



## Margaret Thomas



Principal Consultant

Margaret is an experienced research and evaluation professional who designs and conducts quantitative and qualitative research and evaluation projects. She has built a strong professional practice in designing evaluation strategies and frameworks for organisations.

Margaret is a trained facilitator who is experienced in strategic planning and review within and across agencies.

Since joining ARTD in 2005, she has applied her expertise to projects in the health, social and environmental fields. Margaret worked in senior positions in research and evaluation in the public sector for 13 years. She has also worked with and for non-government organisations including the Heart Foundation and Diabetes Australia.

She is currently completing a Doctor of Public Health degree at the University of Sydney and is a casual lecturer and tutor with the School of Public Health. She has published consistently in peer-reviewed journals.

Master of Public Health,  
University of Sydney (1993)

Grad Diploma of  
Occupational Therapy,  
Cumberland College of Health  
Sciences (1979)

Bachelor of Science,  
University of NSW (1978)

Member, Australasian  
Evaluation Society

Member, Australian  
Public Health Association

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### Evaluation

Margaret is the lead consultant in designing evaluation strategies and frameworks for ARTD clients in the health, human service and environmental sectors. Margaret works with organisations to build evaluation capacity and develop and implement evaluation strategies. She has worked with the Cancer Institute NSW to embed evaluation in program plans and reporting, with the Cancer Council NSW to develop an evaluation strategy for the Tackling Tobacco Program and with the National Breast and Ovarian Cancer Centre to design program logic models and an evaluation framework across all the Centre's program areas.

She has designed and managed many evaluation studies for ARTD including

- *Participation in Community Sport and Active Recreation (PICSAR)* project, a three year evaluation for VicHealth in partnership with Monash University (VicHealth, 2008-2010)
- *MetroACTIVE*, a project to increase integrated planning for physical activity in six Melbourne Councils (VicHealth, 2006/2007)
- *SunSmart Project*, a pilot project working with Local Government to increase attention to sun protection in local councils (The Cancer Council NSW, 2009-2011)
- *Clean Air, Healthy Communities project*, to assess changes in the behaviour of private industry and the community towards improving air quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions (Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW, 2009-in progress).
- *Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative (AuSSI)*, first overall evaluation of this national partnership (Department of the Environment Water Heritage and the Arts, 2009-2010).

Margaret undertakes a broad range of evaluation and research studies and reviews and has extensive knowledge and experience in the design, collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. Prior to joining ARTD Margaret consulted on, and conducted, numerous health program evaluations for NSW Health. Her recently submitted thesis for a Doctor of Public Health involved analysis of evaluation data from three large mass media campaigns targeting physical activity. She has a strong interest in health inequalities and the implementation of policy and program solutions.

### Research

Margaret has specialist qualifications and experience in public health research and has been a senior team member on significant projects. Between 2000 and 2005 she developed and coordinated a large research program for the NSW Department of Health that continues to fund innovative projects (Health Promotion Demonstration Research Grants Scheme). She is currently undertaking a large research project for Camp Quality, a non-profit children's cancer organisation.

### Strategy

Margaret is experienced in developing strategic plans across a range of policy issues. Examples include the National Diabetes Action Plan (1992) and a national obesity strategy for the Australasian Society for the Study of Obesity (1995). More recently Margaret worked with ARTD colleagues to develop a new state-wide Strategic Plan for Skin Cancer Prevention (2007). She is also a skilled facilitator, currently undertaking consumer consultations on legal reform proposals for the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department.