

Adapting the Clunes Model Across the Hepburn Shire

As part of the Living and Ageing Well in Hepburn project, Central Highlands Rural Health (CHRH) committed to seeding healthy ageing hubs across the Hepburn Shire using the model developed up for the Clunes hub.

This project is about enhancing people's lives by reducing the risk of isolation which we know can lead to poor health outcomes and impact quality of life. Community consultation feedback was consistent. Knowing what groups and activities are available in the community, and how to access them, was identified as lacking and desired for people wishing to connect within the local community. People stated they wanted information in print as well as online. We wanted to make sure that people have access to information and opportunities to connect with their community, because we know that those who are active in their community can feel more purpose in life which has many positive health benefits.

Working closely with local neighbourhood houses, the healthy ageing hub project builds on existing community initiatives and local groups to centralise accurate information on programs and groups available to the community. We rolled out four key initiatives to help seed hubs in Trentham, Creswick and Daylesford based on our experience working within the Clunes project. These include:

1. Local printed What's On guides
2. Localised service directories via online Kiosks
3. Notice boards
4. Healthy Conversations sessions

What's On guides

In an effort to foster engagement with participants in an older demographic where social media communications cannot be relied on, traditional 'village well' communications were built into the Clunes model and these were extended via Central Highlands Rural Health to the three seed hubs of Trentham, Creswick and Daylesford. A key plank of this is the creation of printed, pocket-sized 'What's On' guides. These fold-out brochures are printed seasonally and contain a detailed list of groups and services available to those in the community, with information on how to get involved. The guides are distributed in local cafes and shops as well as through the neighbourhood house and health service networks.

Notice boards

Further strengthening the 'village well' communications concept, notice boards were erected outside every neighbourhood house in all four towns. Importantly, the notice boards each share the same branding to give the healthy ageing hub project a physically definable presence across the shire. Posters promoting the What's On guides and carrying QR code links to the neighbourhood house are displayed on the boards. Posters placed on the boards are also placed on the windows of various local businesses.

'Kiosks'

'Kiosks' were placed in the neighbourhood house of each of the four towns. These easy-to-use iPads on stands provide access to online information about services, groups and activities through the directory Ask Izzy, along with other services and local websites. Volunteer assistance is available for anyone having difficulties accessing information or activities. Information and resources have been developed to ensure volunteers assisting participants to access the information are supported and equipped to fill their roles competently.





Healthy Conversations

A program of information sessions called 'Healthy Conversations' are being delivered by Central Highlands Rural Health clinicians and external service providers and are being conducted in each neighbourhood house. These sessions offer people the opportunity to engage with professionals without needing to register with a service provider.

This collaboration has strengthened community resources and community feedback suggests it has made neighbourhood houses and the health service more visible and approachable. Furthermore, through the collaboration of these services and the information sessions, community health and wellbeing literacy is improving.

It's been fantastic to work with the neighbourhood houses across the region to bring this program to life. We strongly believe that for projects like this to be successful and to get the community on board, it has to be done with the community and in partnership with existing community groups and services like the neighbourhood houses.

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