



NEWSLETTER

Community Health

December 2024



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone from our team!

We are almost at the end of another year! Here at Community Health, we have had some exciting new developments, particularly with the commencement of our Nurse Practitioner Clinic, enabling a much-needed expansion of our Sexual & Reproductive health services.

The Health Promotion team have been very busy with a range of interventions to support healthy eating, active living and gender equity within our community.

We have a new nurse in the Refugee Health role and have added some group education sessions to the Breastfeeding Support Service. Our Diabetes Educator team has continued to provide a collaborative service including an Endocrinology service and support for those with Gestational Diabetes. Our Dietetics and Cancer Support teams have also seen service growth to meet community demand.

We wish you all a relaxing and safe festive season and look forward to supporting your health needs in 2025.

In this newsletter:

Health Promotion Plans & Actions

Diabetes Education updates

Sexual & Reproductive Health News

Social Support Groups

Staff Profile Highlights

Health Tips for the New Year

Community Health
Our service will be closed from
Tuesday 24 Dec at 3pm until
Thursday 2 Jan at 8.30am

Community Health team



16 Days of Activism Against Gender based Violence

Lead by Swan Hill Rotary Club and community partners the **Walk Against Family Violence** was supported by over 130 participants on the 25 November, the first day of the 16 Days campaign, despite a wet and raining day. Presentations that followed the walk held in the Town Hall included from:

- Orange Door who indicated that they had supported 3942 victim survivors and children in the past year, which is 2152 more than the previous year.
- Victoria Police stating the rise in family violence incident reports, particularly for first time reports and a steadying of repeat offences

The purpose of the walk was to raise awareness of our high rates of family violence and create hope of a future where everyone feels safe and respected. To view the walk and key messages see here:

<https://media.swanhill.vic.gov.au/index.php/s/2raWrtWqWWM4eYx>



Swan Hill Storywalk

On Wednesday 27 November the Swan Hill Gender Equity Network held an activity at the Swan Hill Regional Library called a storywalk, the walk was actually not possible due to the weather.

Over 70 people attended including 42 children and 34 adults. Tara from our Health Promotion team started the session by giving a quick brief on how the storywalk came about through the collaborative efforts from the network and the importance of breaking ridge gender stereotypes and promoting equity. This was followed by fun warm up exercises, a reading of 'I want to be a superhero' by Kristy from the library and 'Bold Australian Girl' read by Marina from Vic Police-Family Violence unit. We had great feedback and conversations around the careers 'you could be anything' activity the children participated in afterwards while eating fruit cups.

For more information on our work on gender equity go to our Health Promotion page on the SHDH website. <https://www.shdh.org.au/our-services/health-promotion/>

Smiles 4 Miles - Shine Bright Woorinen South Kindergarten

Our Service is part of the “Smiles 4 Miles Program”. Our journey with the Smiles 4 Miles began almost 20 years ago. The program promotes the ideas of Drink Well, Eat Well and Clean Well. The program has been reviewed several times since its beginning to align with the introduction of two significant frameworks. In 2009 the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development framework (VEYLDF) was introduced and in 2012 we saw the introduction of the National Quality Standards (NQS) as part of the National Quality Framework (NQF) which serves as a benchmark for assessing and improving the quality of education and care provided to young children.

To align the program with these frameworks was such a great initiative as educators could then add their Service’s involvement [children, families and educators] in the Smiles 4 Miles program directly into their QIPs (Quality Improvement Plans) as evidence of meeting various elements/standards.

More recently the Smiles 4 Miles program was reviewed making it more gender neutral.

The key messages of Drink Well, Eat Well and Clean Well have provided and still provide educators with a strong platform to promote good dental health and hygiene, which is such an important thing for children to learn and families to become proactive about.

The messages are simple and clear making it straight forward for children to remember. Learning experiences and family engagement fit easily into the messages too. Some favourite Learning Experiences are growing our own vegetables and making soup.

Support from SHDH Health Promotion is provided with visits, newsletters, PD, refresher sessions and links to the program which has a wealth of ideas advocating healthy lifestyles and healthy eating.

Bronte Rayner from Health Promotion at SHDH coordinates the ‘Smiles 4 Miles’ program in Swan Hill and ‘The Healthy Together Achievement Program’, which we are a part of too. Both advocate healthy lifestyles and healthy eating. Bronte distributes family newsletters and resources and visits all Swan Hill and District Kindergartens with a ‘Road Show’ - ‘Eat a Rainbow’. Bronte also coordinated the ‘Dental Screenings’.

The Smiles 4 Miles program is so worthwhile. It has enriched our program and the children’s learning. Our service has thoroughly enjoyed being involved with the program. Congratulations to everyone associated with Smilies 4 Miles on a successful 20 years.

*Alison Boyd-Law
Educational Leader and Nominated Supervisor
Shine Bright Woorinen South Kindergarten*

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Early Years Online Hub

Are you looking for school holiday activities for young children? Remember to check out the **early years online hub**, promoting local events, activities, information and services for families of young children in our local area. <https://www.earlyyearsonlinehub.org.au/>

We would love to hear your feedback and suggestions for the online hub, especially if you speak a language other than English or know someone who does?

Go to the feedback page on the website and complete the survey here:

<https://forms.earlyyearsonlinehub.org.au/early-years-feedback>

Diabetes - Urgent Care made easy



Diabetes Education

We are currently experiencing a high level of service demand and wish to advise of the following urgent care options:

Your GP - if your GP is not available, or you are unsure if you need to visit ED, try one of these alternative service providers

NURSE-ON-CALL

This free service puts you directly in touch with a registered nurse for caring, professional health advice 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Call **1300 60 60 24** or visit website for more information.

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/nurse-on-call>

VVED (Victorian Virtual Emergency Department)

This service provides

- Access to urgent diabetes care from anywhere in Victoria.
- Cost-free clinical assessment and medical advice through any device.
- 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Interpreter services if required are available at no cost to you.

To access go to:

<https://www.vved.org.au/> or scan the QR code



Doctors On Demand

This Australian Telehealth Service provides

- Online GP appointments, medical certificates and prescriptions.
- 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Fees apply

To access go to:

<https://www.doctorsondemand.com.au>

If more urgent/unwell attend the Swan Hill District Health Emergency Department or call **000**.



Intereach Family Day

On the 14th of November the Health Promotion team partnered with Swan Hill Regional Library and Intereach Family Day Care to provide Intereach Family Day Care providers and children in their care a celebration day focused on their participation in Dental Health Services Victoria achieving 20 years of the Smiles 4 Miles program! The children had a visit from the *tooth fairy*, a *tomato*, *banana* and *pea* as well as *Chomper* and *Digby Dog* brush puppets. The day promoted the messages of the program which are **Clean Well, Eat Well** and **Drink Well**. Children got to brush Chomper and Digby's teeth, decorate toothbrushes, make an elephant themed straw and make and eat some funny rice cake vegetable faces. Thanks to everyone involved in making this event such a success!





Sexual & Reproductive Health

Pregnancy termination options over the Christmas period.

As Community Health is closed from 3pm Christmas eve until Thursday January 2nd, please contact **1800 My Options** for service advice. They have information on their website, including live chat and convert all information to other languages, see here: <https://www.1800myoptions.org.au/>
Phone: 1800 696 784

Here at Community Health, we have a Nurse Practitioner led Sexual Health Clinic offering a comprehensive sexual health screening and assessment service, including treatment and referral as required. This includes sexually transmitted infections and blood borne virus testing. This is a free service, offered to people of all genders. To learn more about this service, go to <https://www.shdh.org.au/our-services/community-health/>

Food Hub

The Food For All Food Hub has been very busy of late. For many the added pressure of Christmas - providing gifts or creating a special meal - can feel overwhelming. To support local families the Food Hub will be providing Christmas Day hampers to those in need. We have been able to do this with some very generous donations including an anonymous donor who specifically requested their donation go towards Christmas products. We have been overwhelmed with their generosity and thank them enormously for their support.



With the year ending we can reflect on the achievements of the Food Hub in 2024. The Food Hub was accessed over 485 times with in excess of 4200 people being supported. We now have 18 member agencies on board and a small team of volunteers to assist our work. There are now 4 permanent donation points in Swan Hill including Swan Hill Community Health, Swan Hill Neighbourhood House, The Dandy Lion Studio and Woolworths which adds greatly to the food we can provide.

An Anti-Poverty Week Food Drive was conducted with local businesses in which we received an amazing amount of food and hygiene products. We have also been extremely fortunate to receive cash donations and food products from various community groups and local schools. Students within schools have conducted initiatives to support the Food Hub and we love having young people involved in this charitable work too.

It has also been very exciting to welcome Arahura Farms as a partner providing fresh produce to the Food Hub. It's so important to have fresh and nutritious food to provide to our community, and even better when it is grown locally.

On behalf of Food For All Swan Hill we would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the success of the Food Hub in 2024. We will continue to strive to grow and develop the Hub in 2025, ensuring the needs of our community are met.

Social Support Groups

The Social Support Groups provided by Swan Hill District Health provide community members with recreational and social support through a variety of activities to suit individual interest and hobbies. These include celebrating fun activities, special theme days, music and outings, with encourage social interaction and foster friendships.

For more information phone Jamie and the Social Support team, on **03 5033 9359**

- **Active Ageing - Mondays 9am or 10am**, Scout Hall, Ken Harrison Reserve
Active Ageing runs two exercise classes for seniors wishing to improve or maintain their physical wellbeing in a supportive and fun environment. Bookings essential to determine the most appropriate group. Cost \$5 for morning tea.



- **Shedders - Mondays 9am - 1pm**, Neighbourhood House Men's Shed
The Men's Shed is a space for men to work on new or restorative woodwork and painting projects with supervision, promoting personal wellbeing and helping maintain independence at home. Cost \$15 for lunch.

- **Arties - Tuesdays 9.15am -1pm**, Swan Hill Senior Citizens Hall
A creative painting group for those with an interest in expressing themselves and working on their personal painting skill. No experience necessary, only a willingness to engage and learn a new skill. Cost \$5 for morning tea.



- **Forget Me Nots -Tuesdays 9.30am -1pm**, Swan Hill Neighbourhood House
A group with a focus on dementia support and mental health. Activities assist members to engage with others, reminisce and support conversations and friendships. Cost \$15 for lunch

- **Crafties - Wednesdays 9am - 1pm**, Swan Hill Neighbourhood House
Crafties is for those with an interest in craft and conversation. Group craft projects or solo activities to occupy your hands, while enjoying conversation and laughter. Cost \$15 for lunch.

- **Carte Italiane/Bingo Italiano - alternate Wednesdays 1.30 - 4pm**, Swan Hill Neighbourhood House.
A group for Italian-speaking seniors who are interested in engaging with others, playing games and having fun. There is an emphasis on social support and fun. These groups alternate fortnightly. Cost \$5 for afternoon tea.

- **Afghan Men's - Wednesdays 4-7pm**, Swan Hill Uniting Church
This group engages local Afghan men in the Swan Hill area to meet and converse with others. Members play games particularly carrom and share a light meal. Cost Free.



- **Opals - Thursdays 10am- 2pm**, Swan Hill Neighbourhood House
A group for those with an interest in socialising, joining in with activities and games and stimulating conversation. Theme days are also held regularly. Cost \$15 for lunch.

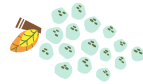
- **Garden Club - Fridays 9.30 - 11.30am**, Swan Hill Neighbourhood House
Group is aimed at supporting growing a variety of vegetables, herbs and flowers in our community garden, also involves planning for crop rotations and a social chat and cuppa. Cost \$5 for morning tea.

- **Games Group - Fridays 12.30 - 3pm**, Swan Hill Neighbourhood House
Aimed to challenge those interested in board and card games, including conversation. Cost \$5 for afternoon tea.

- **Outings** - we have outings in the community to local events and nearby towns most months. Please phone to enquire about our next outing. Cost varies.



Staff Profile Highlights



Dietetics



Brianna

Brianna is a dietitian who supports people living with cancer in our community to prevent malnutrition and manage symptoms related to their treatment. She also works on our acute ward as a clinical dietitian.



Sam

Sam is a dietitian working on the acute ward and in food services. She works both with inpatients and with food services staff to make sure that the hospital meals we provide are safe and meet patient's nutritional needs.



Renae

Renae is one of our Accredited Practising Dietitians (APD). Throughout her career she has primarily worked as a rural generalist Dietitian and has completed additional study Paediatric Nutrition. Renae's key areas include tube feeding in the home, general community outpatient clinics, Sub-Acute and Haemodialysis; occasionally you may see her on the Acute Ward.



Bianca

Meet Bianca, our newest dietitian! A recent graduate with a Master's in Dietetics from Monash University. Bianca is excited to join the team and support the Swan Hill community.



Community Health



Easy Cucumber Christmas Trees

These little trees are easy to make and fun for kids, who generally like carrots and cucumbers! Try growing these vegetables, they are quick to grow and fun to pick.

1 large carrot, peeled
1 whole cucumber

From the thicker end of the carrot, cut 8 rounds, about 1/2cm thick. Using a mini star shaped cutter, cut a star from each.

Divide the remaining piece of carrot into 8 pieces to form the trunks of your trees.

Using a vegetable peeler, cut long strips from the cucumber, the length long. Starting from the smallest end, carefully fold a strip of cucumber back and forth until you have created a tree shape. Push the folds together and push a cocktail stick through to skewer them from top to bottom. Push the cocktail stick in to one of the carrot pieces, big fold down. Push a carrot star on the other end.

ref: www.eatsamazinig.co.uk



eat fruit & veg move more often smile together

Health tips for the new year!

Has the new year prompted you to consider your fitness?

Check out of **Physical Activity Options**.

Adults:

<https://www.shdh.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/FINAL-PA-Options-Resource-for-Adults-updated-June-2023.pdf>

Primary School aged Children:

<https://www.shdh.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/PA-Options-2023-Primary-School-age-Children.pdf>

Children 0-5 years:

<https://www.shdh.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Physical-Activity-Options-for-Children-0-5-years-2023.pdf>

Healthy eating questions?

- Book an appointment with a Dietitian, our contact details are below.
- Check out our tips and recipes on our blog at <https://eatmovesmile.shdh.org.au/>
- <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/australian-guide-healthy-eating>

Do you feel stressed or exhausted?

Try some mental wellbeing tips such as:

- sleep well
- keep active
- eat well
- establish a good routine
- practise mindfulness

Learn more at:

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/mental-health/wellbeing>

Thank you for reading!

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