



Tell Gippsland PHN

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2023

INTRODUCTION:

Gippsland Primary Health Network gathers feedback from community members, advisory groups and health professionals. This is a summary of what we've heard in October to December 2023 about what is impacting health and wellbeing, and how we can make improvements.



Cost of healthcare a major barrier for accessing care

- Difficulty accessing bulk billing GPs
- High gap fees for specialist, allied health and dental care
- Transport as an added cost

"I'd go wherever so long as it wasn't as expensive as now"

- Community Member

"I leave it as long as I can, then go to get it investigated"

- Community Member



Other non-medical factors affecting health

- Lack of social connections
- Lack of food security impacts nutrition and social inclusion
- Homelessness or unstable housing
- Lack of access to transport
- Stigma blocks people from seeking help for drug, alcohol, and gambling issues
- Lack of trust in the healthcare system "don't believe they can help"

"...community members are often reticent to seek help, either for lack of knowledge or fear of ridicule and stigma"

- Community Member



Difficulty accessing services

- Lack of information about how to access available services
- Lack of workforce, especially in rural and remote areas
- Mental health and alcohol and other drug services, especially for complex cases
- Appropriate services for LGBTQIA+ people
- Appropriate services for multicultural people
- Assessment and management of ADHD
- Palliative care including medication and bereavement support

WHAT IS WORKING WELL:

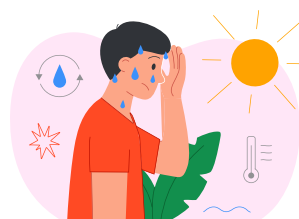
- Community houses providing food support and social connections
- Priority Primary Care Centres have shorter wait times and reduce pressure on emergency departments
- Remote patient monitoring can reduce the risk of people ending up in hospital
- Transport project taking people to appointments
- 75% of aged care homes have received grants to improve internet equipment and connection

"Programs which support ... access to care ... [for] the more vulnerable / aged client"

- Community member

"There is a lot of local expertise and passion"

- Community member



Holiday season impacting needs and services

- Expected increase in demand on services still operating
- Increased demand due to tourists
- Concern about staff burnout
- Concern about increased risk of psychological distress, suicide and family violence



Pressures on family and carers

- Significant needs among people with experience of dealing with health issues in their families
- Caring for others often means ignoring their own health issues
- People with mental health and alcohol and other drug issues impacted due to significant difficulty accessing services
- People unable to access help at home



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SUGGESTIONS:

- Urgent need for more effective community connection
- Easier access to bulk billed services
- Promote collaboration to avoid sector confusion and competition
- Promote increased access to [Priority Primary Care Centres](#) in more places and with easier access to medications
- Health messages for at risk groups

“Outreach to underrepresented communities for health services”

- Professional

“Assistance towards guiding clients and our communities to know how to access, where to access, and what is available.”

- Professional

“... address acute issues with a longer-term lens ... [for example] people experiencing homelessness or family violence.”

- Professional

“Initiatives towards promoting the area as a great place to live to attract more health professionals”

- Professional

Resources and services

- Find the **Right care, in the right place, at the right time**
- **Health Translations** – translated information about health and wellbeing
- Consider registering for family or couple **Medicare safety nets**
- **1800RESPECT - 1800 737 732** - Support for people impacted by domestic, family or sexual violence
- **After-hours medical support** options in Gippsland, including the **Health Access telehealth after hours program**
- **Carer Gateway** – 1800 422 737 – for people providing unpaid care and support
- **DirectLine** – 1800 888 236 – alcohol and drug counselling and referral
- **QLife** – 1800 184 527 – LGBTIQ+ peer support and referral
- **Head to Health** – 1800 595 212 – connect to mental health support
- **Mental health and wellbeing connect centres** – 1300 000 717 - for families, carers and supporters
- **My health app** – a secure convenient way to access My Health Record
- **Digital Health Education and Training Resources for Healthcare Providers**
- **Provider Connect Australia** – for providers to update information included in health service directories



Crisis services

- **Lifeline** - 13 11 14
- **Suicide Call Back Service** - 1300 659 467
- **Beyond Blue** - 1300 224 636
- **MensLine Australia** - 1300 789 978
- **Kids Helpline** - 1800 551 800
- **ReachOut** - Online service for under25s and their parents
- **13YARN** - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Crisis Support - 13 92 76

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Tell Gippsland
PHN Webpage



Feedback
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If you have questions or would like to request the detailed document that informed this infographic, please contact tellgippslandphn@gphn.org.au or (03) 5175 5444.