

HACC & Homelessness in Yarra

Coordinating Services for Better Outcomes

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HACC & Homelessness in Yarra

City of Yarra Aboriginal Partnerships

City of Yarra (CoY) has a coordinating and funding role in fostering Indigenous service coordination and service provision in Yarra. Colin Hunter is CoY's Community Planner – Aboriginal Partnerships. His roles range from policy development to cooking a stew for 40 people. He has strong grassroots networks and engagement with the local Indigenous community of which he is a member and a Wurundjeri Elder.

Colin is coordinating CoY's new *Aboriginal Partnerships Plan 2010-2014* which is currently being developed. The draft plan aims to strengthen partnerships between Council, the Aboriginal community, other levels of government and the local non-Indigenous community. Colin also delivers in-house induction to new CoY staff providing an overview of local Indigenous history and Council's role in the community.

Colin coordinates two important groups - the CoY Aboriginal Advisory Group (YAAG) and the Yarra Aboriginal Services Network (YASN). The YAAG consists of Wurundjeri Elders, Yarra Councillors, Council officers and senior community members. The YAAG advises Council on issues relating to Yarra's Indigenous community. The YASN meets monthly and has 25 different members including HomeGround, Centrelink, NYCH, the legal service, Centrelink, WISE employment and the Victorian Police. Colin believes that homelessness is the

The Yarra HACC and Homelessness Newsletter will provide:

- * **information about services** in the Yarra area working on homelessness so you get to know what's available for your clients and so you can make more effective referrals;
- * articles on each **specific theme**;
- * articles featuring the work of a **local agency** and a **local worker**;
- * **news and events updates**, including about the Forum on 18 November 2009;
- * **policy updates** on homelessness and related topics; and
- * **City of Yarra** updates.

number 1 issue facing the Indigenous community in Yarra. It is also a huge issue for the broader



community. Detox and Local Law 8 are also huge issues for the local Indigenous community. Detox needs to be accessible when people are ready otherwise they lose motivation and the opportunity is lost. Colin believes that there have been interesting ramifications of Local Law 8 including reduced drinking and improved

health outcomes. However it has put a lot of pressure on people's tenure with groups gathering to drink at home. This has led to more overcrowding and violence in OOH properties which then puts tenancies at further risk. Diversionary activities are necessary to give people alternatives to drinking. This where services such as MAYSAR are critical.

MAYSAR (with funding from CoY) is a community cultural centre (184-186 Gertrude Street), that provides meals and runs programs such as Kooris in the Kitchen, a health and nutrition cooking course. MAYSAR plans to run a range of activities from arts, crafts and music, to personal fitness training. MAYSAR takes an holistic approach to improving the health and wellbeing of the Aboriginal community – physical, spiritual, emotional, cultural.

Colin believes that the main challenges for service coordination are the high level of complex needs in the Indigenous community and knowing what services are available. Getting everyone on the same page, knowing what each service does is critical. Some people have lots of workers but it is not coordinated and it is not working. We have to take services to people who need them not the other way around. Service coordination can be improved through networks such the YASN; through joint strategic planning; joint activities and engagement with each other. Most of the mainstream services in Yarra are very culturally aware and provide appropriate responses to Indigenous clients when they use them. If you would like more information, please contact Colin Hunter on 9205 5014 or Colin.Hunter@yarracity.vic.gov.au. More information is also available on Council's website www.yarracity.vic.gov.au.

The Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS)

By Reg Thorpe, Policy Officer, and
Denise McGuinness, Manager Community Programs.



VAHS, 186 Nicholson St Fitzroy

The Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS) was established in 1972 to address the specific medical needs of Victorian indigenous communities. The organisation has expanded to provide a comprehensive range of medical, dental and social services for our community. As well as providing a variety of medical services, VAHS is committed to supporting the well being of the community through contributions to community events and activities. VAHS is also committed to assisting research into the ongoing needs of the community.

The VAHS consists of the following Units:

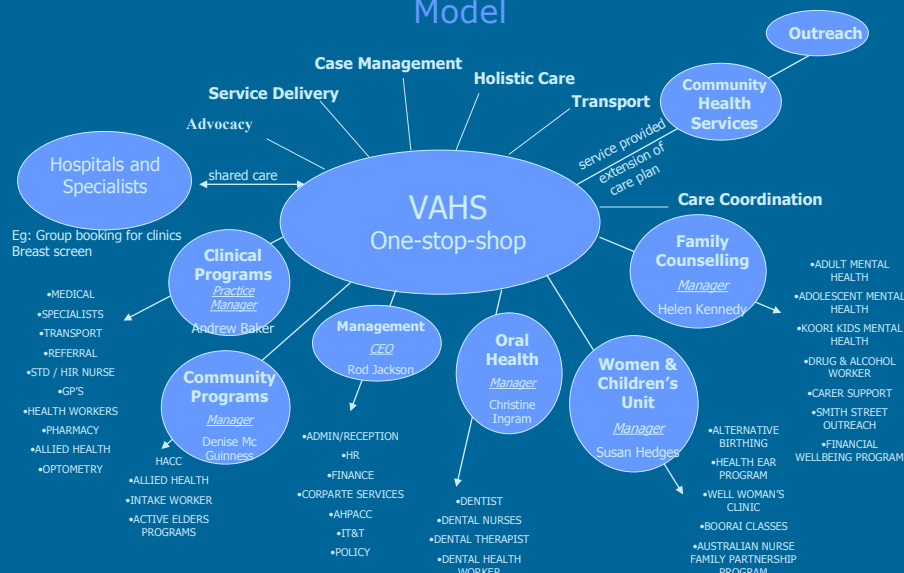
- Clinical Programs – Medical, Dental, Podiatry, Physiotherapy, Dietary/nutritionist, Pharmacy services;
- Community Programs – providing health support to Elders in the home, Home and Community Care, including palliative and chronic disease management in conjunction with clinical programs; Family Violence, Men’s Health,
- Family Counselling Programs – adult, adolescent, Koori Kids, Court support, and Family support in

relation to psychiatric emotional care and counselling, financial and problem gambling counselling, family violence and healing service,

- Administration – policy development, liaison and establishment of partnerships, interface between Government and other mainstream partners, executive functions, reporting, education and training, capacity building and work force development;
- Women’s and Children’s Programs – Maternal and Child Health, Maternity and Enhancement services, Paediatric and Gynaecology services, In Home Support and visiting, Audiology, Nurse Family Partnership, and Family Violence.

Please note that these services are integrated across the whole of VAHS including its off-site locations in Thornbury, Northcote, and Collingwood where Family Counselling Services and the Nurse Family Partnership programs respectively are located. The VAHS has an extensive referral network to ensure quality service delivery for ATSI Victorians in Aboriginal and mainstream health care and other social services. Linkages and partnerships with other organisations are formalised, through Memorandums of Understanding and through involvement in their service and strategic planning and strong referral pathways.

Victorian Aboriginal Health Service One-Stop-Shop Care Coordination and Management Model



HACC & Homelessness in Yarra

Meet... Bo Barney Drug and Alcohol Outreach Worker North Yarra Community Health

What is your current role?

I am the Drug and Alcohol Outreach Worker at North Yarra Community Health (NYCH). Half of my position is funded by the Department of Health and half is funded by the City of Yarra. I work as part of the Priority Access Team at NYCH which focuses on improving the health of disenfranchised groups. I have been in this role for nearly one year and have had approximately 400 client contacts.

My role includes referrals, counselling, assessment, transport to appointments, funerals and the Billabong program.

How did you get into this role?

I have had personal experience of homelessness and alcohol dependency. I understand these issues because I have been there – I have been sober for 31 years. I know the clients well – I have known some of the families for a long time. I worked in a range of roles before this including childcare, sobering centres and as a youth worker.

What are the highlights of your work?

The good things about this job are making it easier for someone to get access to the services they need. There are good services available now. I like seeing the progress and positive change in people's lives – if they take up detox and rehab and they can see the benefits. Keeping people out of jail and seeing people feel better about themselves are also positives. Early diagnosis of major illnesses eg. cancer and diabetes so people can treatment early is bonus.

What are the lowlights

Domestic violence, people's hopelessness inside, overdoses, the violence. There is a vicious cycle of people using their dependency to justify self-harm and harm to others. I want people to want to help themselves and not to give up.



What does service coordination mean to you?

Service coordination means everything. We need to work with the community and people who understand the community. Bureaucrats don't come onto the street or to Billabong and they don't understand the needs. We need to complement each others' services and have more support workers outreaching to indigenous gathering

places. We need a more connected support network so people don't have to do so much "hard yakka" to get the help they need. An overarching network for all outreach workers in the area would be useful.

How can we solve homelessness in Yarra?

We need a connection to the past, connecting old and young and learning from the past. We need an indigenous parkland where people can have traditional gatherings, eg. near Dights Falls. This would give the community more of a spiritual connections to the land and space for healthy activities such as cooking and corroboree. It would be a "magnanimous gesture" by government. We also need purpose built housing for different family types including male only, female only, couples and families housing. This includes permanent housing and halfway houses. Food and food storage is another important issue.

Yarra HACC & Homelessness Forum 2009

Report is available at

<http://www.homeground.org.au/page-8-100-2ndYarraHACCandHomelessnessForum.htm>

Yarra HACC & Homelessness

Newsletter Evaluation

By Resolve Community Consulting

Resolve Community Consulting recently completed an evaluation of the Yarra HACC and Homelessness Newsletter. The evaluation was based on the feedback received through the recent online evaluation survey, which was completed by 21 newsletter readers. Thanks to everyone who took the time to complete the survey. It has provided valuable insights into the achievements of the newsletter against the original objectives. The newsletter objectives were to:

1. Increase sharing of service information, including service directory information (including service contact details, eligibility requirements, catchments);
2. Increase shared knowledge amongst Yarra HACC and homelessness and related services, focusing on shared practice knowledge;
3. Improve the responsiveness of the Yarra service system to the often complex needs of homeless clients;
4. Produce regular, accessible and up-to-date newsletters on a bi-monthly (once every two months) basis; and
5. Support and promote the 2009 Forum and other collaborative activities resulting from the Forum.

Five newsletter editions have been produced:

October 2009 – Service Coordination

December 2009 – Mental Health

February 2010 – Drug and Alcohol

April 2010 – Disability

June 2010 – Indigenous Service Coordination

The Evaluation found that (based on 21 surveys) :

- The most read editions were Edition 3 Drug and Alcohol and Edition 2 Mental Health;
- The most commonly read sections of the newsletter were policy updates, feature agency and the services directory;

- 90% indicated that reading the newsletter had widened their awareness of the services available to their client group while 70% had discovered services they were not previously aware of.
- Respondents indicated that reading the newsletter had created awareness of upcoming events (80%) and of policy developments (60%).
- 20% of respondents indicated that they had made referrals to new services or to services which they had not been aware their clients were eligible for and 15% responded that the newsletter information had assisted them in making referrals more quickly and/or confidently.

The Evaluation Report concluded that the Newsletter had met its objectives. Readers developed a wider awareness of service availability to homeless persons in Yarra and some made referrals more quickly and/or confidently and referred to new services and to services which they hadn't been aware their clients were eligible for.

The newsletter has been delivered in an accessible and timely way and has delivered readers information of value, particularly in the areas of policy developments, service contact details and the work of different agencies. The Newsletter has supported the 2009 Forum by echoing much of the successful work of the Forum. The Evaluation also examines the longer term outcomes of the 2009 Yarra HACC and Homelessness Forum.

The full report is available at

www.homeground.org.au . Resolve would like to thank everyone that contributed to the newsletter.

NEWS

Third Yarra HACC and Homelessness Forum

The third Yarra HACC and Homelessness Forum will be held on **Thursday 18 November 2010** at the Fitzroy Town Hall. Mark it your diaries now!

Newsletter Archives

The HACC and Homelessness Newsletter archives and evaluation report are now available on the HomeGround website www.homeground.org.au

National Homelessness Persons Week— August 2 - 8, 2010

For more info see www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au

Homeless Not Voteless

Encourage clients to enrol to vote. For more info see www.chp.org.au



Yarra City Council News

Have your say on safety!

Council's Safer Yarra Plan is due for development, so have your say on safety in Yarra and help ensure the new plan reflects the community's priorities. An example of a topic for discussion is "Living in Yarra and sense of safety - where and when do you feel safe or unsafe?" To have your say, read other comments and get involved, visit <http://bangthetable.com/saferyarra>

Primary Care Partnerships Changes

From 1 July 2010 the North Central Metro PCP will no longer be a functioning entity. New Primary Care Partnerships will be operating across the municipalities previously covered by the NCMPCP. New PCPs include:

Melbourne, Moonee Valley, Moreland and Yarra PCP: contact Christine Greenhatch, 83251855, email CGreenhatch@mvcc.vic.gov.au

North East PCP: contact Julie Watson, 94502614, email: julie.watson@bchs.org.au for municipalities of Darebin, Banyule and Nillumbik.

Hume Whittlesea PCP: contact Bruce Watson, 9300 3082, email BruceW@mchs.org.au.



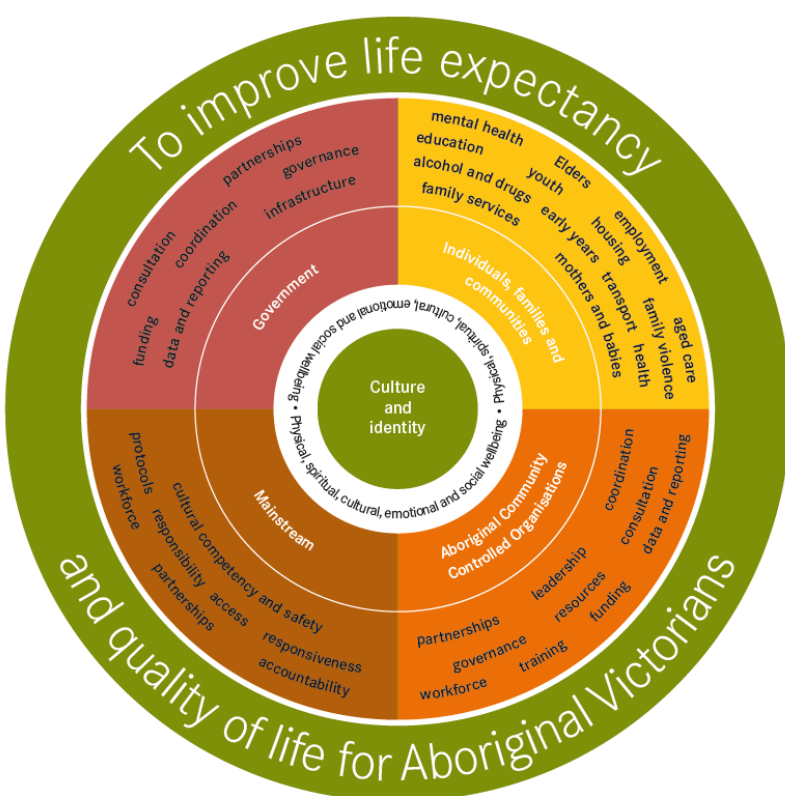
Department of Human Services, Aboriginal Services Plan January 2008 – December 2010

The Victorian Government's vision for the future of Aboriginal affairs is outlined in the *Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework*. The overarching goal of the framework is 'to improve life expectancy and quality of life for Indigenous Victorians'. Effort over the short to medium term (5–15 year timeframe) is guided by the imperative to deliver measurable improvements in priority areas in partnership with Aboriginal communities.

The *Aboriginal Services Plan 2008-2010* identifies how DHS can support the framework and strive to improve the physical, spiritual, cultural, emotional and social wellbeing of Aboriginal Victorians. The 2008-2010 plan is targeted, with specific priority areas highlighted to improve outcomes and help bridge the life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and improve quality of life for Aboriginal people in Victoria. The plan supports policy and program development across the range of DHS' responsibilities in

health, mental health, drug and alcohol, aged care, disability, housing and children's, youth and family services.

The overarching goal of the Plan is represented on the outside of the circle (see diagram below), highlighting a desire to end a situation in which Aboriginal people die on average 17 years younger than other Victorians, and experience a greater concentration of hardship and trauma over the course of their lives. The next layer of the circle highlights some of the areas of social or economic disadvantage that affect Aboriginal people in relation to employment, housing, poverty, education and health. Also highlighted is the activity that needs to occur across government, mainstream and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to create a positive difference. For the full plan see www.dhs.vic.gov.au/pdpd/koori/



Yarra Service Directory

ALERT - Assessment Liaison & Early Referral Team

St Vincent's Hospital, Ph. 92882211
Pager 204. Sites at St Vincent's Hospital,
North Richmond Community Health Centre,
North Yarra Community Health

ARBIAS - Alcohol Related Brain Injury Australian Services

27 Hope Street, Brunswick, Ph. 8388 1222
www.arbias.org.au

CHP - Council to Homeless Persons

2 Stanley Street, Collingwood, Ph.9419 8699,
Homelessness Advocacy Service,
Free Call: 1800 066 256 www.chp.org.au

Clarendon Community Mental Health Service

52 Albert Street, East Melbourne,
Ph. 9417 5696
St Vincents Mental Health Triage (24/7)
Ph. 1300 558 862

Good Shepherd Youth and Family Services

117 Johnston Street, Collingwood
Ph: 03 9419 5477 www.goodshepvic.org.au

HomeGround

68 Oxford Street, Collingwood
Ph. 9417-2500 Freecall: 1800 048 325
www.homeground.org.au

Jesuit Social Services - Connexions

1 Langridge Street, Collingwood
Ph. 9415 8700 www.jss.org.au
**NCMPCP - North Central Metro Primary
Care Partnership**, Ph. 9480 3044
www.ncmpcp.org.au

North West Aged Care Assessment Service (ACAS)

Poplar Road, Parkville, Ph. 8387 2129

NYCH - North Yarra Community Health, Allied Health Outreach Team

Sites: 75 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy
365 Hoddle Street, Collingwood
622 Lygon Street, North Carlton
Next Door 350 Smith Street, Collingwood
Ph. 9411 3555
www.nych.org.au

RDNS HPP Royal District Nursing Service Homeless Persons Program

113 Rosslyn Street, West Melbourne,
HPP Main Office, Ph. 83270700
at NYCH, Ph. 9411 3500 www.rdns.com.au

Salvation Army Crossroads Youth & Family Services, Youth Housing & Support

12 Tranmere Street, North Fitzroy,
41 Mater Street, Collingwood, Ph. 9489 1122

Sister Francesca Healy Cottage (The Cottage)

80 Fitzroy Street, Fitzroy, Ph. 9288 2413

Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre

251 High Street, Preston, Ph. 94960200,
www.spectrumvic.org.au

Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre

54-62 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy, Ph. 8413 8413
24/7 counselling & information
Direct Line: 1800 888 236
24/7 clinical advisory service,
DACAS: 1800 812 804
www.turningpoint.org.au

VAHS - Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, HACC and Allied Health Services

186 Nicholson Street, Fitzroy, Ph. 9419 3000,
**Smith Street Indigenous Outreach Support
Program** Ph. 0413 045 532 www.vahs.org.au

Yarra City Council, Aged and Disability Services Branch (HACC)

Collingwood Town Hall, Ph. 9205 5555
www.yarracity.vic.gov.au

Yarra Community Housing

297 Napier Street, Fitzroy, Ph. 9419 0009
www.ych.org.au

Yarra Housing and Homelessness Network

Ph. 9205 5094

Yarra Service, Personal Helpers and Mentors Program (PHaMs)

6-8 Otter Street, Collingwood, Ph. 9417 0605

YSAS - Youth Substance Abuse Service

Level 1, 131 Johnston Street, Fitzroy
Ph. 9415 8881 YSASline: 1800 014 446
(24 hour toll free service) www.ysas.org.au

*If you would like your service details to be included in future newsletters
or if you would like to update your service information:
Please email Ruth at resolvecc@optusnet.com.au*