

20 years helping improve regional health, wellbeing

When patients are still exercising two years after knee replacement surgery and heart attacks, all the organisations involved know they are onto a good thing.

Central Hume Primary Care Partnership chair, Heather Betts, said training provided to staff at Northeast Health Wangaratta's Complex Care program in a new self-management approach had empowered patients and delivered benefits for the patients and the clinicians who manage their care.

This is just one example of how Central Hume PCP has been improving the health and wellbeing of people in the region for 20 years," Ms Betts said.

Central Hume PCP which covers Wangaratta, Alpine, Benalla and Mansfield council areas, is one of 28 PCPs in Victoria, all celebrating 20 years in 2020.

"As a Primary Care Partnership, health and wellbeing benefits are what we work to provide and so, after 20 years, we think it's time to celebrate them," Ms Betts said.

Central Hume PCP executive officer, Huw Brokensha, said the key to PCPs is that they work to enable collaboration on multiple complex health and wellbeing challenges facing the community.

"The self-management project demonstrates how PCPs work," she said.

"We bring our partners together to identify what's needed, then pool our resources to deliver."

"That might be building skills capacity in our region, through training staff as in this case, but at the end of the day it's all focused on improving the health and wellbeing outcomes in our communities."

"A big benefit of how the partnership approach works is that it empowers our communities to shape how we deliver on government policy, considering the reality of rural health and wellbeing services, public transport and



SEEING RESULTS: Mary Ellis and physiotherapist Ada Mickan talk about goals and how best to achieve them.

Mary and Ada seeing the benefits of new approach

MORE than two years after her first knee replacement, Mary Ellis is sticking to her exercise routine thanks to the support of the Complex Care program at Northeast Health Wangaratta (NHW).

"I'm continuing to try to improve my health on my own and with their help. I wouldn't be as good as I am if I didn't have their support," Mary said.

She, and other patients, believe they are benefiting from a new self-management philosophy in which

staff were recently trained through the Central Hume Primary Care Partnership.

NHW Complex Care co-ordinator, Megan Thoratt, believes the benefit for clients is that they are more honest with feel less judged, "and they will tell you not just what you want to hear".

"With this approach, they feel more valued," she said.

Colleague and physiotherapist Ada Mickan agrees.

"There's nothing worse than being told what to do," she said.

"With this approach, our role is more as a facilitator in their health journey."

"And patients are more committed to following through with the change because they have come up with the idea themselves."

"We been a big thing."

"Most people know what they need to do, but it takes time for someone to sit with them to support them to do it."

the impact of their resources and potentially duplicating services."

Mr Brokensha said the PCP works on a variety of health and wellbeing priorities across the region.

This has included a youth mental health project in Mansfield and a whole-of-community approach in the Alpine Shire, which has led to the formation of the Alpine Active Group to help get more people physically active.

"Without the Central Hume PCP, many of these organisations would work in isolation, losing the benefits of extended networks and collaboration, reducing



Stay active during the Covid-19 period

THERE'S lots of evidence to show that staying active can help with managing any existing illness and delay or even prevent the onset of a new illness.

During Covid-19, this is more important to remember than ever. It can be tempting to "sit around" too much while there are restrictions remaining in place on social movements.

But keeping active still matters, even during a lockdown, and no matter what your age.

Keep your body moving and you will discover a sense of achievement. You will have more energy, sleep better at night and reduce your stress levels.

When you feel better, you can enjoy life more.

Regular physical activity, at least 30 minutes a day, can help prevent and manage disease, maintain mobility and independence, improve wellbeing, prevent chronic disease, lower blood pressure, reduce the risk of falling, reduce the need for some medications and be a great way to meet people and have fun.

You've got a lot to gain by becoming (or staying) more active. Here are a few simple tips for getting more active into your day.

1. See physical activity as an opportunity, not an inconvenience. Your body was designed to move.

So, the more movement you do, the healthier you'll be and better you'll feel.

2. Be active in as many ways as you can. Every single movement is an opportunity to improve your health and wellbeing.

3. Break it up. If 30 minutes all at once each day seems like a tall order, start with five minutes at least three times a day then gradually build up the time and frequency until 30 minutes feels easier.

4. Find strength in numbers. Being active can be a family thing, social thing, or something you enjoy doing on your own. Being active with others may give you that extra boost you need to get up and get active. Maintain care around keeping a minimum distance of 1.5 metres from others.

Try a mix of activities to maximise your body's strength, fitness and agility as we all live through this "Covid era".

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