

LOWER HUME ABORIGINAL HEALTH & WELLBEING PROGRAM

For nearly a decade the Lower Hume Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Program has been supporting the Lower Hume catchment (Mitchell and Murrindindi Shires) to deliver better health and wellbeing outcomes for the Aboriginal community. The model has evolved over time to align to the Hume Region Closing the Gap 2009-2013, Koolin Balit 2012-2022 and most recently to Korin Korin Balit-Djak 2017-2027.

The Lower Hume Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Program Officer was originally employed and managed through a local hospital. In 2014 management of the program was transferred to Lower Hume Primary Care Partnership (PCP) due to the **strong alignment to the core business of PCP** including;

- A partnership approach to improving health and wellbeing
- A focus on equitable access and outcomes
- A holistic view of preventing poor health and wellbeing outcomes.

Lower Hume PCP assists the Lower Hume Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Program to achieve **place-based outcomes** through integrating work with broader initiatives, having the support of a locally based team and connecting the program to the strong relationships of our members and partners.

The Lower Hume Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Program Officer has built **strong connections and significant trust** with the local Aboriginal community through Goranwarrabul House, the Seymour Local Aboriginal Network and the Taungurung Aboriginal Land and Water Council.

The Lower Hume Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Program facilitate a quarterly Lower Hume Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Collaborative meeting which provides the opportunity for **local input into the program**. The Lower Hume Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Collaborative is also a valued **opportunity for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workers to come together** to share information, gain cultural insight, discuss local issues and consider opportunities to better work together.



The Lower Hume Aboriginal Health & Wellbeing Program advocates for **culturally safe and appropriate service access and delivery** and continues to support many mainstream organisations throughout the Lower Hume catchment providing them with Aboriginal specific information and resources to assist them in implementing culturally appropriate and responsive approaches and practices within their workplaces.

The Lower Hume Aboriginal Health & Wellbeing Program is based out of **Goranwarrabul House** in Seymour and was one of 13 programs included in the Victorian gathering places evaluation. The Final Report titled *Health and wellbeing outcomes of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander gathering place model in Victoria: a place for inclusion, connection and empowerment* found that **gathering places have a noteworthy impact (in many different ways) on the health and wellbeing** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who participate in their programs and attend their venues.

Goranwarrabul House is one of the many achievements to come from the Lower Hume Aboriginal Health & Wellbeing Program; since being launched in 2011 Goranwarrabul House has become a recognised hub in the community, providing a **culturally safe and welcoming space** for the Aboriginal people to link-in and connect with services and community groups, **contributing to socially connected people, positive behaviours and healthy lifestyles**.

Goranwarrabul House is also a **first point of contact** for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workers who are visiting or are new to the area and want to connect and/or link-in with the Aboriginal community and is a place for workers from varying organisations to source local information to assist with Aboriginal patients/clients being referred back into the local area.



Summary of workplan against Korin Korin Balit Djak Priorities

2. Prioritising Aboriginal Culture & Community

Increase Aboriginal community-led initiatives that facilitate connection to culture, country and community to promote Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety.

- Support Aboriginal community-led initiatives that promote positive and healthy lifestyles and increases people's connection to culture and country.

4. Safe, Secure & Strong Families and Individuals

Better outcomes for Aboriginal children in out-of-home care.

- Promote and raise the profile of Goranwarrabul House to carers and support them to link-in with the Aboriginal community and access additional support/s.
- Improve networks with local child protection workers to increase their access to culturally appropriate information and support them to link in with Aboriginal workers and supports.

5. Physically, socially and emotionally healthy Aboriginal Communities

Promote and embed Aboriginal trauma-informed healing, recovery and resilience initiatives.

- Work with mainstream organisations to develop and/or deliver culturally appropriate workshops and education sessions for Aboriginal community.
- Support and empower Aboriginal people/community to establish and run special interest groups that promote social and cultural connection.

Invest in primary prevention, early detection & early intervention to reduce chronic disease and it's impacts.

- Continue to capture a true and current reflection of Aboriginal people's health in order to respond to their identified needs and priorities.
- Promote the Aboriginal Health Check (#715) to GP's as well as the Aboriginal community to empower them to request a health check.
- Coordinate, deliver and/or promote various Aboriginal specific health education and screening sessions.
- Advocate for improved health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal people.
- Engage and empower the Aboriginal community to be active participants in the development and implementation of initiatives that improve healthy eating and physical activity.

Improve cancer outcomes for Aboriginal people.

- Promote culturally safe cancer care and prevention including screening information, resources and training opportunities to mainstream services and the community.

Manage illness better through culturally responsive, connected supports and care.

- Work with mainstream service providers and broader networks to understand and implement culturally safe, appropriate and responsive practices and initiatives within their workplaces.