

ewba in action...



Morphett Vale and Murray Bridge communities share how they've put *eat well be active* into action

Name of site and author of this story:

Aboriginal Primary Health Care Unit (APHCU) and the women from the Women's Cooking Group, including Sandy Wilson, Aboriginal Healthy Living Coordinator and Lyn Kartinyeri, Community Volunteer.

What has your site been doing in relation to ewba's key message/s and Strategy/ies for action? Who has been involved?

The Aboriginal Primary Health Care Unit in Murray Bridge has developed a women's cooking program with the support of *eat well be active (ewba)* Murray Bridge.

The program includes:

- Nutrition information sessions where participants talk about healthy food, share their experiences and learn from each other.
- Information on how to eat well on a budget.
- Supermarket tours / reading food labels.
- Healthy cooking sessions using recipes from the 'Deadly Tucker' Cookbook.
- Conducting cooking demonstrations at community events in Murray Bridge such as 'Close the Gap' Day.

Has this been a new event/project/activity/practice/environmental changes/policy for your site, or does it build on existing elements?

The women's cooking program has been a new initiative. The sessions are conducted fortnightly and are planned in advance by the participants. Together, the group identifies what topics they would like to learn more about.

Lyn Kartinyeri, Community Volunteer, has been the key facilitator of the program. Annabelle Wilson (ewba PhD candidate) has utilised her experience as a Dietitian to assist in planning and facilitating the program. Housing SA has also supported the program by providing \$1000 funding, which was used to purchase basic cooking utensils and electric frying pans.

What has been the best part of your site's action/s?

The women have been involved in the development of each session and the direction the program has taken. It has been designed primarily by them to meet their needs.

Having developed a range of new skills and improved their knowledge and understanding, the participants have developed confidence in nutrition and healthy eating and can now take a leadership role at community events such as delivering healthy cooking demonstrations.

The sessions have been delivered so that the group talks about healthy food and cooking and shares their own experiences and prior knowledge. This has allowed everyone in the group, including the facilitators, to learn from each other.

What has been the biggest challenge (if any) that has had to be overcome?

It has been crucial to ensure that the program is delivered in a way that is culturally appropriate and meets the needs and interests of all of the women present. This was achieved by working with the women to plan and deliver the sessions.

What have been some of the outcomes so far, what changes have you noticed, or what are you hoping for as a result of your new activity/project/policy?

The program has delivered some fantastic outcomes so far. The participants have improved their knowledge and understanding on a range of topics in basic nutrition, food budgeting, healthy cooking, label reading and cooking skills. There have been some opportunities for training and development, for example a number of women have received a certificate in food handling. Ideally, the women involved in this program will continue to play a leadership role and share their skills with their community, for example at community events.

What do the community say about this?

The women have reported that they found the program enjoyable, informative and that they have learnt a lot. A number of the women also consistently reported how they have communicated what they have learnt through the program to the wider community, including their family members.

Positive feedback was received from the Murray Bridge Aboriginal community when the women were involved in cooking demonstrations at community events. This resulted in discussions with multiple community members about nutrition and cooking.

Where to for the future?

Funding has been secured from another source so that this program will be able to continue with another group of women. Ideally, the new group of women and interested women from the last group will receive some more formal training in nutrition (that still meets their interests and needs) so that they are better equipped to take the information back to their community.

What advice would you give to others who would like to start a similar project?

It is vital that the group is designed to meet the needs of the women. For example, ask questions such as, *“what does the group want to know/ learn about and what is the best way to deliver the information?”*

With this group, talking and sharing together has worked well and allowed participants and facilitators to learn from each other. Practical activities such as cooking and a supermarket tour have allowed the women to practice and cement their skills.

It is also important to consider how the information can be transmitted back to the rest of the community so it has a wider reach, and how this may continue once the formal part of the program has concluded, to ensure sustainability.

Aboriginal Primary Health Care Unit (APHCU) Women's Cooking Group



Cooking classes & nutrition information



Supermarket tours

