

Australia's Biggest Morning Tea

On Thursday 29th May 2008, in support for the Cancer Council, staff at MDHSS and volunteers hosted a biggest morning tea at the Health Centre, and members of the MDHSS Friendship Sewing Group displayed a fine array of quilts and other crafts. This event was well attended and members of the community enjoyed a delicious Devonshire tea and other delicacies whilst raising \$257.00 for the Cancer Council.

Australia's Biggest Morning tea is one of the Cancer Council's foremost fundraising events, and the largest, most successful event of its kind in Australia. Over \$40 million has been raised since it first began in 1994. Money raised by Australia's Biggest Morning Tea enables the Cancer Council to continue to fund research, education and awareness, support services and advocacy.

MDHSS would like to thank all the people who attended and made this event such a success.

Staff News

MDHSS is pleased to announce the commencement of two new members of staff: Ms Penny Seears and Ms Carol Nelson.

Penny is a Registered Nurse (RN) Community Health and brings with her a wealth of experience in district nursing, palliative care, wound management and health promotion. Penny, in partnership with the nursing team and other staff, will be consulting with the community to deliver a range of health promotion activities for men, women and youth in the community.

Carol will be undertaking the role of Cook for the day centre and meals on wheels. Carol has extensive experience in the catering industry, sampling some of Carol's recipes will be eagerly anticipated.



Penny Seears (RN) assisting with Australia's Biggest Morning Tea



Carol Nelson, MDHSS Cook

Regular Services at MDHSS

Health Services:

- Home Care Services (home help, property maintenance, meals on wheels, personal care)
- Community Nursing
- Community Aged Care Packages
- National Respite for Carers Program
- Allied Health (podiatry, physiotherapy, dietitian, speech therapy)
- Palliative Care / Post Acute Care
- Family Counselling
- Health Promotion
- Volunteer Transport Services
- Independent Living Units
- Rural Allied Fly-in Service
- Maternal and Child Health

Social Services:

- Planned Activity Group
- Emergency and Disability Services
- Youth Services
- Men's Health Shed

Community Services:

- Neighbourhood House
- Adult Community and Further Education
- Centrelink
- Telecentre
- Occasional Child Care

Visiting Services:

- Aged Care Assessment Service (ACAS)
- Audiologist
- BreastScreen
- Continence Nurse
- Drug and Alcohol
- Maternal and Child Health Nurse
- Occupational Therapy
- PapScreen
- Speech Therapy
- Thrifty Specs

Mallacoota District Health & Support Service Inc.

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 5 - June 2008

Mallacoota Health Centre

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.

Mallacoota Dental Clinic

– no more toothache for Mallacoota!



Everyone will be pleased to learn that the Dental Clinic is nearing completion with anticipation of treating the first patients as early as July. The former Art Room at the Mallacoota Health Centre has been renovated and painted, disabled access has been provided, electrical services and equipment have been installed and the dental chair, dental equipment, and Digital X Ray machine will be arriving in the next few weeks. Car parking has been expanded to provide additional spaces immediately behind the dental clinic.

The Manager has been meeting with dentists from Bega, Merimbula and Sydney, who have been providing advice to MDHSS regarding the best way to set up the dental clinic. Two of these dentists will be servicing the clinic on a monthly basis. Dr. Patrick O'Brien, a respected oral surgeon from Sydney, will be providing services on a monthly basis, and Dr. Bill Tuckwell from Merimbula hopes to operate the dental chair on a fortnightly basis, depending on demand. The dental clinic has installed facilities for EFTPOS and HiCaps for ease of payment and claims for private services. At present the dental clinic will service private patients only, however, MDHSS has written to Dental Services Victoria seeking the allocation of public vouchers. MDHSS hopes to negotiate public services in the future.

MDHSS is very appreciative of the funding provided by the Department of Transport and Regional Services for the project, and funding support from the East Gippsland Division of General Practice, as well as support and advice received from the director of dental services Bairnsdale Regional Health Service, and personnel from Dental Health Services Victoria. The project advice and site visits from Dental Logistics Victoria has been invaluable in assisting Mr. Vernon Darby who has been overseeing the project.

In order to assist MDHSS in planning ahead, expressions of interest are sort from people who are anticipating using the service in the first three months of operation, particularly in the area of oral surgery. Please contact reception on 5158 0243 and leave your contact details. The service at Mallacoota together with the recently opened dental service at Cann River have enriched the region in the area of dental health.

\$267,000 for Respite Services in Mallacoota and District

The National Respite for Carers program has been very successful over the past three years receiving \$186,000 from the Australian Government. This funding has enabled MDHSS to offer clients with support and maintenance for caring relationships between carers and their dependent family members and/or friends. NRCP offers 24-hour in-home respite care, information and support services for carers, social support, day centre support, as well as assistance appropriate to the individual needs and the circumstances of clients and those of the people for whom they care. To date, MDHSS has had 22 clients accessing this service ranging from a few hours a day to 24-hour in home care, depending on assessed need.

MDHSS has been awarded a further three year contract (\$267,000) to provide respite services to eligible people who are caring for family members or friends in the community. People who are eligible to receive respite care include carers of: young disabled people, people with dementia, people who are palliative, and, people who are frail aged living in the community. *(continued over)*

The NRCP program compliments the Community Aged Care Program which provides case-management for older people living at home who require management of care services due to their complex needs. These people would otherwise be eligible for at least low-level residential hostel care but choose to stay at home. Mallacoota is allocated 10 packages and recently vacancies have occurred in this program. This could be interpreted as improvement in the health of older people in the community, or there may be people who do not know about these programs. If anyone in the community would like to know more about the National Respite for Carers Program, or the Community Aged Care Package Program, please contact the Home Care Coordinator, Ms Jenny Griffiths, on 5158 0633.

MDHSS Re-Accreditation *Please! Not Another Survey!!*

Over the next few weeks, MDHSS will be gathering data to support the application for re-accreditation from the Quality Improvement Council Standards Association (QICSA). MDHSS will be surveying clients who have accessed a service over the past two years. Surveys will be specific to particular programs and some clients may receive more than one survey. MDHSS staff acknowledge that surveys can be a pain to fill out, but it should be remembered that the high response rate from the community to the two dental surveys, and the data provided from those surveys, was significant in the Health Centre's well documented submission being successful. Further, MDHSS proposes to engage consultants to prepare the next five year strategic plan and the data from surveys will be used in the planning process.

MDHSS seeks opinion from clients in order to inform decisions regarding possible expansion, improvement, or reduction to services. Your support in completing these surveys will be appreciated.

If you would like more information about the survey or assistance in completing surveys please contact reception on 5158 0243.

Community Reference Group Members 2007-2008:

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

The Community Reference Group meets bi-monthly and provides a forum for discussion and feedback between the community and MDHSS. Members of the community are encouraged to bring issues/concerns to members of the Community Reference Group.

Community Reference Group Meetings

Since the last newsletter, the CRG have met on two occasions. New members to the community reference group (Ms Diana Appleton and Sergeant Andrew Scott) were welcomed, and the election of Mr Gordon Symons as President and Ms Diana Appleton as Vice President took place. Mr Wayne Sullivan, the CEO of MDHSS was warmly welcomed when he attended his first meeting in January.

The Community Reference Group approved the engagement of professional consultants to undertake the MDHSS five-year strategic plan, a six month trial of Independent Living Unit number 5 as a respite care facility, and the upgrading of heating and cooling in the Independent Living Units.

Youth Services

Since January 2008, some exciting events for young people in Mallacoota and district have been organised by MDHSS Youth Services. In a follow-up to the Police High Challenge Camp held in December 2007, MDHSS Youth Services made arrangements for a group of young people from Mallacoota to attend the graduation ceremony of the Victoria Police cadets who attended the Police High Challenge camp. Based partly on the overwhelming positive response from the young people who attended the camp in December 2007, and the special request made by the police cadets for the young people to attend the graduation, MDHSS Youth Services in partnership with the Mallacoota P12 College and the Mallacoota Police, arranged for the re-union at the April graduation ceremony held at the Victoria Police Glen Waverley Academy.

On Saturday 7th June 2008, MDHSS Youth Services had an overwhelming response from young people in the area to the "Market, Movie and Pizza Day" trip to Merimbula. Ms Julie Scott, MDHSS Project Coordinator, and Mr Philip Counsel, Coota Connections Project Coordinator, facilitated the activity and twelve young people enjoyed a morning at the markets, browsing and shopping, followed by an enjoyable lunch.

Special arrangements were made with Merimbula Picture Show Man for a group booking to the movie, "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull," which included free popcorn. The response from participants was unanimous, "this is great, let's do it again!" The grand finale for the exciting day was dinner at a pizza restaurant in Merimbula before travelling back to Mallacoota.

MDHSS Youth Services is organising more fun and exciting activities for young people in the district, with plans well underway for the "Revenge of the Nerds Disco" to be held in June 2008 in the hall at the Mallacoota Health Centre. There will be two discos held on the night, an earlier session for primary school-aged children and later on in the evening a disco for secondary school students. Students from Mallacoota P12 College have assisted the MDHSS Project Co-ordinator in organising this upcoming event.



This activity is sponsored by East Gippsland Shire Council FREEZA funding, in partnership with the Mallacoota Health Centre.

Volunteer Recognition Presentations National Volunteers Week

A morning tea was held on Thursday 22nd May, 2008, in support of National Volunteers Week. MDHSS presented a certificate of appreciation and a gift voucher to each of the 55 volunteers. Volunteers give much of their time and provide invaluable services to the many programs organised by MDHSS. We are extremely grateful for the commitment volunteers make to the organisation.

'A big thank you to all our volunteers'.

Volunteers contributed a total of 2035 hours of service during 2006-2007.

Volunteers undertake a range of activities and many volunteers say that they enjoy a sense of satisfaction in being able to contribute to activities in the community.

If anyone feels that they would like to contribute to the work of MDHSS as a volunteer, please contact reception on 5158 0243.



Mallacoota Health Centre OPEN DAY 15th July 2008 *An Invitation to the Community*

MDHSS is extending an invitation to all members of the community to attend the MDHSS Open Day of the 15th July 2008. Staff at MDHSS will be available between the hours of 10am – 4pm to meet with community members to discuss their individual program areas and services provided to the community. There will be static displays on show and coffee and tea will be available throughout the day.

Representatives from the Quality Improvement Council will be present on the day and MDHSS welcomes community members to drop in and say hello.

MDHSS is proud of the services it delivers to the community and looks forward to your attendance on the day.

