

Korin Korin Balit Djak Reporting Template

Korin Korin Balit Djak funded projects are to submit a project report every six months. This report is due for submission to the relevant Agency Performance Advisor in your Area by end of January and the end of July each financial year.

The purpose of these reports is to understand how the project was managed and implemented and the key learning from the project. This will assist with future planning for Korin Korin Balit-Djak initiatives that support community to achieve priority outcomes.

| Project | | | |
|-------------------|--|-----------------|------------|
| Prepared by: | Rebecca Welsh, Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Program Officer | | |
| Endorsed by: | Lee Coller, Interim Executive Officer, Lower Hume PCP 7/9/20 | | |
| Approved by: | | | |
| Commencement date | 01/07/2019 | Completion date | 30/06/2020 |

Project partners (please list all project partners engaged throughout the life of the project)

HOSPITALS & COMMUNITY SERVICES

- Nexus Primary Health
- Alexandra District Health
- Yea & District Memorial Hospital
- The Kilmore and District Hospital
- Seymour Health
- Eastern Health Aboriginal Health Team Child and Family Nurse
- Northern Health Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer
- GV Health Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer's

SERVICES & PROGRAMS

- Wallan Future Hub
- Murrindindi Shire Council
- Mitchell Shire Council
- FamilyCare
- The Bridge Youth Service
- Child Protection
- Victorian Alcohol & Drug Association (VAADA)
- Turning Point
- Commonground
- Rivers and Ranges Community Leadership Program
- Cancer Council
- Seymour FM
- Rodney Lees Optometrist
- Australian College of Optometry
- SalvoCare
- Seymour Neighbourhood House

- Seymour Men's Shed
- Think Place Family Violence Holistic Healing for Victorian Aboriginal Communities
- Primary Care Connect
- Central Hume Aboriginal Health & Community Support Worker (Central Hume PCP)
- Dementia Australia
- Diabetes Victoria
- Firefoxes Australia
- Kinglake Ranges Community Neighbourhood House
- Uniting Care

ABORIGINAL ORGANISATIONS, PROGRAMS & WORKERS

- Rumbalara Aboriginal Corporation
- Taungurung Land & Waters Council
- Hume Dhelk Dja Regional Action Group
- Hume RAJAC (Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee)
- Seymour Local Aboriginal Network
- Victims Assistance Program Koori Engagement Worker
- Aboriginal Health Education Department of Rural Health, University of Melbourne (Shepparton)
- Indigenous Advocate Rights, Information and Advocate Centre
- Lakidjeka Caseworker VACCA
- Victoria Police Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer (ACLO) + Police Aboriginal Liaison Officer (PALO)
- Indigenous Eye Health Network
- Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer
- Centrelink Indigenous Service Officer
- KESO's (Koori Education Support Officers) Dept of Education and Training

Project governance (what was the system of governance employed with this project? E.g. consortium, steering group)

The program is managed by Lower Hume Primary Care Partnership (PCP) and works closely with the community by facilitating a Lower Hume Aboriginal Health & Wellbeing Collaborative and being actively involved in the Seymour Local Aboriginal Network (LAN)

Please provide a succinct summary of the project over the course of its lifespan with consideration to engagement with the Aboriginal community and sector, systems strengthening, workforce capacity, and dissemination of learnings.

For nearly a decade the LH AH&W 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 Health Gap 2009-13, Koolin Balit 2012-22 and most recently to Korin Korin Balit Djak 2017-27.

In 2014 management of the LH AH&W Program was transferred to the Lower Hume Primary Care Partnership (PCP) due to the strong alignment with their core business. Lower Hume PCP assists the LH AH&W 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 its members and partners.

Prior to the LH AH&W Program commencing in the Lower Hume catchment it was reported that there was very little presence of Aboriginal specific workers, services or programs of any kind and if there was, it never lasted very long; it's believed this was due to there not being any accountability for the role being in the area, staff turn-over, low numbers of Aboriginal identified people, or over time the connection was lost. And there was no resemblance of an "Aboriginal community".

The Aboriginal people living in the Lower Hume catchment are mostly represented of people who are from different mobs (not Taungurung) who are displaced, and/or have a disconnection to their family, mob and culture.

Since commencing, the worker has continually explored ways to engage with the Aboriginal people / community to gain an understanding of their health issues and their experiences when accessing services; the worker has used this knowledge to advocate for improved outcomes relating to service delivery and access and implementing new initiatives.

- The worker supports Aboriginal people's capacity to be informed and make healthier choices to improve their health and wellbeing, sharing knowledge relating to referral pathways and linking-in with local health, wellbeing, community, allied health and specialist services.
- Through Goranwarrabul House and community engagement opportunities the worker promotes the program and distributes Aboriginal specific information and resources relating to healthy lifestyles and shares knowledge relating to Aboriginal workers, services and programs coming into the area.
- The LH AH&W Program has supported the community in building the profile of an "Aboriginal community" which has raised their existence within the wider community and from a cultural perspective has contributed to an increased sense of pride and belonging and overall social and cultural connectedness amongst the Aboriginal people/community.
- Over the years the worker has formed a strong, trusting and reputable rapport with professionals and
 mainstream organisations throughout the Lower Hume catchment supporting them to be culturally
 appropriate, respectful and welcoming for their Aboriginal consumers (and any future staff
 recruitment) and participates in various network committees as a representative for local Aboriginal
 health, wellbeing and cultural appropriateness.
- The LH AH&W Program is a first point of contact for new workers and programs (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) coming into the Lower Hume area. The LH AH&W Program offers a platform whereby individuals can arrange connection to the Aboriginal community and/or promote their role/program.

Did the project achieve its objectives? (please list the objectives of the project as outlined in the project plan and provide a brief summary of how these were achieved)

Objective

Focus Area 2.2

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

Summary / Achievements

- Seymour Local Aboriginal Network (LAN) the Program Officer actively involved with and supports the Seymour LAN with their monthly meetings and with the planning and coordination of their annual NAIDOC event, for the fourth year in a row they had a parade down the main street of Seymour ending at the park for food, culture, service engagement and family friendly activities. This year's event was the most successful event to date, due to the increased number of attendees and the number of local services that were involved either to have a stall and represent, promote and engage with the community or who had offered some form of support.
- Goranwarrabul House is a culturally safe, welcoming and familiar platform for the LHAH&W Program Officer to deliver a variety of health and wellbeing information, education and screening sessions. It provides the worker with opportunities to engage with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community enabling the worker to build rapport and trust. Often Goranwarrabul House is 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 community as well as a place for workers from varying organisation to source local information to assist them with Aboriginal patients/clients being referred back into their local area.
- *Treaty voting:* Goranwarrabul House was identified by the Victorian Treaty Advancement Elections Office as a suitable venue to be one of the North East Polling Places for the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria

- 6 adults and 2 teenagers (1x absentee vote, 5x locals, 2x from other towns) attended on the day to meet the candidates and to vote.
- Inland Rail Indigenous Participation Advisor made contact with me to introduce himself and explain the future rail project and the possible employment opportunities for Aboriginal people; I provided the Indigenous Participation Advisor with some background to the area and suggested names / contacts that he should also meet (e.g. Taungurung Land & Waters Council, Seymour LAN, RAJAC, Rumbalara, etc)
- Rumbalara Aboriginal Corporation continues to be co-located at Goranwarrabul House with a fulltime worker who covers AOD and the coordination of their outreach services. Having Rumbalara Aboriginal Corporation here in Seymour has been extremely positive and beneficial for the Aboriginal community giving them the option to link in with Aboriginal specific services and programs that are culturally appropriate and holistic approach to the client's needs.

Rumbalara AOD/Outreach Services Worker is available on any health screening days to support people who need further assistance or access to other programs e.g. housing, AOD, financial assistance, justice, etc

 Aboriginal Women's Gatherings - The Program Officer worked in collaboration with the Aboriginal Maternal Child Health Initiative to apply for the Hume Dhelk Dja Community Initiative funding to run Aboriginal Women's Gatherings in Seymour and Wallan. The Application was successful.

The purpose of the gatherings is to give Aboriginal women, parents, carers the opportunity to meet regularly for friendships, fun, support and connection to culture.

The gathering offered a safe space for the women to speak openly and freely, to feel empowered to share and make informed decisions about the types of cultural information and activities that are important to them, whilst creating a positive sense of connection.

• Seymour College - the Program Officer has supported and worked with an Aboriginal student from Seymour College who has been elected as the very <u>first</u> multicultural school captain and one of the teachers to explore ways they can work together to raise the profile of Aboriginal culture to strengthen Aboriginal students pride connection to culture and increase cultural awareness throughout the entire school environment. As a way of enhancing their capacity to implement their ideas and strategies I suggested that they consider applying for community grants to assist with any expenses; we identified the Hume Dhelk Dja Community Initiative Fund submitted and was successful in an application to implement a program that increases culture and pride for the Aboriginal Students, and cultural awareness for the whole school community.

• COVID-19

Seymour LAN – the Program Officer provided local support to the LAN Broker to identify key workers to be added to a list that will form a taskforce that will support / respond to community needs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Seymour LAN Facebook page is being utilised to post information relating to COVID-19 updates, messages that promote caring for our mob and self-care strategies and a form of low-level of communication to identify / assist with needs e.g. masks.

Lower Hume Aboriginal Health & Wellbeing Program – (1) the Program Officer has posted content on the Seymour LAN facebook page relating to COVID-19 updates, regulations and mask wearing;

(2) it was identified that some people in the Aboriginal community were unable to purchase masks due to availability or cost; in response, the Program Officer reached out to key contacts advocating for a supply of disposable masks be made available to Aboriginal people living in the Mitchell Shire area (an identified hot-spot), Rumbalara, the Seymour LAN and the Hume Dhelk Dja responded and provided masks – distribution of the masks has been coordinated between the Program Officer and the Rumbalara AOD/Outreach Worker.

Goranwarrabul House – in line with the government guidelines and under the direction of Seymour Health advice Goranwarrabul House was closed to community to reduce the spread of the virus and to protect the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people and community who are most at risk or vulnerable. The Program Officer remained available for contact via telephone, text message, email, facebook or facebook messaging and offering craft supplies to community as a way of keeping their minds busy during home lock down periods

Rumbalara Aboriginal Corporation – the Seymour community was included in Rumbalara's food parcel deliveries. I worked with the Rumba Outreach Worker to identify people / families in the community who might benefit from receiving one of the packages as well as helping with the deliveries. This food packages were delivered weekly and then fortnightly during the March/April period.

Focus Area 4.2

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

. Aboriginal children in out of home care

- (1) communication with child protection staff has improved with emails being shared relating to Goranwarrabul House, health, wellbeing, connection to culture, cultural appropriateness, and access to services / referral pathways.
- (2) the Aboriginal Maternal Child Health Initiative (AMCHI) has been operating as a pilot in the Mitchell Shire for the past 12½ months, the worker has made positive connection with families and carers of Aboriginal children providing them with information and support and has improved the rates for maternal and child health visits, immunisations and early years services. As a result, worker carers are aware of and now engaging with the Lower Hume Aboriginal Health & Wellbeing Program and furthermore are linking in with the screening programs (optometrist and dental), Rumbalara Outreach Services, Seymour Local Aboriginal Network and NAIDOC celebrations.

Unfortunately, despite all the positive outcomes the AMCHI worker had delivered, especially in such a short time-frame the pilot has come to an end and is no longer being funded / delivered in the Mitchell Shire. It is feared that this will have a significant impact on Aboriginal families who had engaged with the worker/program and potentially any future families who might have benefited from the support that was provided in this role.

To fill the gap / absence, the Program Officer is attending network meetings that this role would normally have attended adding to the existing workload.

Focus Area 5.2

Invest in primary prevention, early detection and early intervention to reduce chronic disease and its impacts

Improve cancer outcomes for Aboriginal people

Manage illness better through culturally responsive, connected supports and care

• Community engagement & health promotion

The Program Officer has participated as a stall holder in a number of community engagement events throughout the Lower Hume catchment using the opportunity to raise the profile of the program and to promote and distribute Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal health and wellbeing information and resources. In addition, the Program Officer showcases an interactive smoking display to highlight the chemicals in cigarettes and quit smoking information and resources e.g. my quit plan and promotion of Quitline number.

These events create opportunities for the Program Office to meet with Aboriginal people who are living in other towns, link-in and network with a different cohort of professionals / agencies while promoting Aboriginal health, wellbeing and cultural appropriateness to the broader community.

- Based on the needs / issues identified through various platforms (anecdotal feedback or reports of, communication raised at the Seymour LAN and reports from other workers e.g Rumbalara, KESOs and RIAC) the Program Officer plans, coordinates delivers and/or promotes Aboriginal specific health awareness/education and health screening sessions as a way of providing information and improving health, wellbeing and social connection.
- The Program Officer has supported the Lower Hume Prevention Collaborative with the roll out of the RESPOND Project in the Murrindindi Shire. A series of community workshops were held for community to identify what affects children's eating and physical activity; the aim of the workshops is to establish community driven actions to create positive change in helping children to eat healthy and stay active.
- The Program Office attends many network meetings as a representative for Aboriginal health, wellbeing and cultural appropriateness as a way of advocating for improved health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal people living in the Lower Hume catchment.
- The Program Officer has developed a screen saver / poster to further promote a list of information and resources that support workplaces to implement culturally safe, respectful and welcoming initiatives. The list of cultural responsive information and resources was initially tabled/distributed to members of the Lower Hume Service Development Collaborative where it was discussed and identified as valuable source of information that needed to be more than a paper-base tool that sat in a file somewhere.
 - we believe the screen saver will support the mainstream organisations in their efforts to increase cultural knowledge and understanding within their entire organisation and potentially reach more staff.
 - it's intended, although optional that each organisation of the LH PCP Service Development Collaborative will arrange for the screen saver slide to run automatically internally throughout their organisation on ALL of their computers.
 - to compliment the screen saver slide we had posters printed as another way to promote the link to cultural responsive information and resources within the organisations.

Korin Korin Balit Djak: Please provide a brief summary against the Key Performance Indicators for the life of the project

KPIs Summary report

Focus Area 2.2

- Number of participants
- Parents/families and individuals feel connected to country and culture [participant feedback]
- Number of initiatives delivered

Seymour LAN

- Attended 5 out of 5 LAN meetings in this reporting period.
- Facilitated <u>2</u> mtgs on behalf of the LAN Broker
- Support provided during the planning and coordination of the 2019 NAIDOC Parade
- Attended 4 planning meetings
- Approximately 200 people attended the event;
- 18 different agencies/groups including cultural heritage and craft were involved and represented on the day, many having information stalls.
- Local newspaper and WIN News coverage of the event
- <u>2</u> interviews on the local radio station (1x leading up to the event and 1x on the day)
- Overall feedback from the Seymour LAN debrief meeting was that it was the best event so far.

Goranwarrabul House

- The meeting room at Goranwarrabul House was used:
 - 58 times by various networks
 - 38 times by an Aboriginal person or group
 - Types of users were: Child Protection for supervised access visits, Self Advocacy Group, KESO mtg with families, the Seymour Aboriginal Women's Group, Family Led Decision Making Mtg, Lower Hume Service Development Collaborative Mtg, the Seymour LAN, Aboriginal community members,
- Number of visitors for this reporting period: 29
- Treaty voting: Goranwarrabul House selected as a venue for one of the North East Polling Places for the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria.
 - Number of attendees: $\underline{6}$ adults and $\underline{2}$ teenagers (1x absentee vote, 5x locals, 2x from other towns) attended on the day to meet the candidates and to vote.
- Inland Rail Indigenous Participation Advisor
 I provided the Indigenous Participation Advisor with some
 background to the area and suggested names / contacts that he
 should also meet e.g. Taungurung Land & Waters Council,
 Seymour LAN, RAJAC, Rumbalara,
- Rumbalara Outreach Services -
 - Number of intake / referrals: 206
 - Types of services/programs referred to: housing, AOD, justice, mental health, GP, financial assistance, family services, men's program, legal, ITC program, aged care,
- Aboriginal Women's Gatherings
 - Number of participants: 41 (plus 4 children)
 - Number of gathering held to date: 7
 - Varying ages
 - The women who have attended so far have not previously engaged with any other initiatives or groups
 - The gatherings are on hold due to COVID-19
- Seymour College
 - successfully applied for Hume Dhelk Dja Community Initiative funding to build a greater sense of pride amongst the Aboriginal students as well as increase cultural awareness amongst students and teachers throughout the entire school community.

Focus Area 4.2

 On <u>2</u> occasions Goranwarrabul House was used for supervised access visits. Better outcomes for Aboriginal children in out of home care Indicators

- number of carers visiting GH
- Information and resources shared
- Engage with Child Protection and promote the Lower Hume Aboriginal Health & Wellbeing Program & Gorawarrabul House
- <u>23</u> Aboriginal children who are in out of home care attended the Rumbalara Dental Clinic held at Goranwarrabul House.
- <u>2</u> Aboriginal children who are in out of home care attended the Optometrist Clinic held at Goranwarrabul House
- 34 times the Program Officer shared information and resources with child protection staff

Focus Area 5.2

Invest in primary prevention, early detection and early intervention to reduce chronic disease and its impacts

Improve cancer outcomes for Aboriginal people

Manage illness better through culturally responsive, connected supports and care

Indicators

- Promotion of health check
- Participating in working groups and consultations
- Participate in opportunities to promote and increase community knowledge and awareness
- Number of agencies

- Number of occasions the 715 Health Check was promoted
 - Community: 8
 - Networks: 6
- Optometrist screening clinics held at Goranwarrabul House
 - Screening was held on 2 occasions in this reporting period
 - 9 people attended
 - Adults: 2x male and 2 female
 - 5x Children; 2x were kids in out of home care
 - 4x reviews and 5x new (first visit)
 - 4x people were issued with glasses
- Dental screening clinics held at Goranwarrabul House
 - Screening was held on 4 occasions in this reporting period
 - <u>47</u> people attended
 - Adults: 4x male and 10x female 33x Children; 23x were kids in out of home care
- RESPOND Murrindindi
 - the Program Officer attended 3 training sessions
 - the Program Officer participated in the delivery of <u>2</u> community workshops.
 - a total of 13 hours
- Number of times QUIT SMOKING is promoted 4
 - Goranwarrabul House has a permanent display of quit smoking information and resources.
 - The Program Officer was invited to review/provide feedback on NO SMOKING signage that Seymour Health implementing.
- <u>6</u> times the Program Office shared information and resources that related to cancer
- Number of network mtgs attended in this reporting period: 34
- Number of agencies actively engaged with that are implementing cultural responsive actions: 11
- Number of times the Program Officer provided information and resources that related to Aboriginal health, wellbeing and social / cultural connection:
 - Networks: 107
 - Community: 51
 - Students or new workers: <u>12</u>
- Number of occasions the Program Officer participated in community engagement events: 9
- Number of times the Program Officer provided information and resources that specifically related to cultural responsiveness, education and training: 33

- Posters promoting 'Making Your Workplace Culturally Safe, Respectful and Welcoming' information and resources have been printed and distributed to:
 - Lower Hume: Service Development Collaborative Group: <u>10</u> agency representatives
 - And then distributed throughout the Hume Region (by M. Harmer the Diversity Advisor): 12x Aged Care Services, 3x to Njernda, 4x to Rumbalara Elders Facility, 6x for other parts of Rumbalara, then others to Loddon Mallee Hume Aboriginal Network, Mildura AC, Bendigo D Aboriginal Corporations, Mungabareena AC, Swan Hill AC, Uniting Care Wangaratta x 3, Alpine at home x 1, NDIS Wangaratta x1, and GOTAFE Benalla x2.

Please identify the key learnings from this project, this may include both strengths and weaknesses

Strengths

- The Lower Hume Aboriginal Health & Wellbeing Program has been in operation for almost 10 years now and has achieved significant outcomes, some of which include:
 - The establishment of Goranwarrabul House, the community's gathering place provides a sense of belonging.
 - Observation that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are proud of their identity, they feel more connected to their Aboriginal community and culture.
 - The Program Officer has built relationships within the community, gaining a strong understanding
 of the local health and wellbeing issues and needs of Aboriginal people, families, and the
 community.
 - The Program Officer has established positive relationships with mainstream services throughout the Lower Hume catchment, raising the profile of Aboriginal health, wellbeing and supporting cultural appropriateness contributing to improved service access, delivery and referral pathways.
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a better understanding and awareness of Close the Gap initiatives and the importance of making healthier choices.
 - The Program Officer is a first point of contact, resulting in an increase of Aboriginal specific services and program's in the area.
 - Implementation of Aboriginal specific health screening initiatives e.g. \$10 glasses, hearing and dental.
 - The Program Officer continually advocates for improved health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the Lower Hume catchment on a local, regional and state-wide level.

Weaknesses

- Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Islander people of all ages to thrive, to build resilience and
 live healthy lifestyles are limited, due to the lack of sustainable financial investment in Aboriginal
 health across the Lower Hume catchment this prevents the implementation of meaningful and longerterm initiatives that support Aboriginal people and their capacity to make self-informed decisions
 relating to their health and wellbeing. For example, this program in the past has only been funded for
 6-12 month funding cycles
- Lack of permanent Aboriginal workforce / employment opportunities across the Lower Hume catchment to support patient / client when accessing mainstream services. For example, pilot of AMCHI program

What adaptations and changes were made along the way? And why?

- The Lower Hume Aboriginal Health & Wellbeing Program has recently undergone a transfer of business from Seymour Health to Taungurung Land & Waters Council.
 - A working group with representatives from Lower Hume PCP, Seymour Health, TL&WC and the DHHS was established to ensure a smooth transition.
 - The Program Officer will continue to be managed by the LH PCP; a formal lease agreement for Goranwarrabul House has been written up and signed off.
- The coronavirus has had a significant impact on the local Aboriginal community, their face-to-face groups and meetings and the closure of Goranwarrabul House which as a result has contributed to isolation, especially for people who need or thrive on that regular connection

Please detail improvements to the health and wellbeing of the local Aboriginal community, including both qualitative and quantitative data collected throughout the project (for example the number of participants in health checks, the number of booklets distributed, the number of training sessions held, percentage increases etc.)

Refer to KPIs above

Did the project meet its timelines and financial commitments?

Yes, see attached financial acquittal

Are there any future plans for the project (such as will the project continue)?

The program is ongoing and will continue to respond to the needs of the local Aboriginal community.

Attachments

- Various images to
- Report from the Seymour Aboriginal Women's Group
- Copy Seymour LAN NAIDOC Parade flyer showcasing the different agencies involved
- Copy of screen saver: promoting information and resources that assist with making workplaces culturally safe, appropriate, welcoming and respectful
- COVID-19



Top left: display of information and resources at an event;
Top right: cultural resources at Goranwarrabul House;
Centre: Goranwarrabul House;
Bottom left: sample of community engagement project;
Bottom right: Seymour LAN NAIDOC Parade down the main street of Seymour.



Seymour Aboriginal Women's Group



Copy Seymour LAN NAIDOC Parade flyer – showcasing the different agencies involved



Copy of screen saver that was developed to promote information and resources that could assist with making workplaces culturally safe, appropriate, welcoming and respectful



Message posted on the Seymour LAN Facebook page