



March 2010

KEEPING WELL

Welcome ~ a new initiative from SGGPCP

Welcome to the first edition of 'Keeping Well' - a newsletter for everyone supporting the communities of Southern Grampians and Glenelg Shires to stay healthy, strong and well.

The partners of Southern Grampians and Glenelg Primary Care Partnership (SGGPCP) have agreed that to build on their existing good health promotion practices there is a need to integrate planning and implementation further. To do so, five priority areas have been agreed: social connection; food security; active communities; transport and oral health. **Keeping Well** aims to ensure that partners and friends are kept up to date with what is happening and enable them to identify opportunities to contribute to and support the process when it is right for them.

Why integrated planning for improving health and wellbeing? Literature strongly supports that the best way to tackle complex social problems that require behavioural change is through a collaborative approach. The advantages of planning together include a higher and longer commitment from partners, better and more effective solutions and fewer resources having to be used by any one partner. This stronger focus on integrated planning, implementation and best practice health promotion is a change in the way we currently work. With proposed national changes to the primary care sector that have a clear focus on preventative health and regional funds distribution based on population health strategies, this change is important and urgent.

How will this make my job easier? It is envisaged that as part of the planning process there will be local data sets developed and a comprehensive evidence base for each priority theme that can be utilised by everyone. The integrated planning process will also build knowledge and skills in health promotion best practice, build stronger support networks and partners, gain a better understanding of how your work fits in to the overall solution of complex health and wellbeing problems and ultimately be more effective in improving the health and wellbeing of the community.

What has happened so far? Working groups for Active Communities, Social Connection and Food Security have been established, with a lead agency steering each group and PCP staff support. The South West Transport Connection Project and Project Group is the mechanism for integrating transport health promotion.

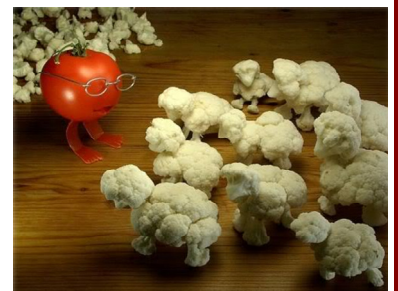
Active Communities: PCP Key Contact: erin.white@wdhs.net or ☎ 0458 325 800

The **Active Communities Working Group** purpose is to work collaboratively to identify a shared vision of what an active community looks like and to identify strategies and opportunities to achieve this within the Southern Grampians & Glenelg Shires. The working group has commitment from Portland District Health, Western District Health Service, Glenelg and Southern Grampians Shires, Heywood Rural Health Glenelg Outreach and South West Sports Assembly. Foundational work on Terms of Reference, definitions and building a strong base of understanding of good health promotion practice was the focus of late 2009. More recently, the working group has gained consensus on the way forward for the 'problem definition' phase for this priority. Partners are now currently working on identifying elements of the built and social environments that impact on whether a community is active, and will then determine what specific needs are to be addressed to ensure that we have physically active, socially vibrant and inclusive communities across our catchment. Using an integrated health promotion approach, we aim to spend the next few months working collaboratively on addressing the problem definition phase and will then look at options for solution generation. Whether a community is considered an 'active community' hinges greatly on policy and planning by local government. This is recognised by the Working Group and they will be linking closely with key people within the two local Shire Councils going forward.

Food Security: PCP Key Contact: joanne.brown@wdhs.net or ☎ 555 18563

The Food Security Working Group is led by Portland District Health with representatives from SGGPCP, Heywood Rural Health and Western District Health Service. The working group has and will continue to look at comprehensive strategies to define the extent of food security across the region as well as gaining a better understanding of integrated health promotion.

VicHealth defines food security as "the state in which all persons obtain nutritionally



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adequate, culturally acceptable, safe foods regularly through local non-emergency sources. Food security broadens the traditional conception of hunger, embracing a systemic view of the causes of hunger and poor nutrition within a community while identifying the changes necessary to prevent their occurrence. Food security programs confront hunger and poverty”.

The problem definition stage will include collecting demographic data, mapping food outlets, transport and access, community consultation, healthy food basket surveys, collating a comprehensive list of current programs and developing a report. Definition of the extent of food security will inform solution generation and possibly create a snapshot of capacity across the area.

Social Connection: PCP Key Contact: rowena.wylie@wdhs.net or ☎ 0419 143 652

The Social Connection Working Group (SCWG) was established in October 2009 and has members from Glenelg Shire (lead agency), Aspire, Community Connections, Glenelg Outreach, Southern Grampians Shire (Rural Outreach), Department of Veterans Affairs and SGGPCP.

The SCWG is currently consulting with members and stakeholders on the key target groups, needs, issues and current activities to improve social connection and gaps or priority areas for work. The purpose of the consultation is to help define the issues and plan effective collaborative work. Underpinning the work is a commitment to focus on working with marginalised and vulnerable groups and areas, and to use a health promotion approach. A summary of the consultation to date is available and is expected to be completed in May.

Once the consultation is completed the working group will determine what actions to undertake. Action may include a mix of interventions such as capacity building, workforce development, collaboration on specific programs and work at a broader level to improve access and inclusiveness of existing programs.

Transport: Key Contact (WDHS): Rebecca.morton@wdhs.net or ☎ 5551 8450

South West Transport Connection Project is led by Western District Health Service (WDHS) and aims to improve local transport options for the communities of Southern Grampians and Glenelg Shires. The working group includes representatives from Glenelg Shire, Southern Grampians Shire, Balmoral Bush Nursing Centre, Old Courthouse Community House Casterton, Local Learning Employment Network(LLEN) and SGGPCP

Transport Connections is a joint initiative of the Department of Planning and Community Development, Department of Transport, Department of Human Services and Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Key local transport activities underway have been consultations with the Merino and Glenthompson communities; establishment of a youth transport brokerage program; the Hamilton to Mt Gambier trial service (with some adjustments following community consultation at Coleraine and Casterton). The service between Portland and Mt Gambier via Nelson is undergoing some modification following consultation. A continuing issue of priority that requires a statewide solution is the impact of the VCAL hours being outside school hours. This restricts rural students participation due to no transport options. A great achievement has been patronage of the Hamilton town bus service has risen significantly since the introduction of low level access bus.

Oral Health: PCP Key Contact: jnette.lowe@wdhs.net or ☎ 55518452

No formal working group for oral health has been established yet. Portland District Health, PCP and Department of Humans Services – Barwon South West Region are the committed partners so far. It is expected that the focus of integrated planning in the first instance will be on people with a disability. In the meantime, Portland District Health continues to deliver the successful Smiles 4 Miles program and adapting the program for introduction into the two Special Development Schools within the region.

Finally - Keeping Well will be distributed every two months to update partners and friends on progress to achieve an *integrated health promotion plan for each of the priority themes*. If you would like more information or want to be involved please contact the listed key contacts or the PCP Office. Feedback and suggestions are also always welcomed and appreciated.

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