

# Collaborative Evaluation Unit

Newsletter, July 2021

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## Our Projects

Work has commenced on the evaluation of the Latrobe Social Prescribing project. The Hazelwood Health clinic has partnered with the Latrobe Health Assembly to employ two community connectors who will be working with community members to help them become more connected with their local facilities and organisations.

The Social Prescribing project aims to improve the health and wellbeing of local communities and its residents. In addition to the Social Prescribing project, the Latrobe Community Health Service has partnered with Gippsland Primary Health Network to establish the Latrobe Smoking support service which will work with individuals helping them to reduce or quit smoking.

It is so great to see these initiatives up and running. The CEU is proud to be working on these projects, which are making a real difference to the lives of individuals and communities.



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## Our Story

### Who are we and why are we here?

The Collaborative Evaluation Unit started after the development of the Latrobe Health Innovation Zone *Health and Well Being Charter* in 2019. From that project we realized that, more broadly, there was a need for **a locally based evaluation unit** who could help **build local evaluation and research capacity**. Our aim is to work in partnership, incorporating a multidisciplinary team approach with expertise across a variety of disciplines to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of community and placed-based projects and initiatives. The CEU has successfully completed a number of evaluations to date and has the ability to respond to the changing environment with collaboration as its core value. We are available for consultations, evaluations and project work and we look forward to working with you in the future.

### What do we evaluate and why do you need us?

We evaluate community, government and enterprise projects and programs. We interview staff, analyse data and identify what went well in the project, what needs to be changed and what could be improved. We make actionable recommendations based on our findings and pass all of this information on to you.

Our aim however, is on building the capacity of people in Gippsland. To do this, we

make it our priority to **work collaboratively with you on each and every evaluation**. We want to teach you how to conduct effective interviews, how to analyse and categorise the data. We write the reports, do the research and publish the articles but we also collaborate with you, so you can take these tools with you into the future.

### **How can we help?**

We offer a range of services that we tailor to your needs. We do training, professional development, research, capacity building, and evaluations. **We tailor our services to suit you!** Contact us today to talk about your project and find out how we can help.

[Contact Us](#)

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## **CEU Workshop Survey**

Have you been to one of our workshops? Do you have an amazing idea for a workshop that you think we'd be awesome facilitators for? We want to hear from you (it'll only take a few minutes)

[Have your say and complete our survey!](#)

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## **Our Publications**

Did you know that you can view our publications and download our evaluation reports from our website? Just click the button below to read about some of the incredible community programs having an impact on the Latrobe Valley and Gippsland.

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

## A thematic analysis of the perceptions of a community-based exercise program on the health and well-being of ageing adults

Elissa Dabkowski BN (Hons), RN, B. Physio , Joanne E. Porter PhD, MN Grad Dip CC, Grad Cert Ed, Grad Dip HSM, BN, RN, Michael Barbagallo PhD, BSc (Hons), Grad Cert Ed (Tert Ed)

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### Funding information:

The authors received a grant of \$3000 from the Foundation of Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) to complete an evaluation. The authors declare that FRRR had no involvement in this study.

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### Abstract

This study explores a weekly community-based exercise program (CBEP) for ageing adults in Gippsland, Victoria, Australia. This program aims to improve the health and well-being of ageing adults and was evaluated using an exploratory qualitative study design. Four focus group discussions and two individual interviews were conducted before a thematic analysis using Braun & Clark's (2006) six-step approach. A total of 23 participants were involved in the study over a 6-week period. The thematic analysis resulted in two main themes: (a) meeting community needs and (b) benefits to health and well-being. Five minor themes stemmed from these two themes, in which participants identified that a service gap existed within the community and the program was adaptive in its design to meet community needs. Participants reported benefits to health and well-being, specifically perceived improved mobility and independence, social connections and 'recharging the batteries to feel good'. The inclusion of Tai Chi exercises was noted for increased vitality and pain management benefits. The role of the exercise instructor was deemed to be instrumental to the success of the CBEP. The CBEP provides motivation for older adults to attend, increasing physical activity. Future CBEPs for ageing adults should provide a social component and relevant health education for participants. Exercises should be safely adapted by the exercise instructor to suit people of various abilities and to promote a more 'inclusive' environment.

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## A thematic analysis of the perceptions of a community-based exercise program on the health and well-being of ageing adults.

Elissa Dabkowski BN (Hons), RN, B. Physio, Joanne Porter, PhD, MN Grad Dip CC, Grad Cert Ed, Grad Dip HSM, BN RN, & Michael Barbagallo, Phd, GSc (Hons), Grad Cert Ed (Tert Ed), M. (2021).

#### Abstract

Mental health and suicide prevention are national health priorities in Australia, with research currently focussed towards the ZERO Suicide (ZS) initiative. The aim of this review was to evaluate the impact of suicide prevention programmes, in particular the ZS prevention initiative. A systematic review using the PRISMA guidelines was conducted using six EBSCO Host databases; Academic Search Complete, Australian/New Zealand Reference Centre, CINAHL Complete, MEDLINE, APA PsycINFO, and APA Psyc Articles. The data extracted from the eligible papers were analysed using a thematic approach. The final data set consisted of fourteen ( $n = 14$ ) peer reviewed articles meeting the eligibility criteria, which included quantitative ( $n = 10$ ), mixed methods ( $n = 2$ ), and qualitative studies ( $n = 2$ ). Results indicated variances between suicide prevention programmes with some papers examining single workshops and others assessing multimodal, organizational interventions. Five major themes were produced from this review including measuring the success of suicide prevention programmes, improvements to the delivery of suicide prevention programmes, barriers to implementing changes, cultural considerations, and further research required for suicide prevention programmes. This review concludes that further long-term research is required to evaluate the implementation and efficacy of suicide prevention programmes in health care. Cultural awareness in suicide prevention training is another area that may benefit from further research. A growing body of evidence establishes the need for multimodal and organizational approaches for suicide prevention initiatives.

An exploration into suicide prevention initiatives for mental health nurses: A systematic literature review.

Elissa Dabkowski BN (Hons), RN, B. Physio, Joanne Porter, PhD, MN Grad Dip CC, Grad Cert Ed, Grad Dip HSM, BN RN



#### they learnt



Dressing for Success: "they stood up **straighter** and with more **confidence** when they came out of the change room in their new clothes, and that was a big step for their **self-esteem**".

Mock Interviews: "Once students had done their interview, they were all feeling very **proud** of themselves which is **fantastic**. I was very proud and quite overwhelmed, they had come such a long way".

## Our Publications

## About us

The Collaborative Evaluation Unit (CEU) is an innovative initiative that aims to build evaluation capacity, research and expertise in Gippsland. As a local provider, the CEU understands the value of listening to the community and has the ability to deliver timely, rigorous and sustainable evaluations tailored to the needs of a wide variety of organisations. The CEU provides training, workshops and mentoring to build capacity to enable organisations to conduct meaningful evaluations.

## Visit our website