



October 2010

KEEPING WELL

Introduction

Agencies and organisations that receive Department of Health (DH) funding for health promotion have just experienced another benefit of integrating our health promotion work – less reporting. The PCP has submitted one report representing our combined efforts in integrating health promotion on the five priority themes. Our main report was a case study on the work of the Social Connection Working Group to date, as an example of the process and benefits of establishing the group and defining the scope. If you would like a copy of the case study, please refer to the SGGPCP website. Over the next year, state wide health promotion measures that are under development shall be incorporated into an evaluation plan for our integrated health promotion work that will be used in future reports.

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

The Working Group has been working on a number of different aspects of Active Communities. We continue to be involved in the Hamilton Structure Plan consultations and are finding that input will “value add” to ideas contained in the Plan.

One key area that we are planning to focus on is the relationship between Active Living and open spaces. We are in the process of scoping the project with the aim of increasing knowledge regarding the barriers or perceived barriers to activity within open spaces, specifically for socio-economically disadvantaged residents. Findings would then outline strategies for local organisations to address to increase the use of open spaces by these communities. This approach stems from evidence regarding the health benefits of living near open spaces and the advantages to an active community. *Having access to green open spaces improves physical and mental wellbeing* ('Green and Open Space Planning for Urban Consolidation', Byrne & Sipe, 2010). *Living near green open spaces, such as parks and other natural environments assists with prevention of obesity, cardiovascular disease, as well as mental health issues* ('Beyond Blue to Green' Townsend & Weerasuriya, 2010). However, the question for us is, even in regional and rural areas, how “accessible” are these green open spaces for residents that are socio-economically disadvantaged? With this knowledge, we can then work in partnership with local organisations to optimise the use of our local open spaces. The process will involve two major parts. The first being information gathering through a wide variety of consultation methods. The second part of the project would be to develop a strategic plan to enable the communities to improve use of their open spaces. This Plan would aim to outline ways to address the most common issues preventing communities from being active in their local open spaces, making use of local and regional expertise and collaborative partnerships within the SGG PCP.

In addition to this, the Working Group is also reviewing their current Terms of Reference, their Works Plan, as well as continuing work on a resource mapping document that is a compilation of all the relevant plans relating to Active Communities.

Food Security: PCP Key Contact: joanne.brown@wdhs.net or ☎ 5551 8563.

Lead Agency Key Contact – PDH: Kristy De Rose (PDH): kderose.pdh@swarh.vic.gov.au

Community consultation has been the main focus of the Food Security Working Group over the last 2 months. Surveys have been completed by almost 500 community members across the catchment. Collation and further analysis of this information will soon be underway.

Monash University Students Oana and Jorja have played a major role setting up and running focus groups across the Glenelg Shire. Eight focus groups were attended by over 40 participants who shared diversity of knowledge about food security. Oana and Jorja are now busily transcribing the focus groups and will present a report before the end of October. Focus groups will commence in the Southern Grampians Shire early October. Next steps will be to collate all the data and look at service provision, gaps in food security and community needs.





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Oral Health: PCP Key Contact: jenny.williams@wdhs.net or ☎ 555 18471.

Lead Agency Key Contact – PDH, Lynda Smith: lmsmith@swarh.vic.gov.au or ☎ 5522 1198

The Oral Health Working Group has now met three times and have developed draft Terms of Reference. The group has identified four main areas of focus, being people residing in aged care facilities, 0-12 year olds, people with a disability and local research. Once the ToR are finalised, we will work together to build a project plan, that is broad enough to fulfil the requirements of our membership, whilst being meaningful for everyone.

We have had additional interest from some private dentists and also South West Health Care in our group's activities, which we are very excited about.

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

The Social Connection Working Group (SC WG) has agreed on some key areas for action which include:

- individual agency actions to increase social connection through existing or new initiatives
- professional development including Indigenous cultural awareness, equity, poverty and working effectively with vulnerable groups,
- advocacy for increasing social connection, a healthy equity approach and additional resources
- research and data collection, and
- community engagement and consultation.

We are in the process of developing an action plan which includes strategies under each of these areas.

Another health promotion priority across this catchment is transport. Transport is recognised as a social determinant of health; lack of it is often cited as a barrier to access services and activities. In rural areas the problem is exacerbated by lower frequency or lack of services. The SC WG's consultation identified poor access to transport as being a common barrier to social connection. To help address this issue, the WG will strengthen its link with the SW Transport Connections Project lead by WDHS. One opportunity for this to occur is through the group's input to the transport needs analysis planned for Portland and Heywood.

Transport: Lead Agency Key Contact - WDHS: rebecca.morton@wdhs.net or ☎ 5551 8450

Plans are well advanced for the introduction of *Merino Connections* trial transport service. Commencing on the 5th October and provided by the Casterton Taxi Service, Merino residents will be able to travel to Casterton on Tuesdays to connect with the V Line bus to Hamilton and Warrnambool and on Wednesdays to connect to the trial bus to Mount Gambier. Return services to Merino will be timed to leave after bus services coming back to Casterton. From Hamilton onward connections to Ararat, Ballarat, Warrnambool, Geelong, Portland, Horsham, Adelaide and Melbourne will be possible. People will be required to book on the day prior to travel and the cost of the trip will be similar to a bus fare. This new initiative will provide additional services for Merino who currently have a weekly V Line service to Hamilton and Warrnambool and a community transport service through the Merino Bush Nursing Centre.

As a result of having some surplus funds the South West Transport Connections will undertake a study into the transport needs of people residing in Portland and Heywood. The study will work with existing projects in Glenelg such as the Youth Re-engagement Strategy and the TLC3 that have already identified access to transport as a barrier to involvement in community life. The report produced from the study will outline the specific transport needs in the two towns and provide a way forward for development of new services.

All trial bus services introduced across Victoria as a result of the Transport Connections program, including the three initiated by the South West Transport Connections program are due to be reviewed in the next two months. The reviews will look at patronage and also the social impact of the services provided. Public meetings will be held in relevant Southern Grampians and Glenelg communities and users will have to opportunity to contribute to the reviews.

Produced By Southern Grampians Glenelg Primary Care Partnership

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