies>
- Atopic dermatitis brochure – <https://allergyfacts.org.au/allergy-anaphylaxis/eczema-atopic-dermatitis>
- Halloween posters and help sheet <https://allergyfacts.org.au/resources/posters/halloween-food-allergy-friendly>
- Food for a long-haul flight help sheet https://allergyfacts.org.au/images/pdf/Food_for_a_long_haul_flight_with_allergies.pdf
- Urticaria information including a brochure for the A&AA website <https://allergyfacts.org.au/allergy-anaphylaxis/urticaria-hives>
- Translated Chef Cards to use when travelling with food allergies or eating out at a restaurant where English may not be the first language of the staff <https://allergyfacts.org.au/resources/aaa-translated-chef-card-template>

Quotes about the translated chef cards:

- “These are great - we used them recently in Vietnam - no problems!”

- “These have been amazing for my family”
- “I’m overseas at the moment and have been using these cards for my children - they have been an amazing help. Thank you”
- “Such a fantastic idea. Thank you for providing this”
- “Thank you. These cards are a brilliant idea and will help my daughter feel more confident about travelling.”
- “These are fantastic, we used them recently when in France, they are practical and so helpful.”
- A&AA presented a free Webinar titled “Eating out with Food Allergies” with the International Convention Centre Sydney - ICC Sydney and NSW Food Authority. The webinar aims to make it easier for people with food allergies to eat out at restaurants and cafes. That webinar is now freely available on the A&AA website <https://allergyfacts.org.au/resources/webinars/eating-out-with-food-allergies>.
- Easter help sheet. This resource was developed to assist consumers with managing Easter celebrations with food allergy. It was developed as, each year, many people report allergic reactions during the Easter period due to dairy (and sometimes peanut and tree nut) content of chocolate and extra risk due to Easter egg hunts and family/friend celebrations. <https://allergyfacts.org.au/resources/help-sheets/managing-food-allergies-at-easter>
- Ordering food online help sheet. This resource was developed to help consumers with food allergies when ordering food online. <https://allergyfacts.org.au/resources/help-sheets/online-food-ordering-and-allergies>. A&AA is aware of one fatality that occurred after food was purchased online by an individual with tree nut allergy. A&AA continues to assist consumers who have purchased food online after disclosing their allergy and then had anaphylaxis, with reporting the restaurant to the state health department.
- How to Recognise Different Tree Nuts Fact Sheets. This resource was developed with funding from “Nuts for Life” to help consumers with tree nut allergies (or those who care for them) recognise various tree nuts in their different forms. <https://allergyfacts.org.au/resources/tree-nuts>
- A&AA updated its Eating Out help sheet which is available here: <https://allergyfacts.org.au/resources/help-sheets/eating-out>
- A&AA was involved in the development and promotion of videos from the National Allergy Strategy educating consumers about practical day to day management of food allergies: Food Preparation (cross contamination); Food Preparation (separation of time and space); Food Labels (what information must appear on a food label); Food Labels (how to find allergens on food labels); Food Labels (precautionary allergen labelling statements); Food Labels (unlabelled foods); Food Storage. See the videos here: <https://nationalallergystrategy.org.au/resources/food-allergy-videos>
- A&AA held an interactive zoom Q&A session on the topic “Transition to High School” this session was recorded and is now available on the A&AA website: <https://allergyfacts.org.au/resources/webinars/transition-to-high-school-q-and-a-session>

- A&AA released a position statement on the labelling of packaged foods see: <https://allergyfacts.org.au/about/aaa-position-statements/allergen-labelling-of-packaged-foods>
- To provide greater accessibility to the resources on its website, A&AA installed “Readspeaker” in April 2020.

Conclusion

Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia has had a challenging year. Despite working from home from March 2020 we have continued to grow and extended support those living with allergies. We continue to make ourselves available as consultants and advocates with knowledge and long-standing expertise in allergy management. Our work in allergy management helps to reduce the burden of allergic disease on individuals and their families, on the healthcare system, workplaces, schools, food industry and more. We look forward to the outcome of the Parliamentary Inquiry report and await Minister Greg Hunt’s response on recommendations made by Trent Zimmerman MP and members of the Standing Committee for the Parliamentary Inquiry into Allergies and Anaphylaxis.