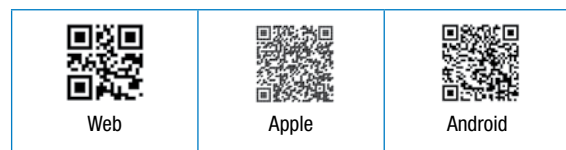


## Editor's note

The International Labour Organization's Social Protection Report 2014/2015 highlights the important contribution which social protection makes in addressing poverty and inequality, as well as in supporting growth and development.<sup>1</sup> It also acknowledges the global improvement in accessing social protection, especially in middle-income countries, and identifies the lack of effective social security systems in some countries as a risk to further improvement. The report provides updates on social protection for children and families, adults and the elderly, as well as universal health coverage, and draws attention to challenges that need to be addressed, if improved access is to be achieved.

Available global<sup>2</sup> and South African<sup>3</sup> data on the prevalence of obesity are a cause for serious concern and mandate reflection and appropriate action in the form of self- and/or population-based interventions. Weight-reducing diets, in general, in their many and various compositions (high in this and low in that) and claims (ranging from the mundane to the miraculous), capture the attention of those who decide to lose weight and are the immediate first step to such practices. Invariably, weight-reducing diets help to achieve variable (in extent) weight loss, at least in the short term, but despite the potential promise that they all claim to have, they also appear to have little, if any, meaningful impact on rising obesity trends. This apparent lack of impact is most likely because of an excessive-for-needs energy (food) intake and inactivity, which in combination, has led to the observed obesogenic trend. In the midst of the plethora of efficacy claims made for weight-reducing diets, the conclusion of a recent systematic review and meta-analysis ["Trials show weight loss in the short term, irrespective of whether or not the diet is low carbohydrate or balanced. There is probably little or no difference in weight loss and changes in cardiovascular risk factors up to two years of follow-up when overweight and obese adults, with or without type 2 diabetes, are randomised to low carbohydrate diets and *isoenergetic* (own emphasis) balanced weight-loss diets"]<sup>4</sup> is indeed sobering, and supports the need to protect the public from erroneous efficacy claims of weight-reducing diets that are almost invariably unsubstantiated.

*SAJCN* readers will be pleased to know that we have indeed made significant progress in appointing a new scientific editorial board, representative of the nutrition and dietetics domain and expertise nationally, regionally and internationally. The *SAJCN*'s current editorial and management board, consisting of society-appointed representatives, will remain intact until the three *SAJCN* parent organisations recommend new appointments. Publishing of the *SAJCN* by Taylor and Francis, jointly with Medpharm Publications (African publisher), is also in its final stages of review. Our aim is to be able to make an official announcement of the new scientific editorial board in the September *SAJCN* issue. *SAJCN* has already been listed in the app stores (Apple® and Android) in the publisher's app called The Red Brick Library. It is a free download.



### References

1. International Labour Organisation. World social protection report 2014/2015: building economic recovery, inclusive development and social justice. ILO [homepage on the Internet]. c2014. Available from: [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms\\_245201.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_245201.pdf)
2. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. Obesity update. OECD [homepage on the Internet]. 2014. C2014. Available from: <http://www.oecd.org/els/health-systems/Obesity-Update-2014.pdf>
3. Shisana O, Labadarios D, Rehle T, SANHANES-1 Team. South African National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (SANHANES-1). Cape Town: HSRC Press; 2014.
4. Naude CE, Schoonees A, Senekal M, et al. Low carbohydrate versus isoenergetic balanced diets for reducing weight and cardiovascular risk: a systematic review and meta-analysis. PLoS ONE. 2014;9(7):e100652.

**Demetre Labadarios**

Editor-in-Chief, *SAJCN*

SAJCN	DHET	Scopus	SABINET	DOAJ	AJOL	AIM