

Health Promotion news

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From the Transition Manager

Welcome to the first article for the Health Promotion Service. Over the last three months Health Promotion has

been developing a new service delivery model to address the population health challenges of over 1.1 million people in

our new Area Health Service. The draft proposal has been finalised.

With an expanded population base the need for effective health programs that deliver benefit to the community in promoting positive well-being, reducing preventable illness and lowering overall health care expenditure is vital.

We look forward to working together to take the best programs and approaches from both South East and Illawarra and establish a new Health Promotion Service that will improve health and reduce health inequities, establish strategic partnerships and improve the quality of health promotion action across the Area. ❖

ASSISTing childhood obesity

Monique Hauber-Davidson | Communication and Marketing Co-ordinator, HPS

The Health Promotion Service has been working for the last two months on a submission to NSW Health for a world-first primary prevention program for childhood obesity.

The \$5 million NSW Health 'ASSIST' program, part of the NSW Chronic Disease Prevention Strategy (2003-2007), will implement a major initiative to prevent childhood obesity in one Area Health Service. About 22 per cent of Australian children and adolescents are considered overweight or obese and rates have tripled over the last 15 years.

The ASSIST program is an innovative answer from NSW Health to the so-called "investment failure" of prevention programs. It's sometimes claimed that primary prevention strategies in Australia have failed because of a lack of investment in programs as opposed to poor design or execution.

The ASSIST funding will enable one Health Service to deliver a major primary prevention childhood obesity program that will be applied at an intensity and duration sufficient to deliver health and economic benefits.

ASSIST is the first known program of its kind in the world to invest such significant funds in childhood obesity prevention. In addition to the expected health benefits, it will create Australia-wide, and even international, interest as its progress will be keenly monitored by experts throughout the health and academic world.

The Health Promotion Service has an excellent track record in programs addressing childhood obesity. The

Good Food for Children program implemented in south eastern Sydney worked successfully with childcare settings on nutrition issues and staff in the Illawarra have researched the most effective ways to increase physical activity in the school playground.

Health Promotion is a keen applicant for the ASSIST program. A strong team from across the Area comprising of individuals with extensive experience in obesity research and health promotion are working on the application, due at the end of March 2005.

For more information contact Monique Hauber-Davidson on 9382 8124. ❖

Memorial tapestries find a home

Louise Saville | Public Relations Manager, TSH

After three years of hard work by the Bicentennial Tapestry Re-weaving Committee at Sutherland Hospital, John Ralf's memorial tapestry is once again hanging in the hospital for all to enjoy.

The tapestry, which was created to honour of the volunteer bushfire fighters who lost their lives at Menai (1977), Waterfall (1980) and Grays Point (1983), is fittingly constructed of three 180cm high panels.

The Committee was brought together to replace one of the panels which was stolen.

Through the generous support of the local community the Committee was able to raise sufficient funds to have

the missing panel re-woven by the Victorian Tapestry Workshop.

On Sunday 4 September, the Committee oversaw the re-hanging of the tapestries in the Atrium of the new hospital building, during a re-dedication ceremony. ❖