



## Dr. Margaret Thomas

Principal Consultant



Margaret is an experienced research and evaluation professional who designs and conducts major research and evaluation projects. She has built a strong professional practice in designing evaluation frameworks and strategies and building evaluation capacity for public policy programs and 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 in the health, human services 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 recently completed a Doctor of Public Health 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 evaluation and strategy for ARTD clients in the health sector. She 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 across the public policy spectrum including

- *Participation in Community Sport and Active Recreation (PICSAR)* project, a three year evaluation 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 with Local Government to increase attention to sun protection in local councils (The Cancer Council NSW, 2009-2011)
- *Clean Air, Healthy Communities project*, impact on industry and the community for improving air quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions (Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW, 2009-2011).
- *NSW Health Child Protection and Sexual Assault Counselling Services* This major review mapped services, outlined strengths and weaknesses and provided draft KPIs. (NSW Department of Health, 2011)
- *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 has expertise in the design, collection and analysis of 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 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 recently led a ground-breaking research project for Camp Quality, a non-profit children's cancer organisation.

### Strategy

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