

## MHFA Courses

As we are all aware, rural people, farmers, businesses and residents are experiencing a great deal of stress related to the drought. DHS has recognised this and has provided funds to the BLPCP to conduct two Mental Health First Aid training courses for members of the community in the Loddon Shire and the City of Greater Bendigo. Peter Abraham and Judy Keath from Boort District Hospital have agreed to facilitate the course in the Loddon Shire.

The Mental Health First Aid course will be conducted in Boort by Lourene Liebenberg from Deniliquin and will be held on 19 and 20 July 2007.

Mental Health First Aid is the help provided to a person developing a mental health problem or who is experiencing a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate professional treatment is received or until the crisis resolves. Details of the Mental Health First Aid

Course is able to be obtained from <http://www.mhfa.com.au>

The website states "While people often know a lot about common physical health problems, there is widespread ignorance of mental health problems. This ignorance adds to stigmatizing attitudes and prevents people from seeking help early and seeking the best sort of help. It also prevents people providing appropriate support to colleagues and family members, simply because they do not know how."

The participants of Mental Health First Aid courses around Australia have included teachers, nurses, support workers, welfare staff, police members, bank staff and members of the general public.

Participants are given a manual and receive a certificate at the completion of the course. The website states that 'those who have completed the course have been very positive about the knowledge and skills

they have acquired."

Jeff Scoble and Brian Baxter from Mclvor Health and Community Services have agreed to facilitate a later course and this will be held in Heathcote, conducted by Lifeline on 1 and 2 September 2007.

We are working to have the Instructors Course conducted in Bendigo later this year. If anyone is interested in undertaking this 5 day course, please express your interest to the BLPCP office so we can identify whether there is enough interest to bring the course to Bendigo. The contact number for the BLPCP is 54344300.

The course emphasizes to the participants that the MHFA course does not qualify them to be a counselor, just as a conventional first aid course does not qualify someone to be a doctor of nurse. Its role is to promote first aid – the initial help that is given before professional help is sought.

27 April 2007

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## Health Promotion Course

With Health Promotion being an important part of health service delivery, this short course is very useful for people working in a range of services. Staff from non health services, such as fitness organisations and welfare services, may also be interested in undertaking this course.

La Trobe University is delivering this course from 16 to

24 May 2007 in Bendigo.

If you, or someone you know:

- Would like an introduction to health promotion theory and practice?
- Would like to acquire skills to increase the success of public health and health promotion planning, practices and strategies?
- Would like the opportunity to network with

people from other services that promote health?

-Would like to explore the potential of integrating health promotion approaches into your work?

Then register your interest ASAP to ensure your place.

### When:

16,17,23

and 24 May 2007

### Where:

La Trobe University Bendigo

### Cost:

\$100

### Registration:

publichealth.bendigo@latrobe.edu.au

## ***Changes in the PCP Executive Committee.***

At the last meeting of the BLPCP Executive Committee held on Friday 30 March 2007, the Committee accepted the resignations of Jennifer Alden from Women's Health Loddon Mallee and Namanita Muss from the Bendigo and District Division of General Practice. Both these women have resigned from their respective organisations. Jennifer is taking up the Senior Policy Officer role at VicHealth. The Chairperson of BLPCP Sue Clarke, on behalf of the members of the PCP, expressed appreciation to Jennifer and Namanita for the support and assistance they have provided to the PCP and wished them both well for the future. The BLPCP will seek to have the new CEO's of Women's Health Loddon Mallee and the Bendigo and District Division of General Practice take up membership of the PCP Executive Committee to increase the governance capability of the the Committee.

## ***Heart Foundation Kellogg Local Government Awards***

Community groups, schools, health and community services organisations and private industry that work with Local Government are strongly encouraged by the Heart Foundation to enter these awards. The application must be made by local government.

Programs that build community connections encourage people to be physically active, be smoke free, and make healthy food choices are all eligible for these awards. The awards are provided to four winners in each state and from these national winners will be chosen.

The categories for entry are: Implementation of Plans and Policies to support heart health; Provision and use of facilities to improve heart health; Programs that improve heart health in priority groups; Programs that promote healthy weight. [www.heartfoundation.com.au/lga](http://www.heartfoundation.com.au/lga)

## ***Public Health Awards.***

It would be great to see many of our PCP members receive an award in the Victorian Public Healthcare Awards. There are 10 categories for these awards.

1. Excellence in care and service delivery
2. Innovation in access to healthcare
3. Innovation in models of care
4. Excellence in safety of care
5. Excellence in continuity of care
6. Excellence in consumer and carer participation
7. Excellence in community engagement
8. Excellence in health promotion and prevention
9. Innovation in information technology
10. Innovation in workforce design.

In addition, there are the Minister's Awards for outstanding staff achievement by an individual and by a team.

And finally there is the ultimate accolade, the Premier's Awards for the most outstanding health services of the year. The categories for the Premier's Awards are:

- Primary health service of the year
- Rural health service of the year
- Regional health service of the year
- Metropolitan health service of the year.

Please note, there are two steps to submitting an application for the Premier's Award. Organisations must first register an intention to enter the relevant Premier's Awards by Friday 18 May 2007 through the website. Secondly, a submission of up to 2500 words is required detailing achievements in the areas of performance, clinical governance, consumer and community participation, workforce, innovation and excellence, partnerships and collaboration, and leadership. This entry must be submitted by the Awards closing date.

**Entries for all categories close on Wednesday 15 June 2007.**

**Health Training Package**

The Department of Human Services has worked with the Community Services and Health Industry Training Board to ensure that enough qualified practitioners are available to health and community services in Victoria. The new Health Training Package is the Vocational and Education Training (VET) framework for nationally recognised training in the health and community services industry. The framework integrates 86 different qualifications and assessment guidelines for VET trained practitioners in occupational groups such as Allied Health Assistants, Division 2 Nurses, Health Support Services (including Administration), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker, Massage Therapists, Aromatherapists etc. BRIT is facilitating

an Information Session for the Community Services and Health Industry Training Board to present to Human Resources Managers and Clinical Educators, in nursing and allied health about the training on offer and the types of roles that trainees are able to fill. Those agencies who recruit and train staff will receive information about this model of recognizing competencies and employer incentives.

The recently endorsed Health Training Package is now an innovative way to ensure the health and community services workforce is appropriately trained, skilled and qualified.

The Department of Human Services has commissioned the Community Services and Health Industry Training Board to deliver this session so that health services are able to utilize this frame-

work in an effective way.

The 9.30am to 12.30 session is aimed at HR Managers and others involved in recruiting and training staff.

The second session from 1pm to 3pm is aimed at workplace assessors and others involved in training and education.

The Health Training Package Framework can be used as the basis for human resource management and learning and development of any healthcare organisation and provides the resources to assist with Workforce Planning, Job design and Recruitment and Retention.

To register contact BRIT Innovation and Development Support Unit by Thursday 3 May 2007 on 5434 1404 or email [idsu@britafe.edu.vic.au](mailto:idsu@britafe.edu.vic.au)

**Youth Substance Abuse Service (YSAS)**

**FREE SEMINAR**

On Monday 30 April 2007 9.15am to 11am, there will be a Seminar at Buda Historic Home, 42 Hunter Street, Castlemaine presented by the YSAS.

The Seminar aims to clarify the differing effects of speed and ice on the central nervous system and suggest some avenues for intervention. The Seminar will also review the development of stimulants as medications from their origins in Chinese medicine to their everyday use as a decongestant of choice in the 1930's, to post war weight loss and antidepressants through to today's controversies regarding their use with children.

This Seminar is open to all sectors and rsvp should be forwarded to Jane Tydd on 5434 5619 or email

[jane.tydd@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:jane.tydd@dhs.vic.gov.au)

**Community Building – Who is interested?**

The Centre for Civil Society is a public policy and social innovation think tank. It is not party political and it encourages participants from all political and social backgrounds in empowering families, communities, small businesses and other organisations and in strengthening civil society. The Centre for Civil Society is the only think tank in Australia with a wide ranging agenda of empowerment of ordinary people. The Centre works with grass-roots communities, aiming to influence elite opinion from below. The Centre uses its own money, and the funds it raises from events and donations from support-

ers. On Tuesday 19 June 2007, from 9am to 5pm, the Centre for Civil Society is holding a National Symposium at the Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre in Melbourne to gather community leaders, activists, researchers, policy makers, and workers in community agencies to listen to speakers who will present on authentic community programs and models of community building strategies which have a stronger emphasis on empowerment, devolution, and self determination.

The Centre for Civil Society is concerned about highly bureaucratized initiatives in community building which have little

conceptual or strategic clarity about what they aim to achieve or what they are doing. It is concerned about the low levels of actual community participation in community building initiatives. This Symposium will be oriented to ongoing work in shaping alternative community building strategies and approaches.

The Centre for Civil Society is also calling for abstracts of papers, presentations and workshops from those who would like to present at the Symposium. For further information contact Vern Hughes, Symposium Convener [vern@civilsociety.org.au](mailto:vern@civilsociety.org.au)

**Introducing our e-referral Project Officer**

Annette Raison has commenced work at BLPCP to implement the e-referral plan with those agencies who have volunteered to participate. Annette and her partner Shaun have stopped off in Bendigo for 6 months as part of their tour around Australia, Annette comes originally from Perth and has previously worked for Silver Chain which provides home based nursing and support services across most of WA. As well as implementing the e-referral plan, Annette will be available to assist any of our member organisations who wish to commence electronic referrals using the connecting care website. Annette can be contacted on the BLPCP telephone number 54344300.

# A New Approach to Family Violence.

Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership  
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Jacinta Allan, the Minister coordinating the new approach to family violence in Victoria has written an article for the 4<sup>th</sup> Family Violence e-bulletin "New Approach".

Jacinta says:

*KPMG have completed the development of the common Risk Assessment and Risk Management framework which will reinforce the main directions of family violence in Victoria: women's and children's safety and men's accountability, consistently applied throughout the family violence service system. The next step is to develop an implementation plan, based on the experience gained through the initial pilot process...*

Members of the BLPCP have identified the need to also focus on prevention of violence against women, which includes sexual assault and family violence. The PCP Community Health Plan includes the objective to "document existing programs and policies within BLPCP agencies regarding preventing violence against women and children. The Bendigo Family Violence Working Group will lead this process and the aim is to ensure that service providers have increased awareness of violence in the community and of services addressing this need.

Another objective in our Community Health Plan is "to support community based agencies, the Shire of Loddon and the City of Greater Bendigo to expand violence prevention programs and policies". This will again be led by the Bendigo Family Violence Working Group and aims to have an interagency strategy which will highlight violence as a priority to be addressed by member agencies and local government.

## Obesity Prevention (5-day course for practitioners)

Deakin University in Geelong is offering places in this comprehensive 5 day course of lectures, activities and workshops based on adult learning principles. The course is designed for managers and practitioners working in physical activity and/or nutrition promotion including physical activity practitioners, nurses, dietitians, GPs, health promotion workers and others interested in the areas of physical activity, nutrition and healthy weight. The course will provide you with:

- A fundamental understanding of the obesity epidemic and its impact
- A framework for understanding determinants
- Approaches for addressing the obesity epidemic
- The evidence base for

obesity prevention.

The presenters are obesity experts from Deakin University:

1. Prof Boyd Swinburn – Professor of Population Health
2. Dr Andrea Sanigorski – Manager Sentinel Site for Obesity Prevention
3. Prof Liz Waters – Chair in Public Health

This course will be held from 9am to 5pm each day of 4 to 8 June 2007. It is limited to 50 places and the cost is \$1200 per person (early bird \$1090 by 1 May)

Enquiries for this course can be directed to:

[anne.simmons@deakin.edu.au](mailto:anne.simmons@deakin.edu.au)

## Partnerships at Work

On Tuesday 24 April 2007, a number of our partners met at Sports Focus to prepare a joint submission from the BLPCP for a Walking Together Grant 2007. Partners came from as far away as Boort and Inglewood, and the Executive Officer of Sports Focus, Shelley Mulqueen, led the group. The aim of the submission was to demonstrate the extent to which the joint project addresses gaps in walking participation within our local communities, and how we will train individuals and build organisational capacity to provide support to walking groups. If we are successful with this submission, we will be required to achieve sustainable outcomes and have processes

in place to support the continuation of project outcomes. The partners agreed that the goal of the "Lets Walk" project was to establish new sustainable walking groups throughout the Loddon Shire and the City of Greater Bendigo, and to provide Walking Leadership Training to build organisational capacity.

The project will target CALD groups, drought affected communities, vision impaired persons and the partners for this joint project include City of Greater Bendigo, Boort District Hospital, Vision Australia, Loddon Neighbourhood House, Inglewood and Districts Health Service and Sports Focus.