



2009

Aged & Disability Services Awards

Winners, Finalists & Nominees

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Award for Rising Star

This Award recognises an individual with three years or less work experience within the Aged and Disability Services Sector, who has demonstrated initiative above and beyond the required parameters of their role.

Winner



Lisa Castle

Care Coordinator, Casey City Council

Since commencing employment with the City of Casey eight months ago, Lisa Castle has positively influenced fellow staff members to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the values of the organisation. In her first year of employment, Lisa has made a significant contribution to the Community Care Department's re-shaping of Home and Community Care (HACC) service delivery in line with the Active Service Model. The 'rising star award' qualities of tenacity, endurance, persistence & commitment mirror Lisa's approach to enhancing the lives of older people and young people with disabilities.

Since commencing employment with the City of Casey, Lisa has proved to be an invaluable team member successfully fulfilling the role of Project Officer and now excelling as Care Coordinator. Lisa has approached her current role with a persistent tenacity to complete tasks above and beyond the parameters and expectations of the position. Many departmental achievements are attributed to Lisa's professional and passionate approach to maximising opportunities for the department to achieve "service excellence and innovation" status. This is illustrated by the department receiving recognition at the LG Pro 'Awards for Excellence' presentations in February 2009.

The 'Service Delivery Initiative' category award was made for the development and implementation of the innovative "Let's Cook" program for HACC clients. Lisa has been re-financing the program since commencing her employment with the City of Casey. The 'Let's Cook Program' is a fun and interactive group-cooking program for Casey's HACC clients that aims to equip participants with the skills and knowledge to cook simple, healthy, nutritious meals and feel confident in the kitchen.

Lisa has made other significant workplace contributions through displaying consistent integrity and honesty. Modelling such qualities marks the character of a future true leader, a leader that is willing to stand by values that will achieve sustainable long term cultural change. This has also assisted with Lisa developing many positive relationships across this organisation. As a result, Lisa has enhanced team morale and assisted with inter-team relationship development.

Utilising effective written and verbal skills is a key component that staff require to successfully fulfil aged and disability industry sector roles. Lisa establishes positive rapport with clients and staff, and effectively uses excellent written skills. Lisa rose to the challenge when asked to complete funding grant submissions. Her application and commitment to exceeding role parameters and expectations resulted in success for one of Lisa's \$20,000 funding grant submissions. As a result, the Community Care Department has developed a sensory and aromatherapy program for dementia-specific clients.

Within five months of Lisa commencing employment as a Project Officer at the City of Casey, she was promoted to Care Coordination. This promotion was an opportunity for Lisa to strengthen her current skill-set and broaden her aged and disability sector experience. Lisa's drive and commitment to excelling in the position has been acknowledged by peers as well as the management team. Again, this illustrates Lisa modelling 'rising star award' qualities.

Finalist



Sian Hards

Coordinator, Casey City Council

Sian Hards has consistently demonstrated “true workplace asset” qualities in multiple roles during her four and half years of employment with the City of Casey. Working within a continuous improvement and “can do attitude” framework, Sian is always thinking outside the square, seeking opportunities for professional growth, and, most importantly, is passionate about making a difference in the community. Sian’s individual accomplishments include multiple promotions within the department, an enduring commitment to enhancing quality and innovative program outcomes and promoting team-building principles within the Community Care Department. Sian is always smiling and bursting with energy, qualities that continue to have a positive impact on her work and her colleagues.

Fostering an effective teamwork environment within any organisation requires individuals who are committed to working towards a common goal or vision with the encouragement of others to continue to grow and improve. Sian Hards illustrates this essential teamwork quality within the Community Care Department because she always looks for opportunities to assist others where possible and embraces workplace change.

Flexibility is pivotal to achieving dynamic teamwork outcomes. Sian consistently demonstrates her ability to approach work in a flexible manner and is always the first staff member to support other teams and fulfil required duties when needed. This approach greatly assists the Community Care Department to continue to provide smooth client service delivery and achieve quality customer service outcomes.

The Community Care Department strives towards achieving “Innovation & Service Excellence”; one of four departmental priority objectives. Sian has contributed to this objective by enhancing the annual departmental planning process in modifying one-year action plans to a format that all staff could understand, embrace and participate in proactively. By Sian volunteering her assistance to facilitate planning sessions with 200 employees, she provided the opportunity for staff to list what is working / not working within

the department and to develop one, three, six and twelve month goals.

Award for Outstanding Program of Project (Grant Based)

This Award recognises the development and implementation of a project or program which has achieved a significant service improvement through an effective and innovative approach

Winner

Southern Region – Active Service Model Project

Joan Andrews, Bayside City Council, Alison Clarke, Active Service Model, Penny Pavlou, Stonnington City Council, Georgia Hills, Kingston City Council, Michelle Marr, Glen Eira City Council, Mary Rydberg, Greater Dandenong City Council, May Hassan, Casey City Council, Jenny Van Riel, Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, Heather Betts, Port Phillip City Council, Peter Harrison, Frankston City Council

This nomination is in recognition of the innovative work undertaken by a consortium of local governments to progress the Active Service Model in the Southern Region. The Councils comprising Bayside, Glen Eira, Frankston, Stonnington, Greater Dandenong, Casey, Port Phillip, Kingston and Mornington Peninsula Shire have steadily and consistently worked together since 2006 to realise this project.

The project demonstrates the power and the benefits that can be achieved when Local Governments work together in a collaborative way, the benefits of Councils working together to obtain funding, the value of Local Government and the Department of Human Services working in partnership and the positive outcomes for residents as a result of collaboration between Local Government and the Community Health sector.

This project highlights the gains that can be achieved when Councils work together in collaboration, rather than isolation.

The Southern Region Councils, comprising Bayside, Glen Eira, Frankston, Stonnington, Greater Dandenong, Casey, Port Phillip, Kingston and Mornington Peninsula Shire have been successful in obtaining funding from the Department Human Services over a three year period to progressively implement a project aimed at providing staff with the knowledge and skills to assist them to empower HACC clients to identify and achieve their goals and improve their level of independence.

The project required a philosophical shift in the way HACC Services are delivered to clients in order to bring about long term sustainable change. This shift towards a restorative and capacity building approach, (the Active Service Model) to delivering HACC services aims to identify and build on client's strengths and to provide a holistic and person centred approach to increase their independence.

The project was initiated by the Aged & Disability Services Managers who had the vision, commitment and energy to follow the project through. The Managers group has been well established over many years and provides a forum for sharing ideas and identifying opportunities for ongoing sector development. A key success of the project has been the involvement of all Councils in the Southern Region, including MECWA who provide services for the Shire of Cardinia.

The Active Service Model project commenced in the Southern Region in 2006, following the successful acquisition of funding from the Department Human Services and gained further funding in 2007/08. Due to the ongoing success of the project and the learnings that can be shared and transferred across the state the Southern Region has secured additional funding to progress the project in the 2009/10 year.

Finalists

Climate Change Project

Murrindindi Shire Council: Cassandra Crowe, Maree Lyster, Jim Wolstencroft, James Kelly

The Murrindindi Shire Council Home Maintenance Service was successful in applying for Project Funding from the State Government in relation to Climate Control Initiatives. The object of our Programme was to provide extra funding to assist our HACC clients with water recycling, water saving devices, general water conservation and low emission temperature control measures and related home maintenance, and assistance to reduce the impact of climate change in their homes.

The Murrindindi Shire Council services approximately 450 HACC clients who live within small townships and in outlying rural areas. As with any other HACC client from any area of Victoria, our clients often live in older houses which were not built with climate control in mind and have a variety of different issues such as having large gaps under and around doors and windows, windows which fully face direct sunlight, none or not enough smoke alarms, large shower roses, etc. Our clients also enjoy their gardens not just for the enjoyment but also for growing their own fruit and vegetables. Due to quite severe water restrictions in our towns and those in outlying areas relying on rainwater tanks, they are facing the problem of how to water. Many clients are forced to either downsize their gardens or face the heartbreak of them dying.

Our Climate Change Programme has been designed to provide the goods and materials needed to aid clients to participate in their own climate control issues and to help reduce their own heating, cooling and water consumption. These are provided to the clients, and also the labour provided by our Home Maintenance Officers to install them at no cost. This gives many of our clients an opportunity to make these improvements they may otherwise be financially unable to afford.

Our programme has been able to assist clients to:

- Purchase and installation of grey water diverters – which enable clients to divert water from showers and washing machines, etc, to their gardens and lawns, thereby reducing their water consumption.
- Purchase and installation of blinds for external windows which face directly into the sun, thereby keeping home interiors cooler in summer and saving on energy consumption.
- Purchase and installation of shade sails for clients living in outlying areas who rely on tank water. Sails were erected above water tanks to keep direct sunlight off tanks thereby keeping water cooler and helping to stop water evaporation, and to stop leaves and debris from entering tanks, thereby improving the quality of the water.
- Purchase and installation of window and door seals, and draught stoppers to help control temperatures in the home, thereby saving on energy consumption from heating and cooling.
- Purchase and installation of water saving showerheads to dramatically reduce the amount of water being used during showers.
- Purchase and spreading of garden mulch to reduce water loss from soil and regulate soil temperatures more evenly thereby reducing the amount of watering needed in the garden.
- Purchase and installation of smoke alarms to raise the safety of clients in the home.
- Purchase and installation of batteries for smoke alarms whether installed under the Climate Change Programme or previously existing smoke alarms to raise the safety of client in the home.
- Purchase of small water tanks or bladders for collection of water from small roof areas (such as sheds or garages) for use in the garden and yard, thereby saving on water consumption from mains water or other tanks.
- Provide assistance with purchase and installation of large water tanks to clients in outlying areas, thereby increasing the amount of water being collected from roofs, etc.
- Refilling empty water tanks for clients who rely solely on tank water.

When initiating this programme we relied solely on our Home Maintenance Officers to identify the needs of clients who were already receiving Home Maintenance, and to explain to them the types of assistance they could receive and the benefits to them of the programme. We felt the Shire Home Maintenance Officers were in the best position to do this, as they were the ones in and around client's homes and gardens in the course of their work. Once the programme was up and running, word of mouth between clients and an article in our tri-monthly client newsletter "Dindi Chat", gave us a rapid uptake of the services provided under the programme.

As our Home Maintenance Officers are highly skilled in property and garden maintenance they were able to use their own discretion in identify the **genuine** needs of our clients, thereby ensuring those clients who needed the assistance most received it first. This allowed us to spread our resources over an entire 12 months meaning we were able to assist clients with issues around climate change which encompassed both extremes of climate – summer and winter. At the end of the 12 month period of the programme, we had a small amount of funding left over, which we used to build up a stock of most often used items such as blinds in varying sizes, weather strips and seals, shower heads, water diverters, smoke alarms and batteries, so we can continue to provide our clients with this valuable service.

Tribute must be made to the Shires Home Maintenance Officers as it has been their dedication and hardwork which has made this programme such a success. They have been responsible for identifying client needs, for the uptake of the assistance and the ordering, purchasing and delivering of materials.

Our HACC clients have benefited greatly from this programme which has helped them to reduce their energy and water consumption and to enable them to actively participate in climate control.

Our Shire has benefited from this programme due to the goodwill it has built up with our clients by providing a free and much needed service. Many clients have rung the office to say how delighted they are and how much they have appreciated the service.

Our state, country and indeed entire world have benefited in some small way from our programme because the HACC clients who reside in the Shire of Murrindindi have done their bit for climate change and global warming.

Award for Outstanding Program of Project (Non-Grant Based)

This Award recognises the development and implementation of a project or program which has achieved a significant service improvement through an effective and innovative approach

Winner

Aged & Disability Services Planned Activity Group

Greater Bendigo City Council: Rod Flavell, Alana Cooper, Yvonne Parsons, Carla Daly, Suzanne Sandiford, Sheryl Hartney, Allan Seddon, Klauren Scott, Bev Fawcett, Kaye White, Helen Naughton, Erin Wayman, Liz Sandiford, Jacinta Pollock, Wendy Grenfell, Lyn Davis

The City of Greater Bendigo has rejuvenated an under-utilised Senior Citizen's Centre and built a new Planned Activity Group (PAG) Centre and created a community hub for the Kangaroo Flat community.

This project has provided the opportunity to focus on the needs of older people and to enhance HACC services incorporating Positive Ageing principles.

The outcomes of this pilot project demonstrate that it is possible to replicate this service delivery model across the community which will provide community hubs that provide accessible services and activities for both older people and the wider community.

- To provide a modern, purpose-built and user friendly PAG Centre
- To consolidate a fragmented PAG service which was provided from various venues that were unsuitable for both clients and staff
- To rejuvenate a declining and under-utilised Senior Citizen's Centre
- To create a community hub which incorporates services for seniors and the general community
- To provide services and support to an area in Bendigo which has designated areas of disadvantage
- To forge partnerships with other health and community service providers
- To incorporate Positive Ageing and Age Friendly Cities concepts into HACC services

Project Outcomes

- A new facility which incorporates specific design features and facilities for clients and staff
- An expanded PAG program which incorporates Group Respite Care Services for younger clients and their carers
- All PAG services have been consolidated onto the one site which is a more efficient
- A new management model which provides for improved governance, increased utilisation rates, and scheduled maintenance
- A multi-purpose community hub that provides a range of services and activities that encourages a cross section of the community to use the facility
- Partnerships with a number of health and community service organisations such as Bendigo Health, Bendigo Community Health Services and other community organisations to provide services and activities in Kangaroo Flat
- Increased the transport fleet from two (2) to three (3) buses which provides more flexibility to the PAG program
- Intergenerational contact between older and younger people in activities like carpet bowls, computer and text messaging sessions, have been fostered between the Senior Citizens and Kangaroo Flat Secondary College students
- The opportunity to implement recommendations from the recently completed Bendigo-Loddon PCP PAG 'Tips Booklet' which outlines programs and activities for PAG sessions which promote positive ageing
- Other Senior Citizens' Clubs are picking up ideas from this pilot project and implementing initiatives such as computer training, exercise classes and strength training

Finalists

Moreland Home Care OHS Committee

Moreland City Council: Heather King, Daphne Miloshis, David Lukey, Flora Pappas, Christine Heathcote, Lidia Marcinczak, Helen Fraser, Peter Portbury, Maret Jarv, Frank Joyce, Jane Walker

Moreland's Home Care OHS team significantly improved safety for workers and clients through:

- Conducting 3,500 client Equipment Audits
- Auditing/reviewing all safety equipment used by staff
- developing/distributing *Home Care* and *Home Maintenance Safe Work Practices Manuals*, approved Cleaning Products Brochure, First Response cards
- arranging comprehensive OHS training for Home Care staff
- Replacing/distributing 300+ new mops/buckets and 20+ vacuum cleaners to clients.
- Implementing peer and supervisory OH&S checks.

The team's work culminated in achieving Safety Map accreditation (nationally recognised) and Moreland Council's OHS Achievement award for 2008.

The overall program objective was to improve the safety of workers and clients in the Home Care service, by:

- Improving information to clients about the service and safe cleaning products and equipment;
- Improving training and tools for workers to better identify and report hazards and to identify solutions;
- Increasing training for workers on safe work practices;
- Reducing hazards in the workplace.

The Program outcomes

The Home Care Health and Safety Committee was formed and developed the Home Care OH&S Plan. In a 12 month period all 15 key actions were achieved.

Some of the key outcomes were:

1. Equipment Audits.
 - An audit of 3,500 client households was undertaken to check and report on the cleaning products provided, and the condition of the mop, bucket and vacuum.
 - All safety equipment used by staff was audited and reviewed such as the testing of 250 electrical safety switches and resulting in the replacement of knee pads and the trial of other new equipment.
 2. Safe Work Practices Manuals.
 - The Home Care Safe Work Practices Manual was reviewed, updated and distributed to all 160 Home Carers. Included in this manual is a risk assessment for all tasks, photographs of correct practices and helpful hints relating to home care, personal care and respite.
 - The Home Maintenance Safe Work Procedures Manual was developed and distributed. A risk assessment was undertaken for all tasks and the manual includes "what to consider prior to commencing work", "what to do when undertaking work", "what not to do" and "risk control measures" for such tasks as working with ladders, working at lower levels, working with power tools, etc.
 3. Training.

A comprehensive training program was developed and rolled out for all staff. The training included:

 - All Home Carers trained in new Home Care Safe Work Practices manual.
 - All Home Maintenance officers trained in the Home Maintenance Safe Work Procedures manual.
 - 160 Home Carers trained in Manual Handling and Dealing with clients with Difficult Behaviours.
-

4. Approved Cleaning Products and Equipment.

Cleaning products were identified that are environmentally friendly, ethical, cruelty free and safe for use by Home Care staff. A colour brochure has been printed with photos of all cleaning products and key information in seven community languages. The brochure has been distributed to 3,500 clients during April 2009 and is provided to all new clients at initial assessment. The brochure also contains information about the equipment to be used in the home and can be used as an aid when shopping.

5. Equipment replacement program.

- Following the equipment audit, where inappropriate mops or buckets were identified over 300 new mops and buckets were distributed to these clients (at reduced fee), thus reducing the risks to staff.
- A number of vacuum cleaners were also identified as inappropriate or a hazard and all have been addressed with each client to enable a suitable outcome. Council provided some residents with second hand vacuums or carpet sweepers where client was unable to afford a replacement vacuum.

6. First Response Cards.

A set of emergency procedure first response cards was produced to provide a quick reference and helpful hints for home carers in the event of an emergency.

7. Onsite OH&S checks.

A system of training and support was developed for peers and supervisors to conduct onsite OH&S checks. The checks are designed to identify risks in manual handling and technique and priorities for training, equipment and hazard minimization. All Home Carers received at least one peer check and one supervisor check during the 2008/09 year.

The work culminated in the Home Care unit achieving Safety Map accreditation (Work Safe approved) in recognition of the work undertaken by the committee.

The Project was led by the Home Care OHS committee and involved all Home Care and Home Maintenance staff – over 180 staff along with six Home Care Team Leaders.

The project has been extremely thorough with all audit forms being analysed and any issues followed up with clients. The initiative has resulted in enormous improvements in products and equipment home carers use, increased understanding of safe work practices by home care and home maintenance staff and much better information provided to clients to enable them to provide appropriate equipment to support carers.

All 15 actions identified in the OHS plan were completed within the 12 month period. The OHS Committee was formed in April 2008 and so to achieve all these actions and produce and implement new brochures, manuals, training programs and onsite checks is a credit to the efforts of each member of the Committee and all staff in Home Care unit.

Campaspe Movers & Shakers

Campaspe Shire Council: Linda Riding, Carol Brongeeest, Janelle Wheatley, Frank O’Nial, Kate Frawley

The Campaspe Movers & Shakers is an innovative strength and balance program aimed at enhancing the physical & emotional wellbeing of participants. The program aimed at the HACC target population was introduced in 2008 with sessions rolled out across the entire of municipality. The program supports & compliments existing classes delivered by other providers.

The trained instructors are passionate about the program and bring a wealth of skill and knowledge to the classes. Participants report significant improvements in their fitness, core strength and confidence.

The Campaspe Movers & Shakers program was developed to support individuals to maintain and increase their strength and independence, support social connectedness and to reduce reliance on the service system.

The program was developed by the Shire of Campaspe Aged & Disability Services team to address a service gap and to promote active and healthy lifestyles. While this kind of program is generally delivered outside the realm of A&D services we had a number of staff who were keen to offer a strength and balance program to support members of the community.

With the financial support of the Campaspe Primary Care Partnership 14 staff from a number of agencies undertook Certificate 3 in fitness and the fitness for the older adult module from Certificate 4. Four staff from the Shire of Campaspe completed their training; making sustainability of the program possible.

Participants must meet HACC eligibility criteria to be accepted into the program. The program commenced in early 2008 and has steadily rolled out across the municipality. The program is offered twice weekly in each location, and is delivered by qualified staff and interested volunteers.

Assessments for programming purposes are conducted by a qualified Physiotherapist, and each participant is reassessed for their improvement, ability and against their previous measurements on a bi annual basis.

The program has been well received in the local communities and provides an important opportunity for participants to increase their fitness as well as make new friends and increase their social participation while having fun and improving their independence.

The Movers & Shakers program is a significant service improvement, and compliments the Shire of Campaspe’s approach to an active and independent service model. Participants report that there are many benefits gained from their attendance at the classes. Part of our approach to developing the program was to limit the reliance on the service system by developing stronger, active & independent older adults.

We believe that our approach to program delivery is innovative. This is not a common activity for local governments to be involved in; Movers & Shakers offers modified programs for those who are unable to complete the set exercises, therefore offering inclusion for all who are interested.

Social connectedness is a unique feature of the program. Participants not only enjoy the exercise but also partake in after class cuppas, dinners to celebrate special occasions, and when classes are in recess over the Christmas closure period participants come together to enjoy a walk rather than a class. Many people report making new friendships as a result of their involvement in the program.

Intergenerational Historical Storytelling Journal

Yarra City Council: Fran Moloney, Leonie Hickie, Lara Lubitz, John Drake, Fiona Hillary, Marie Parker, Lizz Poklar, Hilda Terteci, Belinda Rodrigues, Anastasia Grapsas, Kerrie Simpson, Daryl McMahon, Lorraine Lapetina, Mark Burns, Chris Kupke, Dan Nunan, Julie Bird, 35 elders from City of Yarra and 60 students from Collingwood College

This project was a Historical Storytelling Journey with students from grades three to six, discovering and learning of the lives and experiences of elders in their neighbourhood. It commenced in June 2008. The initial project was for 6 weeks however as it was so successful, contact continued until December and culminated in a big Christmas Party. Contact is still ongoing with future events planned.

The project increased cooperation, interaction and communication between the students and elders.

The participants both students and elders were encouraged to share their talents and resources and to support each other in relationships that benefited with surprising outcomes. For example several of the elders in our dementia group before the activity were reserved and quite. Since the interaction with the students, elders often talk of their childhood experiences amongst themselves in the group setting.

Another example is at Christmas time the students made special gifts for their elder friends. When these gifts were exchanged, many of the elders were overcome with emotion and joy because of the special connection developed between them.

Project objectives:

- To provide students with the opportunity to learn of life and understand historical events as they were experienced by Yarra's elders during the early 1920's.
- To provide an environment for regular communication to improve relationships between the young and the old and diminish ageist attitudes.

Project outcomes:

- Elders told stories of their life experiences during a bomb raid, losing brothers killed in the war, school life in Collingwood and Richmond, dances at the Collingwood Town Hall, marriages in the local church and migration from Eastern Europe to North Fitzroy and Collingwood.
- Relationships between Yarra's students and elders were improved. This was evidenced through a student saying, 'I used to think that old people were old and wrinkly'. 'Now I think that they are a radiant star that has dropped from the sky, found a smile and grown a strong and gorgeous heart'.
- Students writing stories, making books, filming videos, writing and performing a play at Christmas time for elders, parents and families to enjoy.
- Elders commenting on how kid's school experiences are so different from theirs, reminiscing on the days when class sizes were 60 students to one teacher.
- Elders saying 'kids are not so bad after all and it's great to talk to kids'. 'I don't go out much anymore to talk to kids, and my baby is now 52 years old'.
- Strategic placement of tiles in the courtyard of the Collingwood Centre and garden opposite Collingwood College. The tiles were inscribed with student's key learnings from the intergenerational activity. The placement of the tiles was planned for them to remain into perpetuity.
- The project was showcased at the June Positive Ageing – Influencing Change Forum in Melbourne. Local Government representatives attended the forum. Information on the project has been shared with other local councils planning to initiate a similar project.

SEEDS Employment Project

Emma Cramer (Monash City Council), Sarah Forbes (Yarra Ranges City Council) Sherrie Anderson & Ellen Clacy (Melba Support Services), Debra McLean (Oregon Technical Assistance Corporation)

SEEDS Employment Project is a partnership between City of Monash, Shire of Yarra Ranges and Melba Support Services (a disability day and accommodation service). SEEDS operates on the fundamental belief that every person is employable and has the right to meaningful well paid work.

SEEDS has trained more than 300 people in person centered employment approaches and at least 100 job seekers with disabilities have developed plans for future employment and taken action to find employment.

Through the engagement of Deakin University researchers, SEEDS will inform the disability employment sector and emerging government policy.

SEEDS expands the capacity of a new group of community members who see people with disabilities in a new way.

SEEDS Employment Project operates on the fundamental belief that every person is employable and has the right to meaningful well paid work.

SEEDS uses a person centered employment approach to meet its objectives. This approach focuses on starting with the person building a map of their gifts, strengths and capacities, gaining an idea of their dreams and visions and what that means for the person, this process identifies what works and what doesn't work to ensure success in the right workplace. This approach looks at what natural supports and resources will be required to find meaningful well-paid employment. For example: Billy likes to cup his hand and bang it on the table, he also likes to make loud noises, if a button was placed under Billy's hand he could operate a machine, perhaps in a noisy factory or warehouse.

Project objectives:

- To provide more people with disabilities the opportunity to find meaningful well-paid employment.
- To support workers in the disability sector and families to learn person centered employment approaches so that they can support people with disabilities to find meaningful well-paid work.
- To influence public policy so that more people with disabilities can find meaningful well-paid work.

Project outcomes:

- More than 300 people have attended presentations on person centered employment approaches.
- At least 100 job seekers with disabilities have developed plans for future employment as well as taken action to find employment.
- At least 100 families and carer of people with disabilities have learned skills to support people with disabilities to find employment.
- At least 140 workers from disability services have attended training and related events and gained skills to support people with disabilities to find work.
- At least 10 disability employment networks have attended the training and related events and made new industry connections.
- Provided training for organisations not traditionally funded to support people with disabilities into employment. E.g. Disability day services, Neighbourhood Houses.

Planned Activity Group – Paintstains Program

Wodonga City Council: Belinda Johan, Karla Mabeth, Roz Mahoney, Carolyn Ridley, Stephen Heather

Paintstains is a group of individuals who come together for a common purpose of socialisation, learning and achievement within a supported environment. The group has an average age of 82 years with various abilities with little or no previous artistic skills. The group commenced in 2002 with four participants and one dedicated volunteer. In 2009, the group now has six participants and one volunteer. The technique for this group has been developed with our clients' limitations in mind. We encourage minimal use of water, minimal straight lines, and large areas done with sponges. Painters are assisted by staff and volunteers who give directions, guidelines and prompts.

The **objectives** of this group for clients is to promote well being (both physical and mental) through their achievements in art.

The identified **outcomes** for clients include:

- Reduced hypertension
- Maintained motor skills
- Maintained cognitive ability
- Learning new skills
- Focus for family interaction
- Well being through achievement
- Acknowledgement of achievements from staff, family and community

The **objectives** of this group for staff is to promote the clients' well being through achievements, to have successful, workable goal-oriented programs that reflect our organisation as being client-centred and to develop the richness of this program underpinned by the organisation's values of 'Trust, Respect, Integrity and Learning'.

The identified **outcomes** for staff include:

- Utilisation of skills in areas of interest
- Enthusiasm for a 'new' project
- Measurement tool to monitor client wellbeing
- Satisfaction of your clients, peers, supervisors and community
- Ability to think innovatively

This program was brought about through an **innovative approach** to meeting the needs of clients through team discussion. Some clients who had recently joined Council's PAG wished to continue developing their skills in art. Staff were unable to access a tutor, so one member of our team, Karla Lambeth, who had previously taught porcelain painting took on the role. A group of four clients indicated they would be willing to "give it a go". This group was also offered to our clients with dementia.

Nominees

Life Skills Project

Casey City Council – Community Care Department

The aim of the Active Service Model – Life Skills Project partnership initiative of the City of Casey and the Casey-Cardinia Community Health Service is to explore, identify and develop opportunities for clients to achieve capacity for living as independently as possible in their community. The project also provided opportunity for the two organisations to utilise and marry expertise, skills and resources to strengthen HACC program effectiveness by maximising client independence through person-centred and capacity-building approaches to service delivery.

The twelve-week Life Skills Project was conducted in 2008 within current budget and operational resources. The project evaluation noted significant client success stories and an enhanced “solution-focussed” workplace environment. As a result, various umbrella programs, including the “Let’s Cook” and the “Let’s Move” programs have been developed.

The aim of the Active Service Model Project partnership initiative between the City of Casey and the Casey-Cardinia Community Health Service (CCCHS) is to explore, identify and develop opportunities for clients to build capacity to live as independently as possible and to remain living in their community. Project partners required piloting such re-orientation of service delivery by approaching clientele from a “working with” approach rather than a “working for” approach. The project also provided an opportunity for the two organisations to utilise and marry expertise, skills and resources to strengthen HACC program effectiveness in maximising client independence through person-centred and capacity-building approaches to service delivery. This was trialled by combining Assessment and Care Coordination resources (City of Casey) with Occupational Therapist resources (CCCHS).

The Victorian Department of Human Services (DHS) Home and Community Care (HACC) branch have adopted an Active Service model of service delivery. This model aims to work with clients to maximise their independence in daily living tasks through a person-centred restorative approach. Current HACC service delivery trends indicate that clients have a level of dependency on the services of the Casey-Cardinia Community Health Service (CCCHS) and the City of Casey. To change the face of HACC service delivery, the project aimed to maximise the capacity of participants and become more active in community activities.

Initial project development discussions commenced in 2007, with the City of Casey Community Care department approaching the Casey-Cardinia Community Health Service. Several meetings followed the initial project partnership discussion and after generating enthusiasm and commitment amongst staff, the “Life Skills Project” partnership initiative became a reality and commenced in 2008.

Project parameters included targeting a small group (10-12) of HACC eligible participants who had the physical and cognitive capacity to participate in the twelve-week “Life Skills Program”. Other parameters included the outlining of key responsibilities and developing communication processes between both organisations to achieve smooth service provision outcomes.

To measure project effectiveness, a comprehensive six and twelve-week evaluation process was conducted with participating clients and staff. Multiple client success stories, including significant improvements in physical capacity and/or quality of life, were reported by approximately 50 per cent of clients. Additional achievements included notable reduction in their HACC service delivery needs and an enhanced ‘quality of life’ as a result of clients achieving a goal. For example, one client’s goal was to walk her dog around a court, and another discharged himself from service after 6 weeks

having gained the capacity to manage independently. Other service improvements achieved throughout the project included Direct Care Workers (DCW's) developing

enhanced rapport with clients. DCW's reported increased job satisfaction and several continuous improvement recommendations were action- planned. Lastly, Casey-Cardinia Community Health Service noted that synergy was evident as it was clear that a shared vision was developing between the two organisations.

Despite having multiple service improvements, a number of challenges were also experienced throughout the term of the project. Achieving effective communication between the two organisations proved a challenge, yet this was overcome through a determination and commitment from all staff to making the project a success. Additionally, the requirements for reviews were time-consuming and this feedback has been acknowledged and accommodated in the planning for the 2009 project.

Program development and implementation required creative and collaborative work across City of Casey Community Care and Casey-Cardinia Community Health Service with staff members displaying commitment, enthusiasm and passion to respond and deliver services within the Active Service Model framework. To capture accurate measures of project effectiveness, several documentation tools were developed to assist with client goal development and monitoring requirements.

To enhance and maximise client involvement in the decision making process, the six and twelve-week review forms were completed in conjunction with the client and their project DCW. This was facilitated collaboratively by the Assessment Officer and Care Coordinator exploring what is important to, and important for, the client along with what has worked and not worked. Feedback received from the Occupational Therapist at the Casey Cardinia Community Health Centre was also considered throughout the review process.

To capture an accurate client and staff member experience of the Life Skills Project, a "Client & Staff Survey" was developed and conducted together with an End of Project Staff De-Briefing Session.

Due to the success of the project, a 2009 Life Skills Project is currently being planned and refined. Some of the learning to be addressed in the 2009 project includes providing goal development facilitation training, updating and implementing a time- efficient "client-goal development and review "process, and providing DCW's with progress-note report-writing training. Furthermore, focus would be required to continue strengthening stakeholder relationships with project partners by developing a champion "person-centred capacity-building" network.

Casey Russian Outing Group

Casey City Council – Community Care Department

The Casey Russian Outing Group – a partnership initiative between the City of Casey and the Russian Welfare Society, aims to enhance opportunities for HACC eligible Russian community clientele to participate in a fortnightly culturally-appropriate community-based program. The program is in line with the Active Service Model providing opportunities to maximise client independence, decrease social isolation, increase social connectedness and build a client's capacity to develop new friendships across diverse municipalities via building inclusive communities. This initiative will continue to be a key priority for program partners to strengthen relationship and program objectives.

It aims to enhance opportunities for Russian members of the community to attend and participate in meaningful culturally-specific Russian-speaking programs and activities. The program also provides an opportunity to maximise HACC client independence, decrease social isolation, increase social connectedness by providing opportunities to develop new friendships, build inclusive communities and breakdown social barriers through group participants regularly accessing community activities.

Program development and implementation required the development of a collaborative partnership between the City of Casey and the Russian Welfare Society. Program inception occurred in 2007 as a result of the Casey Russian community communicating a need to the Russian Welfare Society for Russian HACC clients to have an opportunity to participate in a regular community-based program. A program was needed to include clients who were living away from the Russian community and did not have the opportunity to travel to participate in and develop on-going relationships with fellow community members in neighbouring municipalities.

The Russian Welfare Society had the physical resources but not the financial capacity to deliver their idea for such a program and then approached the City of Casey. Following discussions a partnership agreement was formed, program resources were negotiated and re-orientated to make the Casey Russian Outing Group a reality for Russian HACC clients. This included financial support from the City of Casey for bus expenses. Russian HACC clients interested in taking part are referred to the Russian Welfare Society by the City of Casey.

The partnership builds client capacity to re-connect and engage with the Russian community, to foster on-going friendships, improve community connectedness, minimise social isolation and empower clients to make informed choices regarding program outings.

Since program inception, participant numbers have increased and outings occur twice per month. Multiple positive outcomes have been noted in clients' expression of satisfaction. Areas of satisfaction have been linked to the client-directed decision-making process regarding program outings. This person-centred approach to service delivery has provided the opportunity to develop a six-month calendar of events. Furthermore, it has enabled clients to re-orient program outings from a general social meal outing program to one that has enabled them to re-connect with nature via country and garden outings. These have included outings to Bendigo, Werribee, Eildon, Monbulk and the National Rhododendron Gardens, fishing expeditions at Eildon trout farm and berry picking at Monbulk, as well as visits to various community expos.

The Casey Russian Outing Group has also received great attention from fellow community members in other municipalities. Community members have commonly expressed "I wish our Council could provide a similar Russian-specific outing program".

The evident success of the program has led both partners to agree to continue the delivery of the program on an ongoing basis. Program replication can easily be achieved, especially as it provides opportunity for organisations to form dynamic partnership initiatives to achieve enhanced client 'quality of life' outcomes through providing accessible community-based programs. A focus on pivotal community priorities such as reducing social isolation, improving social connectedness, enhancing community engagement and client empowerment will ultimately lead the way to providing a bright pathway for the future.

COGG A&DS Promotional DVD

Greater Geelong Council – Stephen Akers, Irene Kadenback, Kathryn McBride

The City of Greater Geelong's (COGG) Aged and Disability Services (A&DS) department has produced a short informative promotional DVD that:

Gives prospective clients and carers a snapshot view of services available.
Provides information that is respectful of diverse cultural and linguistic need in an accessible format.
Communicates a vision of community care that is active and is responsive to individual need.

The DVD promotes service coordination and has been widely accepted by local service providers as a key resource. It actively promotes the Living at Home Assessment Framework and has the potential to be included as part of the Barwon Region Alliance.

Project Objectives:

Improve understanding of community care through the provision of information in accessible formats that are responsive to diverse cultural and linguistic needs.
Reduce community care barriers by delivering equitable program information.
Promote service coordination, create service pathways and support self advocacy for community members who are responding to changing needs.

Project Outcomes:

The outcomes of the promotional DVD centre on improved client outcomes and has achieved this through:

- Improved stakeholder knowledge of COGG A&DS services
- Clearer pathways between community care agencies
- Better understanding of eligibility for Home and Community Care programs
- Improved knowledge of client rights and responsibilities as a result of culturally respectful language
- Reduced barriers to services
- Flexible active service care that is responsive to customer feedback
- Enhanced induction tool for Community Care Workers and Assessment Officers

Distinguishing features:

User Friendly

The DVD is a live document that is able to be updated as a whole or in sections at any future time. The format is available in hard copy or electronically via www.geelongaustralia.com.au. It is an innovative response to communication barriers and service information overload and aligns with COGG's organisational objectives.

Corporate Alignment

The City of Greater Geelong developed five corporate mindsets which were set up to help our organisational culture move from good to great. The five mindsets include Community & Customer Focus, Empowerment with Accountability, Can Do, Innovative Global Thinking and Mutual Respect. These mindsets compliment our Values, and positively impact our Mission and Vision. The DVD project reveals aspects of these mindsets in action.

Accessible Languages

The DVD overcomes cultural, language and other communication barriers to service information whilst promoting an Active Service Model of Community Aged Care. The use menu lists and prompts that are easily understood enable the preferred language to be selected with ease. The language selection includes English, Dutch, German, Greek, Italian, Polish and Serbian.

Content Description

The DVD leads the viewer through an introduction / overview of services, consultation and management processes, planning of reliable services, privacy and confidentiality, complaints process, community advocacy, service fees and care recipient responsibilities. A further menu page prompts the viewer to select additional information on the specific service.

Culturally Responsive

This project was developed in response to feedback collected from clients via annual client satisfaction surveys, the department's quality reference group and a small focus group. These groups included representatives from local service providers, clients, carers and COGG employees. Upon completion of the draft DVD, a test audience was implemented. This process was critical as it shaped the completion of the finished product.

Simplicity

In essence, the success of this innovation is due to its simplicity. It was a fun project for all involved and the care recipients who participated in the filming were extremely happy about their contribution and being included in the process. The DVD is innovative in its ability to connect with older Australians from diverse backgrounds through the six language options; the use of clear and easily understood language; positive manner with verbal, written and visual cues; and lastly accessibility via the internet.

Project Benefits:

This project has improved our service in a number of areas. It is now implemented at the initial time of assessment. The DVD is used as an induction tool for new Community Care Workers and at Occupational Health & Safety refresher sessions.

Benefits also include increased awareness of services to the broader community, for current and new care recipients, health professionals and other community care agencies and staff. The DVD demonstrates an Active Service approach which encourages an adjusted view of service provision that is more active and responsive.

Another positive outcome of the project is that it supports the environment through the reduction of printing and paper usage.

City of Port Phillip Respite Care

Port Phillip City Council – Jo Smale, Virginia Lloyd

The City of Port Phillip 'Our World – A Partnership' Photographic Exhibition was a collaborative effort by children, young people and carers within the City of Port Phillip's Respite Care Programme. It enacted council's commitment to respecting **all** children and young people as active citizens with a right to give their views and opinions on matters that affect them.

There was acknowledgement that there is a hierarchy of citizenship and children and young people with differing abilities are often a silent voice in their community.

Through the consultation and photographic exhibition, the project raised public awareness of children's citizenship and opened a pathway by which these children and young people could have a voice.

The City of Port Phillip acknowledges that there is a shared responsibility to ensure that **all** people, regardless of age, abilities, cultural and socio-economic background enjoy the benefits of our city and participate in all it has to offer.

Council has a commitment to developing a variety of communication strategies and techniques to support children and young people as citizens to give their views and opinions on matters that affect them.

The challenge is to ensure that provision is made for those who have previously had limited or no opportunity to share their views and opinions, particularly those with disabilities.

This pilot project was a joint initiative between council's Family and Children's Services and Community Development and Engagement with funding through the Metro Access Programme from September to December 2008.

It enacted:

- ❖ The City of Port Phillip's Municipal Early Years Plan, 'Creating a Child Friendly Port Phillip 2005-2009' that includes Articles 12 and 13 of the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child through recognising and respecting **all** children and young people as active citizens who can share valid and important views and opinions about their lives that are different, not inferior to those of adults.
- ❖ The Goals of the Victorian State Disability Plan 2002-2012 that include enabling people with a disability to pursue their own individual lifestyles, building inclusive communities for people with a disability by developing more inclusive and accessible public services, and promoting non-discriminatory practices.
- ❖ The Victorian State Government's *A Fairer Victoria 2005* policy statement acknowledging that some groups of people and some places in Victoria still experience disadvantage, hardship and barriers to accessing services and fully participating in community life.

Aims of the Project

To give children, young people and their carers within council's Respite Care Programme:

- create an expectation that children and young people with differing abilities have equal opportunity with others to inform council, staff and the community on topics that affect them.
- a model of nonverbal consultation that can be used to advise council during **any** community engagement but especially in the development of the Disability Action Plan and the future Disability Framework.
- a tool that increases their independence and gives them a 'voice' in the formation and management of their individual plans
- joint ownership with their carers of a project through participation, taking control of the choice of images to be photographed and selecting and giving consent for photographs to be exhibited.
- Increased skills in the medium of photography and quality of presentation.

Outcomes

- Raised awareness of council, staff and the community of the significance of the Respite Care Programme and the unique bond between the child/young person and their carer who worked within the child/young person's interests and respected their independence.
- Gave insight into the importance for carers to have a close relationship that is built on trust and open communication. In most cases the child/young person physically took the photographs with the aid of the carer but if this was not possible, the carer was required to respect and respond to the directions of the child/young person.
- Developed carers' skills in consultation and communication.
- The exhibition exposed challenges for accessibility and ways in which areas within the municipality might provide greater accessibility particularly for the recreational needs of children and young people with disabilities. Council officers are required to respond to these issues.
- Children and young people with differing abilities will now contribute to the formation and development of their individual plans and will be included in consultations in new developments or review of strategies and policies that affect them.

The Process

1. Information was distributed to children, young people and their families and carers within the Respite Care Programme with information about the Photographic Exhibition.
If they agreed to participate, written consent was sought from children/young people, their parents/guardians and carers and permission for the data to be included in relevant council documents.
2. Carers were given digital cameras and to ask the children/young people to record through photography such topics as what they do/do not enjoy doing with their carer; what places would they like to go or things they would like to do but can't and why; future aspirations or a subject that related specifically to them.
Carers were also asked to complete questions that related to their work such as 'What excites you about the work you do: What does the child/young person tell you is fun for them or what do you observe them enjoying: What does the child/young person tell you they find difficult/inaccessible for them: How do you or the child/young person feel things can be improved for them?
3. Children/young people, their families and their carers then selected the photographs and words to be mounted for the public exhibition that took place at St Kilda Town Hall on the International Day of People with a Disability in November 2008 and then at the Disability Respite and Recreation Expo in February 2009.
4. Families were given a CD of all their photographs and the originals of those displayed in recognition of their contribution to the project.
5. The information gathered from the consultation is being used in the development of the Children's Plan and the Disability Framework.

Sustainability

This project has created changes in attitude and practice not only within the Respite Care Programme but has raised questions in other areas of council especially in access to recreational opportunities. The results of the project will inform the new Disability Framework and children/young people with differing abilities will be included in future community engagement that is relevant to them. This project has highlighted the commitment of carers to the work they do and the challenges of the role. Following this project, a further project will use this medium to monitor the individual programmes for children/young people together with a review of the service. Although this pilot project received a small amount of funding, ongoing practices would not be reliant on additional financial resources but would be embedded within the day to day operations of the Respite Care Programme.

Wyndham Leadership Program 2009

Wyndham City Council – Cory Becker, Priscilla Mayne, Nunzio Giunta

The 3 month **Leadership Program** was a **Wyndham City Council** and **Leadership Plus** joint initiative. The initiative recognised intellectually disabled people as community leaders and identified and developed potential leaders in the Wyndham community.

The 3 month program included participants from **Mambourin Enterprises** and **Create Wyndham**. The workshops were designed to enhance leadership skills, personal development, team building skills, group work and public speaking.

The group visited different venues in Wyndham including the **Wyndham Cultural Centre**, the **Council Chambers**, **Youth Resource Centre** and the **Werribee Sports and Fitness Centre**. By visiting the different venues the group had the opportunity to engage with different services that Wyndham have to offer.

To deliver a 3 month program comprising of 6 workshops designed to enhance personal development, team building skills, leadership skills, work in groups and develop public speaking skills. In completing the program participants received certificates from **Wyndham City Council** and accreditation from **R.M.I.T University**. The program was also aimed to give participants opportunities at not only developing the mentioned skills, but develop further life skills in which they could use to make contributions to the community.

To empower young people with intellectual disabilities (aged 18-25 years) with strong leadership skills and a good knowledge of support services that the **Wyndham City Council** has to offer. Through this project the participants received accreditation from a Diploma of Community Development at certificate 4 level. Therefore the youth will have opportunities to participate in decision making bodies and organisations within Wyndham. It was quite clear that by the completion of the program all participants had improved immensely. At the beginning of the program the students were definitely timid, not prepared to work together and at time not willing to participate in activities. However by the conclusion of the program all the participants, were able to work together to problem solve, voice opinions, participate in all tasks and formally address a group of people.

Funding was provided from **Wyndham City Council** and **Leadership Plus** internal budgets.

The **Wyndham Leadership Program** was an industry first, and a world first of its kind, which allowed young people with intellectual disabilities to participate in a leadership program. In the workshops participants were given the opportunity to enhance and develop team building skills, leadership skills, work in groups and develop public speaking skills. The project started with an introduction session that 25 people attended. From there 9 people were selected to complete the program. The program ran very successfully and all participants completed the program satisfactorily. It was also planned and implemented successfully, further reiterating the point that the joint initiative program is sustainable.

The main barrier was ensuring participants attended at least 90% of workshops and completed tasks at a satisfactory level in order to receive accreditation from **R.M.I.T University**.

The many benefits the young people derived from the program included:

- All participants now have 1 unit of competency from a certificate of Community Development, allowing them to complete further studies.
- Participants are more aware of services that Wyndham provide.
- Provided the participants with skills that will further enhance their chances of attaining employment and seeking further educational opportunities.
- The young people have been recognised and developed as Wyndham's future leaders.

Award for Enduring Individual Contribution

This Award recognises an outstanding contribution by an individual to the Aged and Disability Services Sector, demonstrating enduring leadership, innovation and sustainable change.

Winner



Anne Coall

Senior Citizen's Liaison, Whittlesea City Council

Anne has been an extremely valuable council employee in the Aged Care Sector for over nine years. All programs are designed to be financially sustainable both to Council from a funding perspective and to older people from a participation perspective.

Anne has continually demonstrated innovation and resourcefulness when planning, developing and implementing programs. Anne is committed to finding ways to overcome barriers that may prevent older people from participating in various social, health and wellbeing programs, encouraging them to get involved in their local community.

Anne has initiated several programs herself and in other cases she has greatly developed existing programs.

Anne has always demonstrated leadership, support and encouragement to her fellow staff members, other agencies and to older people. She has a long demonstrated history of commitment, resourcefulness, creativity and approachability.

Council has received an amazing amount of positive feedback and comments on Anne's friendliness, encouragement and the success of various programs being due to her efforts and personality. Anne is an outstanding team player, encouraging and supporting colleagues, assisting them unquestionably, an excellent role model and mentor.

Anne has shown incredible leadership in her various roles as described below. Whether it be other staff members in her team, volunteers, other agency staff or senior citizens, she has provided excellent guidance, enthusiasm and support.

Delivered Meals Service

Anne was responsible for the day to day coordination of the Delivered Meals Service. She carried out client assessments and regular reviews, was extremely welcoming to the service and often if there were any problems arising earlier in the day with staff or transport she would deliver meals herself a little later in the day. Anne provided excellent support and acted as a mentor to Meals Administration staff, volunteer drivers and catering staff.

Anne took responsibility for the recruitment of volunteers and was committed to their ongoing recognition. There was never a shortage of volunteers due to Anne's efforts and personality. Anne always supported the volunteers by promoting the International Day of Volunteers functions and National Volunteer Week. Anne was always very effective in her liaison with the caterers of this program. She was an excellent networker and was the key player in the ultimate formation of Meals Victoria, after attending many meetings from agencies all over Victoria.

Anne was an excellent promoter of developing the service. She was the key player to the addition of ethnic meals to the menu which was extremely appreciated by all the ethnic communities. She initiated 'Lunch in a Bunch' which consisted of monthly group meals at pubs and other venues which was very successful. Anne also initiated a Melbourne Cup Day Luncheon at Barry Road Community Activity Centre

for Meals clients, including the invitation of clients from other agencies to promote socialisation. Anne also involved local schools to become involved in this event every year where students would serve the older people and socialise with them.

Senior Citizen Clubs

Anne has assisted clubs to develop their programs to offer more stimulating activities to increase health and wellbeing of members. She is very dedicated and effective in supporting clubs with internal conflict.

Anne is very resourceful in assisting clubs to seek alternative forms of funding eg Volunteers Small Equipment grants and Multicultural grants and assists them with their financial commitments. Anne is very committed to supporting clubs to network with each other, share information, pool resources and coexist harmoniously.

Anne has chaired the Senior Citizens' Liaison Group, which meets bi-monthly, effectively and enthusiastically. Anne has been responsible for organising special activity days such as Women's Healthy Ageing Forum and Carers Luncheon during Seniors Week.

LEAP Program (Let Everyone Actively Participate)

Anne developed this program to be more accessible to CALD communities, she developed booking systems to be more flexible and inclusive, implemented the use of the Companion Card, developed the activities program for LEAP, and increased opportunities for social networking.

Anne developed the program to become more affordable to participants and cost effective to the Council.

Anne created the LEAP membership scheme which became an invaluable process, including a medical clearance form for participants to be able to access exercise programs and other events. The LEAP membership has increased from the initial 400 participants to 1500 members to date. Anne organised the development of the LEAP calendar to be more appealing to the target group.

Exercise Programs

Anne created many exercise programs, obtained appropriate community venues, instructors, and equipment. She promoted the programs effectively, including to older CALD community, with the result of excellent participation rates and feedback from participants.

Anne has successfully liaised with local Fitness Centres to have more programs accessible to older people and promoted these activities. She has attempted to localise classes to increase accessibility eg Whittlesea township.

Anne was the main player in the development of the Whittlesea Older Persons Exercise Network and has shown incredible dedication to these programs, which simply would not have happened without Anne.

Twilight Program

The Twilight Program consists of a Wednesday afternoon and evening social gathering each week, comprising of a program of activities, dinner, guest speakers, theme nights etc. Anne initiated this program from the ground up, by conducting community information sessions to gauge interest levels and ideas and from this feedback developed a program of activities. One of the aims of this program was to provide an evening program for isolated or lonely elderly persons. Membership numbers have steadily increased, with excellent feedback from participants that the program goes a long way to enhancing social opportunities for older people. Transport is often a barrier in the development of such a program and Anne has successfully gained volunteers to drive a commuter bus to transport those participants who do not have access to their own transport. Volunteers also assist in the kitchen and with some activities. The success of the program is largely due to Anne's efforts and personality.

Finalist



Sophia Petrov

Acting Director, Casey City Council

The key to creating an atmosphere of innovation, fostering a dynamic teamwork environment & developing a strong customer- focused foundation requires exceptional, committed and passionate leadership. Working from a continuous improvement framework approach, Sophia Petrov has consistently illustrated such qualities and has performed her leadership role above and beyond required expectations.

The City of Casey Community Care department attributes multiple departmental achievements to Sophia's strategic and visionary leadership style. The Community Care Department is well placed to continue embracing the person-centred and capacity-building Active Service Model initiative in re-shaping the face of Home & Community Care services.

Enduring Leadership

The key to creating an atmosphere of innovation, fostering a dynamic teamwork environment and developing a strong customer focused foundation requires exceptional, committed and passionate leadership. Working from a continuous improvement framework approach, Sophia Petrov has consistently illustrated such qualities and has performed her leadership role above and beyond required expectations. Allowing staff to be creative, to be risk takers and to always tailor staff support needs on an individual basis mirrors Sophia's enduring leadership qualities. To empower the Community Care Department to transition from delivering a dependent model of care to a person-centred active service care model has been achievable through Sophia's visionary approach to changing the face of HACC service delivery.

Innovation

In August 2004, service providers were challenged in the delivery of HACC services, challenges due to a climate of increased community and client demands. The Ministerial launch of 'Priorities & Future Directions for the Department of Human Services' identified the current paradigm of HACC service delivery as an issue. Reports indicated that in a climate of rising life expectancy and increased service demands there was a case for change. The aim of the Active Service Model is to increase HACC service delivery effectiveness in maximizing client independence through person-centred and capacity-building approaches. The model also aims to change the face of HACC service provision, challenging the assumed 'dependency' model with a more 'restorative and capacity-building' model.

Sophia Petrov was instrumental in re-shaping the HACC service delivery model of care within the City of Casey Community Care department. Where others may have and focused on the negative connotations of the Active Service Model vision, Sophia turned positive thoughts into actions. To successfully implement the 'Active Service Model Framework', the effective use of change management and visionary leadership qualities were essential. Sophia achieved this requirement above and beyond position expectations. The key to creating an atmosphere of innovation was to empower staff to 'think outside the square' and allow them to vision a service that is truly person-centred.

Active Service Model framework development was also achieved via Sophia's development and execution of dynamic recruitment and retention strategies. Recruiting staff with values that support the Active Service Model, enhancing professional development initiatives for staff to adopt the

capacity-building principles and fostering an “innovative and solution-focused” workplace environment were all critical factors in Community Care’s transition process.

Sustainable Change

Dedication, commitment, passion and persistence are qualities required to achieve sustained changes within any area of life. Sophia approaches her work with such qualities, and has the ability to inspire her team to adopt similar qualities. ‘A ship will only be as good as its’ captain’ and this statement mirrors Sophia’s impact within the Community Care Department. She fosters a workplace environment that is open to thinking outside the square, raising suggestions and ideas that assist the promotion of a commitment to striving towards achieving service excellence and innovation. After developing a strong foundation, the re-shaping of service delivery in line with the Active Service Model has proved fruitful and several positive outcomes were achieved.

One outstanding success story resulting from Sophia’s leadership in support of the implementation of the DHS ‘Active Service Model Framework’, is the Community Care Department’s achievement in receiving the LGPro ‘Award for Excellence’ in the ‘Service Delivery Initiative’ category in February 2009. The award was made for the innovative “Let’s Cook’ program for HACC clients

Sustainable change within the department has also been evidenced by creating positive images and promoting the abilities of frail older people, younger people with disabilities, fostering a “champion and person-centred” workplace environment and the building of inclusive communities through project partnership development.

City of Casey Community Care personnel attribute departmental achievements to the leadership of Sophia Petrov. Due to Sophia, the Community Care Department has received DHS recognition in the area of innovation and is well placed to continue embracing the groundbreaking and exciting Active Service Model initiative.

Award for Joint Fire Services

Proudly Sponsored by:



Winner

Murrindindi Shire Council Fire Plan

Murrindindi Shire Council – Corrienne Nichols, Ann Hunter, Erin Walgers

Following the 2005/2006 fires the Aged and Disability Unit at Murrindindi Shire Council put forward a proposal to the Department of Human Services (DHS) to develop individual fire plans for our residents and clients as well as develop an Emergency Risk Register (ERR). The purpose of the ERR is to identify those more vulnerable residents, to ascertain their level of preparedness and what they intended to do – go or stay.

Upon the receipt of the proposal from Murrindindi Shire Council, the DHS asked us to further develop the fire plan template to have a state-wide focus, which we did.

- Promote fire readiness
- Promote independence
- Provide information to facilitate informed decisions in relation to fire plans
- Provide assistance to vulnerable clients during an emergency

The fire plan template and the associated processes focuses on being prepared in the event of an emergency while maintaining a person's independence and providing them with the information they need to make informed decisions about their safety in an emergency.

Murrindindi Shire Council has recognised that vulnerability is not limited to Home and Community Care clients, and that other vulnerable residents, and in fact all residents, need to be prepared with a personalised fire plan.

As such, we have chosen to provide fire plan kits and open our Emergency Risk Register to list all vulnerable residents, not only our Home and Community Care (HACC) clients.

The Emergency Risk Register (ERR) is a database of residents/clients who are considered vulnerable and who have given their consent to be listed on the ERR for follow up in the event of an emergency. Specifically, the database documents if the residents have a fire plan in place, who their emergency support persons are and what they plan to do in the event of an emergency.

Both the Fire Plan and Emergency Risk Register were launched by DHS in Benalla at a regional forum and has been promoted throughout the region.

