

## Community Watch Partnership Project – Information sheet

### What is the Community Watch Partnership Project?

The Community Watch Partnership is a joint partnership initiated by DPV Health, Hume Whittlesea Primary Care Partnership (HWPCP), Whittlesea Community Connections (WCC), and Banksia Gardens Community Services. It seeks to develop an enabling partnership of local agencies, groups, and networks across Hume and Whittlesea with a shared interest to **promote wellbeing** amongst vulnerable members of the community impacted by COVID-19.

### Why was it established?

The project was developed in response to the current COVID-19 pandemic. Due to COVID-19, services have had to find innovative ways to adapt the way they engage with community members, participants, and clients to ensure they are continuing to receive support during these uncertain times. It is likely your organisation has experienced internal changes due to COVID-19 such as re-orienting its priorities and approach to service delivery, as well as changes to staffing numbers, roles, and responsibilities. Social distancing measures may have also increased the vulnerability of community members who were regularly in touch with your service. Given these issues may not be resolved quickly, even as restrictions ease, the Community Watch Project has been established as a proactive response to ensure the wellbeing of community members is maintained now and into the recovery phase of COVID-19, and beyond.

### How does the project work?

The Project will work to enable and **build capacity** in agencies interested in undertaking telephone wellbeing checks and supporting a more coordinated approach to community support within Hume and Whittlesea. As a Partnership we want to identify **what your organisation has done** to adapt and respond to COVID-19, **what you have done well**, and what resources or **assistance you might need** to ensure your organisation can continue servicing the needs of vulnerable members of the community into recovery. We understand the recovery phase of COVID-19 to be the transition back into community life as social distancing restrictions ease, and the additional barriers to community participation and wellbeing that COVID-19 has contributed to also begin to lessen.

While it is unclear whether we will return to business-as usual during the recovery phase of COVID-19, it is nonetheless imperative to plan for this transition while remaining flexible and nimble to the needs of community. The Community Watch Project will contribute to this by scaling the knowledge and learnings gained from the work of the Partnership to develop a set of guiding resources to support community to create a more coordinated long-term approach to wellbeing across the regions.

### Why should your organisation join the Partnership?

As a Partnership we are seeking to **enhance, not duplicate, existing efforts** of local agencies, groups, and networks in the region by working alongside each other to co-create solutions to support community wellbeing. Participating agencies will have access to guiding resources to establish a check-in and support service for your clients and community members, or to identify ways to improve your existing check-in service if you already have similar processes and protocols in place.

These guiding resources include:

- information to support staff and volunteers undertaking wellbeing checks
- guidance on managing data and privacy
- tools for collecting information on the experiences of affected community members
- online directory to identify local services, groups, and programs for referrals

Depending on where your organisation is at, you may choose to engage with the Project at **varying levels**:

1. Accessing the online directory and associated resources
2. Participating in a community of practice with partners of the project to share knowledge, experience, resources, and practice approaches to co-create a coordinated approach to wellbeing across the regions
3. Collecting and sharing information about the strategy your organisation has taken to continue supporting vulnerable community members and the impact this has had for their wellbeing.

### How can your organisation join the Partnership?

To identify the needs of community organisations in the region, and ensure we can offer you the appropriate resources, a [short survey](#) has been created. You can indicate your participation in the Partnership at the end of the survey. We will then be in contact with you shortly after. Click [here](#) to access the survey.

If you have any other questions, please:

- Visit our website for more information on the [Community Watch Partnership Program](#)
- Contact Neela Konara, Team Leader Population Health and Community Watch Partnership Program at [populationhealth@dpvhealth.org.au](mailto:populationhealth@dpvhealth.org.au) or call 03 8401 2751