

# Barwon Health

## Integrated Health Promotion

Annual Report: 2019-2020



**Barwon  
Health**

[www.barwonhealth.org.au/healthy-communities](http://www.barwonhealth.org.au/healthy-communities)

2020

# Healthy Communities Snapshot



## COVID-19

2

Sets traffic light testing cards developed for COVID-19 workplace outbreak in regional Victoria; supported the isolation of **100+** individuals

7

Fact sheets for staying healthy during COVID-19 developed; **353** page visits and **21** downloads

4

COVID-19 simple English fact sheets developed; **280** page visits and **28** downloads



## Mental Health

5

Grants provided to community groups reaching **685** people



## Workplace Health

171

Workplaces supported by Barwon Health Workplace Health

**26%** increase from last year



## Prevention of Violence Against Women

125

Year 9 students from across the region participated in the Respect Cup and increased their knowledge of the effects of stereotyping and gender-based violence

Health Literate Messages toolkit for the Prevention of Violence Against Women developed and downloaded **190** times



## Healthy Eating and Active Living

2

Consultations held with **37** community members to understand factors influencing physical activity

Worked with **5** regional partners to train **54** home care staff to encourage increased incidental activity with their clients

19

Community Kitchens supported with more than **180** people involved



## Connecting

41

Social media posts published reaching **18,500** followers

**2,506**

Visits to Healthy Communities webpage

8

eNewsletters distributed to **450** people

**100**

Local, regional and state partners



## Our Priorities

2020-2021



Increase Water Consumption



Decrease Sugar Sweetened Beverage Consumption



Increase Vegetable Consumption



Increase Incidental Activity



Mental Health Promotion



Prevention of Violence Against Women

# Barwon Health

## Integrated Health Promotion

Annual Report: 2019-2020

### INTRODUCTION

The Healthy Communities team at Barwon Health works with the community in the places they live, learn, work and play to develop, implement and evaluate health promotion initiatives using a range of strategies.



Image sourced from <https://g21.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/HWB-Heal-v2-1.pdf>

We work across the G21 region and our priorities are aligned with the State Government's *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan* and local government regional Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans.

We work with our partners taking a collective impact approach, and collectively, we are delivering on two health and wellbeing plans:

- the Healthier Eating and Active Living Plan (HEAL Plan) and
- the Prevention of Violence Against Women Health Alliance Collective Action Plan (PVAW Plan).

This report focuses on Barwon Health's contribution to the regional work over the 2019-20 period (representing the third year of delivery of the HEAL and PVAW Plans).

## **A reporting period characterised by major incidents**

There were two major incidents in this reporting period that influenced our ability to implement the 2019-20 Annual Plan as intended: a cyber-security incident in Oct-Nov 2019 and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The cyber-security incident saw the team without network access for over eight weeks in late 2019. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the declarations of State of Emergencies by the state government had all staff working remotely with face-to-face interactions with community and partner organisations on hold. This period also saw significant staff redeployments to support Barwon Health's response to this pandemic.

## **About this report**

This report outlines the major achievements over the 2019-20 reporting period, including:

- The principles underpinning our work, the approaches we adopt and the settings in which we work to promote health and wellbeing
- An overview of Barwon Health initiatives (including our work as part of the HEAL and PVAW Plans and local implementation of statewide programs plus case studies)
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) impacts
- Appendices

## THE WAY WE WORK

We apply place-based primary prevention principles, underpinned by health literacy, health equity, collective impact and systems thinking techniques and approaches, to deliver a range of different interventions where people live, work, learn and recreate.

“ Together with our community we build healthier lives.



### Healthier Eating & Active Living

- Increased water consumption
- Decreased sugar sweetened beverage consumption
- Increased vegetable consumption
- Increased incidental activity
- Increased workers health in the G21 region



### Prevention of Violence Against Women

- Strengthened health services leadership commitment to safe, equal and respectful communities
- Developed and communicated key messages
- Increased capacity of the community to act to prevent violence against women
- An evidence base to inform future practice



### Mental Health Promotion

- Increased community participation in mental health and wellbeing initiatives
- Built partnerships to promote young people's mental health and wellbeing
- Increased community awareness of factors that enhance social and emotional wellbeing

*Our work at a glance*



Barwon Health is delivering a Workplace Health initiative, a multi-level intervention that addresses healthy eating, physical activity, alcohol and other drug use, smoking and mental health and wellbeing in the places where people work. Our work supports the local implementation of the state-wide Healthy Workplaces *Achievement Program*.

## Progress

We continue to encourage healthier workplaces using the Achievement Program framework through supporting 171 workplaces in the G21 region. Our strategies involve a combination of direct support, partnerships, education and training, and communications.

### Direct support:

Over the reporting period, an additional 13 workplaces have registered with the Achievement Program via the Cancer Council Victoria portal.

- Supported 171 workplaces in the G21 region through resources, newsletters and events (increase of 35 from 2018-19).
- Provided intensive, tailored support to five workplaces via expression of interest in our Workplace Health eNewsletters (500+ staff).
- Facilitated the Workplace Health Network (4 network meetings) with an average of 8 organisations from diverse industries attended.

### Partnerships

Over the reporting period we have strengthened strategic regional partnerships with Active Geelong, Cancer Council Victoria, G21 Regional Alliance Healthy Eating Plan and Geelong Chamber of Business to increase reach, access broader expertise and collaborate across the region.



Figure: Presenter at the *Creating thriving workplaces through physical activity* workshop

Working with Active Geelong, we facilitated Group Model Building (a systems thinking participatory engagement approach) with a local transport company. Identified as an at-risk industry due to the sedentary behaviour among drivers, this local company's employees participated in the interactive workshops to help identify barriers and enablers to physical activity at work, and to generate workplace-based initiatives to enhance their health and wellbeing.

### Education and Training

- Delivered the *Creating thriving workplaces through physical activity* workshop in partnership with Active Geelong in November (n = 49 attendees).
- Participated as an event exhibitor at Geelong Chamber of Business After 5 network event in November 2019 and February 2020.
- Panel presenter at Achievement Program Health Promoter forum.

### Communications

Workplaces were also supported through a range of communications, including:

- Workplace Health eNewsletters: Developed and distributed 4 eNewsletters to an average of 273 organisations.

Distribution of the eNewsletter has increased from 207 contacts in June 2019 to 292 in June 2020 (increase of 85).

- Targeted bulletins during COVID-19: we promoted resources and services through our network to support workplace health related impacts of COVID-19 (with excellent engagement: of the 301 recipients there were 121 opens and 41 click-throughs).
- Social media posts (n=5 posts) on the Barwon Health Facebook page.



Screenshot of the Workplace Health Initiative newsletter



Water & SSB's  
Objective 1

The *Healthy Choices Guidelines* have been developed by the Victorian Government to help organisations, including Health Services, to offer and promote healthier food and drink options. The guidelines comprise a food and drinks classification guide, a menu assessment tool, policy guidelines and nutritional advice. We have continued to encourage their uptake and use.

### Progress

We continued to work internally as a healthcare setting and externally to encourage adoption of the *Healthy Choice Guidelines* and improve how they are used (number of organisations = 6).

- Supported the modification of Barwon Health's Healthy Eating policy that includes a commitment that Barwon Health will not sell Sugar Sweetened Beverages (SSBs). This policy was scheduled to be adopted in August 2020. The organisation's catering guidelines now also meet Healthy Choices Guidelines.
- Developed a sustainability plan for Barwon Health that will assist organisations implementing Healthy Choice Guidelines across the region.
- Supported five workplaces (over 500 staff), with Healthy Choice Guidelines, as well as the reduction or removal of SSB's from sale to staff and increasing access to water.



## Community Kitchens



## Vegetable Consumption Objectives 1 & 2

Barwon Health continues to oversee the implementation of Community Kitchens in our region and beyond. This well-established program works with participants across a range of settings to enhance knowledge and skills in food selection, shopping and preparation and to improve access to food.

### Progress

Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the program continued to be implemented across the region with 19 Community Kitchens running with more than 180 people involved. The Program supports kitchens located in Corio (n=3), Norlane (n=3), Geelong (n=2), Geelong West (n=2), Ocean Grove, Hamlyn Heights, Whittington, East Geelong, Grovedale, Waurin Ponds, Leopold, Torquay, Drysdale, Bannockburn and Portarlington (n=1). The kitchens are ran in neighbourhood houses, senior citizen's clubs and other community service organisations. Each cater to a variety of participants including those in low SEIFA suburbs, those over 65 and people with a disability.

### Supporting the program

- Four rounds of facilitator training conducted (41 facilitators trained).

- Three Facilitator Network Events held (10 attendees on average).
- Four eNewsletters with 170 recipients (2 newsletters with a COVID-19 focus).
- Developed information sheets for COVID-19 safe Community Kitchens in consultation with 10 Neighborhood Houses.

### Promoting program sustainability

We interviewed Community Kitchen facilitators and host organisations to seek their feedback about the current operating model and our proposed service redesign that sees participating organisations take on more of a coordination role with their target community members (reducing Barwon Health's FTE from 3.5 to 1 day/week). The evaluation, involving 10 interviews and four online surveys, identified a number of areas for improvement that can be incorporated into the pilot of the new model prior to its implementation.



## Increasing Vegetable Consumption



## Vegetable Consumption Objectives 1 & 2

Working with partners under the HEAL Plan, we have implemented a number of strategies to encourage people to consume more vegetables.

### Mapping initiatives in the 3214 postcode

We mapped existing initiatives in the 3214 postcode and identified numerous vegetable consumption initiatives and a number of opportunities for us to intervene.

Plans to engage with the community about possible interventions were put on hold due to COVID-19.

### Education and Social Marketing

Barwon Health, working as part of the HEAL Collective, implemented a social marketing campaign targeting vulnerable communities to encourage increased vegetable consumption with a reach of 400+ individuals.

- *Taste the Rainbow* placemats distributed to vulnerable families via food bank services, supported playgroups and parent groups, community health centre dietetic services and Community Kitchen participants with intellectual disabilities

(targeted through existing network and partner relationships).

- More than 17 separate organisations, workplaces and events were used to distribute placemats



Photo of the pilot vegetable consumption initiative

- We were planning on rolling out a new initiative based on what we learnt based on feedback from our social marketing campaign and our research in the 3214 postcode. We piloted an activity using visual displays and tip sheets, scoped further opportunities to refine this activity but it was put on hold due to COVID-19.



**Water & SSB's**  
Objectives 1 & 2

Barwon Health co-leads the increasing consumption of water and decreasing consumption of sugar sweetened beverages (SSBs) working group as part of the HEAL Plan.

### Reduce access to Sugar Sweetened Beverages (SSB's) and increase access to drinking water

Working with the HEAL SSB/Water working Group, Barwon Health participated in an audit of drink fountains in the G21 region to guide Barwon Water's installation of eight new drink fountains in priority areas.

### Promote the consumption of water across the G21 region

A major focus in this work area was as an active partner in the HEAL regional collective action work delivering the *Choose Water Every Day* social marketing campaign. This involved:

- A major campaign in Barwon Health facilities with water bottle giveaways (350+ distributed), decals, posters and other resources promoting water consumption.
- Supported five large workplaces recruited via an expression of interest in the Workplace Health eNewsletter with campaign resources and other support to increase water consumption and reduce

consumption of SSBs in the workplace (engaging more than 500+ employees).

- Multiple engagement events (Geelong Chamber of Commerce after 5 event, the Workplace Health Physical Activity Event with Active Geelong).
- Social media campaign (posts = 9, with >240 likes).
- We outlined one workplace's experience in a detailed case study.



Various aspects of the collective-action Choose Water Every Day campaign

Our collective action initiative, based on "Refill Canberra", was put on hold due to COVID-19. This initiative planned to work with local cafes and retailers to fill up individual's water bottles.



Barwon Health leads the Increasing Incidental Activity working group as part of the HEAL initiative. The priority is to build the capacity of regional organisations and services to increase opportunities for people aged over 55 to engage in incidental activity.

### Building capacity of aged care workers to support incidental activity with their clients

- In partnership with Colac Ottway and Golden Plains Shires we trained 47 home care staff in incidental activity and how to encourage it (with almost all attendees reporting increased confidence and skills in identifying and supporting incidental activity in their clients).
- With home care providers, we developed a physical activity care plan template for use with clients to support increased incidental activity.

Six months after the commencement of this initiative, a little less than half of aged care workers surveyed had the opportunity to implement what they learnt (reasons included clients were ill or the physical activity care plan had yet to be implemented). We are now shifting this training online to reach more home care workers and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We learnt from efforts that it can be difficult for systemic shifts over the initial time frames anticipated, however, we will continue to work with aged care workers and their settings to encourage incidental activity.

### Social Marketing

- Participated in two regional expo engagement opportunities.
- As part of the HEAL collective, we led a social marketing toolkit with five simple, focus-group tested health-literate messages promoting incidental activity

(containing social media posts, images, posters, website content, sample media releases and supporting resources).

- Shared the toolkit with all partners (4 LGA's, Barwon Water, Dementia Australia, G21 and Bellarine Community Health).
- Adapted this toolkit to be fit-for-purpose for a health care specific setting.



BH specific poster developed as part of the incidental activity toolkit

### Scoping future initiatives through engaging with the community

- Ran a major co-design initiative in March 2020 using Group Model Building (a systems thinking participatory engagement approach). 27 individuals representing 12 different community-based agencies working with people aged 55+ worked to identify the factors that impact incidental activity and proposed prioritised solutions. The HEAL Incidental Activity working group identified a number of these for priority focus in 2021-22. See Appendix for a summary report describing the outcomes of this initiative.

## Case Study: The *Choose Water Every Day* campaign and the experience of the one workplace



*"[The increase in water consumption] was massive for me. It virtually came from zero to... ..I was getting into the second [Choose Water Every Day] bottle every day. That was all through [Health and Wellbeing Officer's] encouragement. That played a very big role. Most people know that water is good for you... ..but I didn't drink much water at all. Through this campaign... and particularly through our Health and Wellbeing Officer's encouragement, I really increased."*

The Healthy Communities Unit (HCU) at Barwon Health worked with a number of workplaces as part of the *Choose Water Every Day* social marketing campaign, delivered as part of the regional Healthy Eating and Active Living collaborative. This case study describes the experience of a small workplace with 7-8 staff and the actions they took.

### ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN

After hearing about the campaign, and being tempted by a free *Choose Water Every Day* branded water bottle, the workplace's Health and Wellbeing Officer contact the HCU exploring how they might get involved. The workplace was provided with a resource kit including water bottles for each team member and a suite of resources including a urine chart, healthy drinks guide and *Choose Water Every Day* social media content. This resource kit was designed to support workplaces in implementing the campaign in ways that worked for them.

The team used the resources to implement a number of things as part of the campaign. They committed to drink more water over a six week period, and tracked progress on a whiteboard in a communal area of their office. At each meeting, they would tick off against their commitments and track progress each week on the whiteboard. The team also invited a dietician and health promotion officer from the HCU who presented on *Choose Water Every Day*, health eating, useful decision aids (such as the green-amber-red ratings and a healthy drinks guide) and answered any questions the team had.

### CAMPAIGN EFFECTIVENESS



[One team member] didn't drink any water before the campaign at all. But they drank [soft drink] instead. When they started with their new found water intake with *Choose Water Every Day*, they actually came out of the bathroom and said "oh-my-goodness. I didn't realise that my urine shouldn't be orange!" I think that's a massive amount of kudos to the program. It wasn't just about her actually having the intake it was the education that came with it...

All team members described positive changes in their water consumption – ranging from small to large. One person in the team was reported to have "...literally turned her life around through this project". This team member went from drinking approximately 2L of soft drink every day prior to the campaign, to one small glass during and after the campaign activities. The other team members also increased their water consumption to some degree.

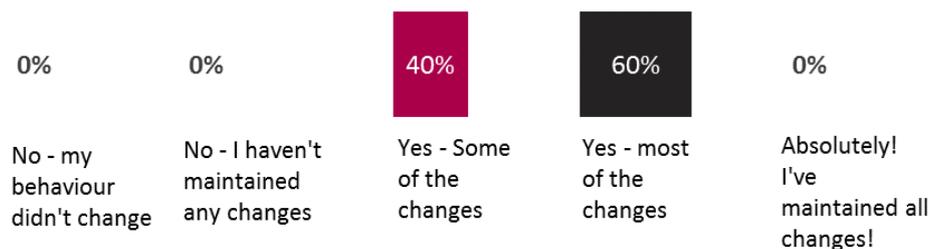
### Case study (cont.)

All team members describe changing their drinking behaviour. Some suggested moderate or massive changes (n = 6).



Another team member described health benefits that came from increased water consumption, noting that their "...mind is a lot clearer when I drink water and the effect on my skin as well, I noticed a difference there". All individuals in the team reported maintaining changes in water consumption following the campaign, albeit in some cases inconsistently.

All team members report maintaining **some, or most**, of the changes arising from the program (n = 5).



### FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTED TO CAMPAIGN EFFECTIVENESS

In addition to the contribution of the Choose Water Every Day campaign to behaviour change, there were some notable factors here that were identified as enablers of these positive changes, including:

- A person in the team who championed wellness.
- The campaign resources - water bottles, information etc. as motivation and to increase awareness and knowledge.
- A team culture willing to "give it a go" and the goal setting and peer support from weekly check-ins about progress.
- An information session with staff from the HCU's dietitian regarding healthy eating and drinking and health and wellbeing.

The team reported that the repeated messages about health and wellness, including messages through the Choose Water Every Day campaign, have played an ongoing role in contributing to healthy behaviours. The team now feels motivated to take further actions to promote health and wellbeing.

## PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



*"I love the concept. I thought it was great that our students knew at the end of the day that it wasn't the netball where they needed to 'win' but that others that didn't know them recognised their choices and behaviours across the day"*

Feedback from a participating teacher  
the first primary school Respect Cup

Our work in this area is delivered as part of the collective action Prevention of Violence Against Women Health Alliance (PVAW Health Alliance) and aligns with the Victorian Government's *Free From Violence* strategy and is underpinned by principles and approaches in the Our Watch, VicHealth and ANROWS *Change the Story* primary prevention framework. Our objectives for the 2019-20 reporting period, and our measures of progress, reflect part of the Barwon Health's contribution to this collective work.

### A Messages Toolkit

Working with partners in the PVAW Health Alliance, we developed the *Health Literate Messages Toolkit for the Prevention of Violence Against Women* (the Toolkit). Initially for PVAW Health Alliance staff, the intended audience for these messages grew to diverse people engaged in PVAW work.

- The Toolkit contains seven clear messages designed to be understood at a grade 5-12 level, hosted on G21's website and launched in December 2019.
- There were 190 downloads of the toolkit in this reporting period from a diverse range of organisations.
- Survey of users suggests few people have used the toolkit during the reporting period (2 out of 18 responses to this question), with the majority of respondents sharing the toolkit.

### The Respect Cup

2019 is the eighth year of the Respect Cup, with:

- 125 Year nine students from nine schools across the region who attended.
- Students continuing to report increased knowledge of the effects of stereotyping and gender-based violence and increased confidence to intervene as bystanders.

- 2019 was also the first year for the implementation of the pilot Respect Cup in primary schools (with 43 students from four schools attending).



*Changes in knowledge and extent of learning at the Respect Cup.*

### Safer and Stronger

The Safer and Stronger Communities Project (led locally by Diversitat), is a Victorian State Government family violence pilot project developed to work with CALD communities and family violence prevention specialists in the Geelong region to co-design community specific family violence prevention strategies and programs. Barwon Health participates as a project partner.

- Delivery moved from face-to-face to online with COVID-19.
- Worked with the Karen and Karenni men and women to design a happy family workshop with resources and supporting a video.

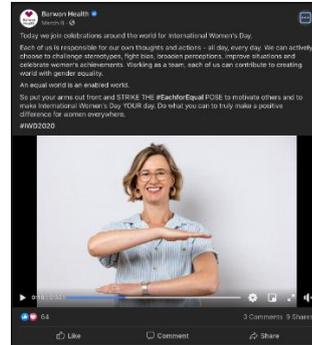
## Social Marketing

Barwon Health delivered a number of social marketing PVAW initiatives:

- Supported and promoted the Barwon Month of Action, International Women’s day and the 16 Days of Activism.
- Used the theme “health care setting staff” to participate in a photo opportunity that

was then shared on social media to promote and gender equity.

- Contributed to the Barwon Health’s Workplace Health eNewsletter (with three PVAW-related articles).



*Screenshot of the Each for Equal social media post shared as part of International Women's Day*

## Case study: A Health Literate Messages Toolkit to Prevent Violence Against Women

The Health Alliance developed the Health Literate Messages Toolkit for the Prevention of Violence Against Women. The Toolkit contains seven simple and consistent messages designed to be understood at a grade 5-12 level (i.e. health literate). The Toolkit was hosted on G21's website and available for download from December 2019, with official launch happening during International Women's Day in March 2020.

### Understanding our effectiveness through good evaluation practice

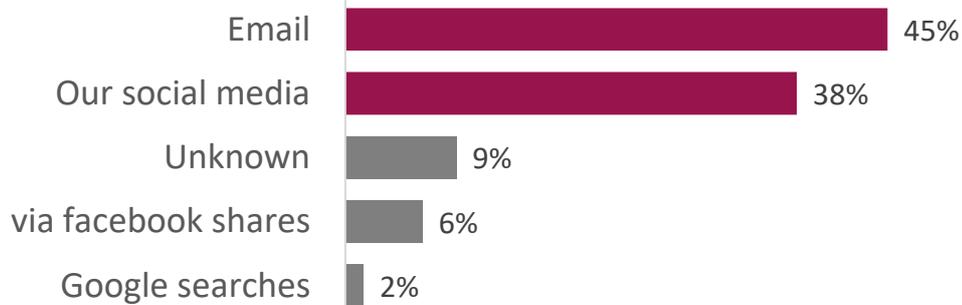
Using an outcomes hierarchy to help design the evaluation, Barwon Health and partners used Google Analytics, a user registration process and an online survey to understand who accessed the Toolkit, what channels were most successful in distributing it and how it was ultimately used.

### How well promoted was the toolkit?

We found that most people came to the toolkit via a link in an email or via social media. We tagged most of our campaign material and our collective promotions, or material promoted by G21, contributed the most to uptake of the toolkit (but we also note that promotions by each organisation in the collective helped to extend its reach).

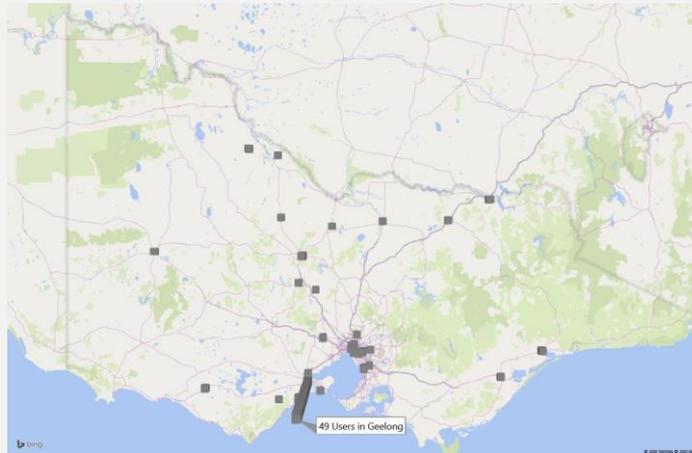


### The majority of people came to the website via a promotion email or from our social media.



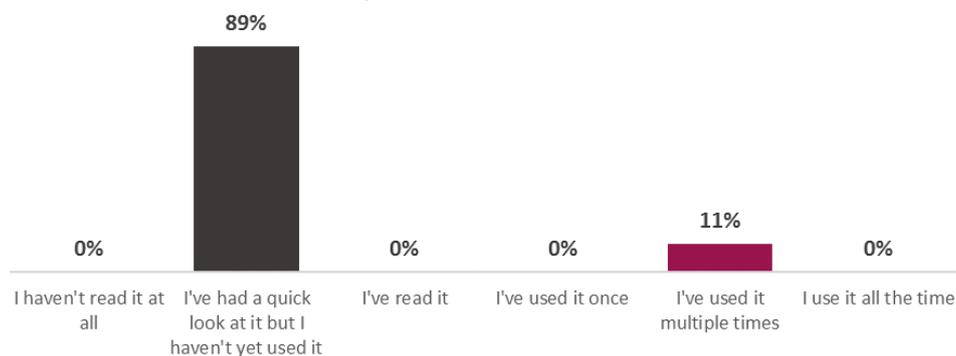
197 people accessed the Toolkit. These people were mostly from Geelong and the Barwon South West Region and tended to be from PVAW Health Alliance members (about 10%); local government (15%), primary care partnerships (12%), other health services (10%) government agencies and departments (8%) or family violence organisations (6%).

## Case study (cont.)



We surveyed 111 users who were happy to be recontacted and had a 21% response rate (23 users). While the majority of people had a quick look at the toolkit and hadn't yet used it, about two-thirds of respondents had share the Toolkit with colleagues.

Most respondents have only had a quick look at the Toolkit, but a small number had used it multiple times (n=18)



Those respondents who hadn't yet used the Toolkit suggested that it was because it wasn't relevant to their day to day job (25%); they didn't have time to refer to it (25%) or nominated some other reasons (50%).

All respondents indicated that the Toolkit was relevant, and all people who had used it found it either "somewhat" or "very" useful.

The Toolkit was relevant to all users and **Very or Extremely** relevant to about half of the respondents (n=23)



## MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION



“Simply encouraging people to exercise more, despite knowing the positive effects it has on mental health, is not enough. To help create the positive, physically active cycle – we need to understand and address the mental health components of the barriers they face”

Healthy Communities Unit Team member

We have included Mental Health Promotion in this report because an increased focus on mental health promotion is a cross-cutting issue in primary prevention. Barwon Health’s Mental Health Promotion Officer sits in the Healthy Communities Unit, but is funded through a separate mechanisms than Integrated Health Promotion. Our Mental Health Promotion Officer is now embedded as an active team member and we are in the early stages of integrating this focus. We continue to look for opportunities to integrate mental health promotion in our activities.

### **Increase community participation in mental health and wellbeing initiatives**

We delivered a small grant program providing \$1000 to five community organisations, reaching over 590 people across eight postcodes in the Barwon region. The five grants included:

- Norlane Community Kitchens Walking Bus initiative (on hold due to COVID-19).
- Drysdale Primary School scale up of Kids Matter Program (including a transition to high school initiative).
- Great Ocean Road Health mindfulness and yoga program during Mental Health Month (see case study).
- Colac Area Health Mental Health First Aid training for Colac Otway sporting clubs.

Headspace and Diversitat mental health literacy initiative for young people from refugee communities (on hold due to COVID-19).

### **Build partnerships to promote young people’s mental health and wellbeing in the region**

We continued to strengthen mental health promotion partnerships over this reporting period. Activities included:

- Continued to foster the regional Mental Health Promotion network,

with 105 members with meetings occurring every three months (meetings put on hold due to COVID19).

- Partnered with Colac Area Health, Colac Otway Shire and local organisations to sponsor an Award at the Colac Youth Awards (200 young people attended).



Figure 1: Georgia Howell, musician and songwriter, winner of the Colac Otway Arts Award

### **Increase community awareness of factors that enhance social and emotional wellbeing**

- Attended the launch of Mental Health Month at Humans in Geelong Expo (audience of 200 and 3000 people at the overall event)
- Mental Health Month calendar of events on Barwon Health’s website

## Case study: Great Ocean Road Health's Mind Your Mental Health – Mental Health Month – Lorne

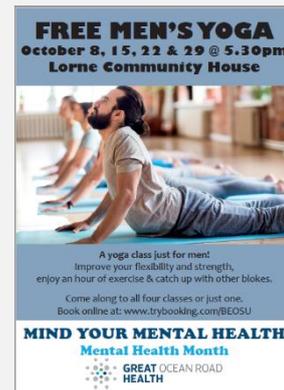
Barwon Health's mental health promotion grants sought proposal from community organisations with the aim of:

- Increasing awareness of the importance of mental wellbeing and the factors that enhance it
- Increasing social connectedness
- Reducing risk factors for mental ill health and
- Increasing resilience

One of the five mental health promotion initiatives funded through this program was Great Ocean Road Health's men's yoga program and a series of mindfulness sessions.

The Lorne community comprises approximately 1,114 permanent residents with a median age of 53 years. With mental health challenges significant for people living rurally, particularly men, Great Ocean Road Health provided a program of activities to build resilience, mental health awareness and provide opportunities for social inclusion during Mental Health Month 2019.

Men were invited to participate in free yoga sessions during the month and both men and women invited to participate in mindfulness sessions to promote mental wellbeing and enhance individual protective factors against mental ill health.



*Program flyer*



*Women receiving notice of the grant at Lorne Community House*

Snapshot surveys were conducted before and after each yoga and mindfulness session as well as a follow up end of month online survey. Forty participants took part in at least one of the activities with many men trying yoga for the first time and participants generally appreciating that the courses were on offer. Participants across both types of activities report improvements in mental wellbeing, mental clarity, calmness and a sense of contentment/happiness.

## CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACTS

This reporting period saw the Healthy Communities Unit (HCU) that is responsible for Barwon Health's integrated health promotion work redeployed to a range of health service functions to support the COVID-19 response.

### Redeployment to critical health service functions

HCU staff were redeployed to support a number of areas of Barwon Health's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was typically for rapid one-off or short duration assignments ranging from a number of days up to multiple weeks. Tasks included:

- Redeployment of Health Promotion Dietitian to the Dietetics unit to assist with food service projects at McKellar House.
- Resourcing a scaling up of Barwon Health's COVID-19 screening capabilities.
- Staffing shifts to screen temperatures of visitors at Barwon Health's McKellar Centre over multiple days and weekends.

### Establishing and running Barwon Health's COVID-19 monitoring call centre

HCU staff were instrumental in establishing Barwon Health's COVID-19 monitoring call centre. The call centre was designed to support compliance with DHHS isolation requirements, screen for medical deterioration and ensure clients have everything they need to stay safely at home.

Initial deployment occurred in March 2020 with a small number of clients monitored until April 18. Following the commencement of the second wave of COVID-19 staff remobilised to staff the call centre on a 7 day/week basis

during this reporting period with a major scale up of activities during this reporting period.

Staff remained redeployed in this call centre until the end of the second wave.

### Redeployment to support organisational COVID-19 communications

The HCU supported organisational capacity in community messaging. This work involved:

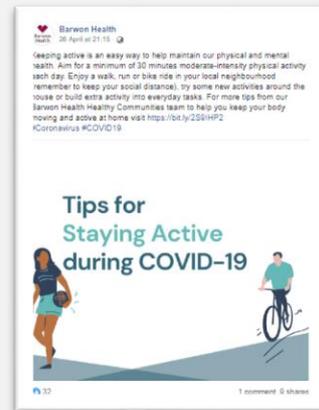
- The development of seven, one page fact sheets and social media posts (the COVID-19 Tip Sheets) and development of two social media posts to support youth mental health (linking to support via Beyond Blue).
- The development of two sets of traffic light system testing cards for a COVID-19 workplace outbreak in regional Victoria to support the isolation of 100+ individuals and contain the COVID-19 cluster resulting in no further spread of the virus within the workplace.
- Developing more accessible communications material (included the development of an Easy English COVID 19 Fact sheet and development of social media posts sharing DHHS's translated material via Barwon Health's social media channels).

## Case study: COVID-19 Tip Sheets

Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the lockdown during the first State of Emergency in March, Barwon Health developed a series of resources to support people to stay healthy during COVID-19. The Tip Sheets were developed whilst staff were redeployed to Barwon Health's COVID call centre.

Seven tip-sheets were developed. The tip sheets were intended to provide simple, easy-to-understand, readable and accessible tips and information on how to remain healthy and well as we adapted to a new way of living during Victoria's first lockdown. The seven tip sheets covered:

- Sleep
- Mental Health
- Staying Active
- Working from home
- Meal Delivery
- Eating Healthier and Water
- Buying Food



Barwon Health's social media post for our COVID tip sheet for physical activity

The Tip Sheets were hosted on the external facing Healthy Communities website, internally on Barwon Health's intranet and were also promoted via newsletters and a range of social media channels. An example of the communities engagement with the resources is the Facebook post for the Staying Active Tip Sheet received 32 likes, 1 comment and 9 shares.



Examples of a number of tip sheets

This rapid response to an unprecedented period of lockdown allowed us to provide digestible tips to support people during this lockdown period. Barwon Health have been contacted by external organisations requesting to use these.

## Impact of COVID-19 on our work

The cyber incident in late 2019, plus the redeployment of staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, has affected our ability to implement our Annual Plan as intended. Much of our work plan was implemented prior to restrictions under Victoria's States of Emergency and Disaster, however, the impacts on our plans were significant.

Restrictions on face-to-face engagement and staff redeployment have meant that much of the planned 2019-20 work program has been delayed, modified or put on hold. While we have deferred work in our Annual Plan, the strategic importance of some of these initiatives will need to be revisited in the context of a "COVID-19 Normal" operating environment and changing priorities.

## APPENDIX

- Healthy Communities Unit (2020) *Community Conversations: Incidental Activity*. Infographic by the Healthy Communities Unit, Barwon Health

# Community Conversation Summary report

We wanted to know what our community said about increasing Physical Activity in people over 55 years in the Barwon region.

## What we did.

In March 2020, consultation sessions were held with 27 representatives from a range of community services and organisations in Geelong and Colac.



## Turning ideas into action.

We used our discussions to form ideas for action!

## What we heard.

During our conversations we identified a range of factors which could influence the amount of physical activity in people over 55 years. The major themes which we identified are outlined below.



Confidence, motivation and knowledge



Family, partners and owning a pet



Accessibility, physical abilities and inclusion



Mental health and social support



Infrastructure, safety and transport



Service cost, design and equipment



### Supporting

people to remain active, and access opportunities for physical activity during periods of 'life transitions'.



### Information

on where local services are that encourage and support physical activity.



### Mentorship

to address lack of confidence or fear, or to build networks to access services.



### Accessibility

including physical, environmental, cost, or awareness. This needs further investigation.

Several possible partnership actions will be proposed to the *G21 Healthy Eating and Active Living Incidental Activity* working group and with local agencies for them to consider what they may be able to implement or enhance.

It is hoped to re-run the conversations next year to check in on how we are all, individuals and agencies, progressing.

## Stronger together.

Our community recognised that there was a role for individuals to take action, but also for community groups, regional health services and government organisations.

Several opportunities emerged for Barwon Health, in partnership with other organisations, to support the community to increase physical activity in people over 55 years.



**So, watch this space!**  
**We're just getting started.**