

Quality Improvements

MDHSS provides services to the district with a population of 1276 (ABS, 2006) drawn from an area of 750sq hectares. MDHSS provides a total of 45 programs in the following areas: Health Services, Social Services and Community Services. The remoteness and isolation of the Mallacoota community, and its situation near the border of NSW / Victoria, with the nearest town being Orbost (140km) or Eden (80km), influences significantly the type and diversity of programs offered.

MDHSS is committed to quality improvement and maintains appropriate policies and procedures to ensure that its services deliver quality care to clients in all areas of the organisation. MDHSS ensures that audits and compliance are carried out in a timely manner and that policy and procedure manuals are

updated across the organisation, including risk assessment. All MDHSS services are currently accredited.

MDHSS is nationally accredited by the Quality Improvement Council Standards Association (QICSA) as well as accreditation through the Community Aged Carer Packages (CACAP) Program, the National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP) and the Home and Community Care (HACC) program.

MDHSS is a registered Adult Community Education (ACE) provider and recently was assessed and met all mandatory requirements specified in the Guidelines for Assessing the Business Viability of ACE organisations.



Regular Services at MDHSS

Adult Community Further Education	Play Group
Centrelink Agency	Postnatal Education and Support
Community Aged Care Packages	Property Maintenance
Community Nursing	Respite Care
Delivered Meals	Speech Therapy
Diabetes Management	Sexual & Reproductive Health Education
Disability Services	Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)
Domiciliary Midwifery	Support Groups
Emergency Relief Program	Telecentre / Internet Access
Family Counselling	Youth Services
Health Promotion	Visiting Services
Home Care	Aged Care Assessment Service (ACAS)
Life Skills / Mentoring Program	Audiologist
Men's Shed	Breast Screen
Neighbourhood House	Continence Nurse
Occasional Child Care	Drug and Alcohol
Palliative Care	Maternal and Child Health Nurse
Podiatry	Occupational Therapy
Post Acute Care	PapScreen
Physiotherapy	Speech Therapy
Planned Activities Group (PAG)	Thrifty Specs



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 4 - January 2008

Mallacoota Health Centre

The Mallacoota District Health and Support Service provides a diverse range of programs that are designed to meet the needs of individuals and groups within the community of Mallacoota, Gipsy Point, Genoa and district.

Most programs at the Mallacoota Health Centre are available to all members of the community on a fee-for-service basis, but concession fees are available to eligible clients. Programs offered at MDHSS which incur no charge are as follows: Family Counselling, Maternal and Child Health, Flexible Care packages, Supported Accommodation Assistance Program, Neighbourhood House support groups, Youth Services and Centrelink. A fees brochure is available at MDHSS.

Annual General Meeting

Several months have elapsed since the last newsletter from MDHSS, mainly due to the work required in preparing the submission to acquire funds for dental services in Mallacoota. In November 2007, the Annual General Meeting was held with the election of three members to the MDHSS Community Reference Group (CRG). Dr. Michael Drake retired as President of the reference group and will be greatly missed. Michael's contribution to MDHSS has been outstanding; he has provided professional advice and support to the Manager and CRG members, assisting the organisation's growth and development.

A major loss to MDHSS is the resignation of the MDHSS Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Gary Gray (CEO Bairnsdale Regional Health Service). In September 2007, Mr. Gray accepted the position as CEO of the Florry Institute in Melbourne. In his four years as CEO, Gary has provided supervision, support and professional guidance to MDHSS in all its activities, and the success of the programs provided by MDHSS can be attributed to his contribution, either in Mallacoota or at a distance from Bairnsdale Regional Health Service.

Sergeant Stuart Johnson has also resigned from the committee after three years significant contribution; however, as a resident of Mallacoota, Stuart and his family will be very much part of the Mallacoota community.

In November 2007, Mr. Wayne Sullivan was appointed CEO of BRHS and CEO of MDHSS. Mr. Sullivan brings to the position an impressive breadth of experience within the health sector, from his beginnings in nursing through to a number of clinical and management roles in health services:

CEO Maryborough District Health Service
 CEO Kyabram and District Health Service
 CEO McIvor Health and Community Services
 CEO Korotit and District Memorial Hospital.

Mr. Sullivan has a Masters Degree of Business, a Graduate Diploma of Health Sciences (Administration), and a Graduate Diploma of Nursing (Community Health).

Community Reference Group Members 2007-2008:

Mr. Wayne Sullivan (CEO, BRHS)	Dr. Jenny Schlager
Ms. Greta Jessup (Acting President)	Mr. Gordon Symons
Ms. Diana Appleton	Ms. Sue Williamson
Ms. Lynne Casement	Ms. Prue Wootton
Sergeant Andrew Scott	Ms. Celia Wallace (Manager, MDHSS)
Ms. Annette Paisley	

Excerpts from the Annual Report

At the Annual General Meeting of MDHSS, on the 15th November 2007, the Annual Report for 2006 – 2007, including the Financial Statement, was presented to the meeting. The Annual Report contained an overview of the 45 programs that MDHSS provides, and funding sources from 11 different government organisations, both State and Federal, as well as an update on the activities of the past twelve months. The Annual Report is available on the MDHSS website.

The past year for MDHSS has been one of review and consolidation in addressing many of the recommendations of the 2004 – 2009 Strategic Plan. Building and facility development involved the refurbishment of the Neighbourhood House and the painting and repair to major buildings. Staff facilities have been improved with the installation of air-conditioning and computer upgrades.

The population profile of Mallacoota and district shows a majority of people over 50 years of age and a significant proportion of the population over 70 years of age living at home. Consequently, the largest programs provided by MDHSS are the Home and Community Care Program (HACC) and Community Aged Care Packages (CACAP) program. However, it is important to provide programs for younger people in particular, young children and young adults, in order to promote a balanced program for the broader community. MDHSS is attempting to improve services provided for young children and their families.

An evaluation committee has been established with representation from staff and the community to guide and monitor the regular evaluation of programs for quality improvement. Evaluations were undertaken of the following programs: Youth Services, Family Counsellor, and Occasional Child Care Program. The session times for occasional child care services have been extended as a result of feedback received from parents. Speech therapy was identified as an area of need for young children and weekly therapy groups were instigated in the second half of the year. Communication with the community has been enhanced through public and distribution of three newsletters, using the database developed for this purpose.

MDHSS would like to convey to the community appreciation for the strong response to the two surveys. The information provided by community members was a significant factor in the success of the submission. In late October the Mallacoota Health Centre was informed that the submission to establish dental services had been successful.

The dental submission allowed for state of the art dental equipment to be installed and this will be undertaken by a company named Dental Logistics from Melbourne. As part of the research process for the submission dental logistics visited Mallacoota and assessed the site and provided costings. Dental Logistics is a part of Dental Health Services Victoria and they will oversee the project as part of their contract. Public dental services will be provided by Bairnsdale Regional Health Service and MDHSS is presently negotiating with dentists in NSW to provide services for private patients.

An application for a planning permit has been lodged to the East Gippsland Shire Council to refurbish an existing building. Plans have been prepared and it is hoped that building will commence in March 2008 and the service begin to operate soon after.

We look forward to completing the project and providing a first class service to the community.

Opening of the Refurbished Neighbourhood House

MDHSS received funding for the refurbishment of the Neighbourhood House from the Department of Victorian Communities. On Thursday 16th November 2007, MDHSS held the official opening of the refurbished Neighbourhood House in conjunction with the MDHSS AGM. Mr. Walter Aich, Gippsland Regional Director of Adult Community and Further Education, representing the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) spoke to community members and invited guests about the important role the Neighbourhood House plays in the community and congratulated MDHSS on the stylish new building.

The facility provides additional office space for staff and volunteers, improved training area for short courses, disabled access for people of all abilities, and a dedicated area for centrelink services.

A slide show of the project highlighted the building process, which was followed by afternoon tea and a tour of the new facilities. MDHSS would like to thank DPCD (formerly Department for Victorian Communities) Modernising Neighbourhood House Program and ACFE for supporting this project.



Class being conducted in the new building



Temporary telecentre building

Podiatrist

MDHSS has contracted the services of Mr. Malcolm Walker, Podiatrist, for a further twelve months.

Mr. Walker comes to Mallacoota once a month as part of the regular monthly visits of health practitioners, brought here by the Rural Allied Fly-in Service flights from Bairnsdale as part of the MDHSS multi-purpose centre funding. Podiatry services are in high demand and MDHSS presently manages a waiting list of clients wishing to access podiatry services. At times the waiting period can be up to two months.



Presenting a large number of programs for small numbers of people is necessary in a small isolated community and to do this effectively presents a challenge to the organisational resources of MDHSS. Critical to the success and diversity of services offered is the work of a large pool of local residents who volunteer their time on a regular basis, supported by a dedicated team of employees.

During the next twelve months, MDHSS will undergo a three-year review for accreditation from QICSA, as well as Homelessness Assistance Service Industry Standards (HASS) accreditation. Also, forward planning will commence in order to update the MDHSS Strategic Plan. The evaluation committee and staff will undertake assessment of relevant programs to ensure that the review of past achievements and potential expansion is systematically undertaken. The year ahead will be one of hard work with many challenges.

Staff News

MDHSS has appointed a new member of staff, Ms Belinda Phillips, Administration Assistant: Neighbourhood House, and a current member of staff, Ms Yvette Courts, has been appointed as Coordinator of the Planned Activities Group (PAG) program.

MDHSS employs home care workers who hold minimum qualifications of Certificate 111 in Home and Community Care (HACC) to work within the Home and Community Care program, the National Respite for Carers Program, Community Aged Care Packages program, and Disability Services. Seven members of staff have recently completed the Home and Community Care (HACC) Certificate III, as well as Certificate III in Aged Care in 2007. Congratulations to the following people: Robyn Buckley, Jenny Clegg, Yvette Courts, Palmina Sorrell, Sandra Sund, Jenny Watts and Yolanda Wetherell.

Dental Services

The most significant development for MDHSS over the past twelve months has been the research (including two community surveys) and consultation with health professionals and dentists from Eden, Merimbula and Bairnsdale Regional Health Services, in preparation for the submission to establish a dental chair in Mallacoota.