

# Statewide PCPs

A communiqué  
from Victorian PCPs

Primary Care Partnerships are established networks of local health and human service organisations working together to find smarter ways of making the health system work better, so that the health of their communities is improved.

## PRIMARY CARE PARTNERSHIPS (PCPs) ARE GETTING GREAT RESULTS IN VICTORIA

Since they were introduced by the Victorian Government in 2000, PCPs have become a vital component of the Victorian healthcare system.

In the 13 years that they have been operating PCPs have grown significantly in both size and reputation – as more and more health and social services and community groups join them in the quest to deliver better healthcare outcomes for Victorians.

Today, PCPs facilitate partnerships with a wide range of health and social service providers and community groups; and they support collaboration and service integration.

Most importantly, they play a key role in enhancing the wellbeing of people within our local communities.

## ACROSS THE STATE, 30 PCPs CONNECT MORE THAN 1,100 ORGANISATIONS

There are now 30 PCPs around Victoria, connecting more than 1,100 organisations across many different sectors – hospitals, GPs, local government, universities, community health services, disability services, problem gambling services, women's health, mental health services, sports groups, schools, police and many more.

These diverse organisations are working together to plan around the needs of the community, to share their skills and expertise, and align their efforts.

In bringing these health and social service organisations together, PCPs are finding new ways of collaborating and sharing valuable learnings, research and information.

They are also enabling more effective integrated planning when it comes to the health needs of the community, and developing the service system, through co-ordination, by making better use of data, evidence-informed interventions and a common planning framework.

In all, these robust partnerships are delivering real results – particularly, better health and social outcomes for community members – at the local level.

Indeed, a recent evaluation report<sup>1</sup> found that PCPs have:

- Improved integrated planning
- Improved service co-ordination
- Increased organisational capacity and learning for health promotion
- Delivered economic benefits and resource efficiencies
- Contributed to healthier communities

## WHY PCPs ARE UNIQUE – WHY THEY NEED ONGOING SUPPORT

PCPs have become an integral, invaluable part of the Victorian healthcare system.

Without them, the strong connections forged between health and social support providers and community groups – connections that enable better planning and delivery of health and social services – will be compromised.

*“...useful partnerships resulting in positive outcomes for clients”*

- Andrew, Mental Health Practitioner

*“Greater job satisfaction through co-ordinated and collaborative agency relationships”*

- Sapna, Health Promotion Co-ordinator

*“...can collaborate with fellow practitioners and agencies”*

- Shelley, District Nurse

*“We've been able to address some of the social impacts on marginalised communities”*

- Jenny, Health Promotion/Prevention Project

*“It gives us up to date information on the health sector”*

- Aran, Child, Youth & Family Services Leader

<sup>1</sup> Department of Health, *Primary Care Partnerships: Integrated Health Promotion 2011*

Some of the unique features of PCPs include:

- **Long-term, robust partnerships**

The very foundation of PCPs is built upon robust and trusted partnerships between diverse groups; to promote cooperation and the sharing of resources, instead of competition.

- **An independent, autonomous governance model**

PCPs are governed via an independent platform to encourage fair and equitable decision making; and to ensure all stakeholders have an equal voice.

- **A focus on facilitation, not service delivery**

PCPs are *not* service providers. Rather, they focus on collaboration and the facilitation of integration of services to promote better health outcomes for local communities.

- **A cost-effective model**

PCPs are designed to maximise the use of existing resources and, as such, are very cost-effective.

Above all, PCPs are focused on the needs of the local communities they serve, and the health and wellbeing of the people in these communities.

## JUST SOME EXAMPLES OF WHERE PCPs SHINE

PCPs are having a positive effect in many areas. Here are just some examples of their value to particular groups:

- **Older people**

PCPs have facilitated health and wellbeing programs for older people, such as fall prevention, e-health, exercise, nutrition, socialising and more.

- **People with disabilities**

PCPs build the capacity of service providers to understand and respond to the needs of vulnerable people, including people with developmental and physical disabilities.

- **Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD)**

PCPs support the service providers to be better informed on cultural awareness and the unique needs of complex community groups such as refugees, asylum seekers and new arrivals in local communities.

- **Chronic and Complex Needs**

PCPs have worked with service providers to develop and implement care pathways for clients with chronic and complex conditions.

There are many more examples in many communities across Victoria, where the lasting benefit of PCPs has been felt. Time and again, these very important groups are making a real difference to people's lives.

## INTERESTING STATS AND FACTS ABOUT PCPs

- More than 1,100 health providers – who are at the 'frontline' of Victoria's health system – are part of the PCP network.
- PCPs bring diverse groups together – welfare, disability, child youth and family services, not for profits, local councils, community health organisations and more – so that, in partnership, they improve the quality of life for local people.
- As early as 2004, a KPMG evaluation report found that PCPs led to earlier identification of client needs, faster response times, and improved access to coordinated services.
- The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2011-15 acknowledges PCPs as established mechanisms for collaborative and coordinated planning at the sub-regional level.
- PCPs are proven to help meet the needs of hard-to-reach and vulnerable communities.
- In creating a single suite of tools for client screening, referrals and coordinated care planning, PCPs have reduced the number of tools used from 350 to 1.
- In 2011/2012 PCP members sent 274,521 secure electronic referrals.

## WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE VALUE OF PCPs?

If you would like any further information about PCPs, please call your local PCP. We can talk over the phone or arrange a convenient time to meet.

*"...offers great opportunities to participate in and influence broader planning systems"*

- **Simon,**  
Aged Care Services Manager

*"We participate in leading edge health and community projects"*

- **Sue,**  
Community Health Services CEO

*"My family know that all services are working from one plan"*

- **Mei Ling,**  
Participant in PCP E-Careplanning Project

*"All the exercise I did – I really like it and it's good for me"*

- **Asfreen,** PCP Healthy Lifestyle Program

*"I did love it – the program is very beneficial to our health"*

- **Rosie,**  
Participant in PCP Falls Prevention Project

*"It's perfect for me because we gather there and communicate – and learn things, this is excellent for lonely people like me."*

- **Speros,**  
Participant in PCP Social Inclusion Initiative