



Mental Health Carers Program Report

For further information contact:

Kaye Graves
Senior Manager
Prevention and Population Health
Phone: (03) 5434 4300
Email: kayegraves@bchs.com.au

Megan O'Keefe
MHCP Health Promotion
Phone: (03) 5434 4300
Email: MeganO'Keefe@bchs.com.au

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Carer is someone who provides unpaid assistance to family or friends with Care needs. They are parents, children, partners, relatives or friends who all assist with a variety of personal care, health care, transport, household tasks and a multitude of other activities with the belief that they can provide better care for their loved one than other available services may be able to. It is estimated that 94% of people requiring care are currently being Cared for by an unpaid Carer, in financial terms, saving the Australian economy \$60.3 Billion dollars annually. (Carers Victoria, 2016)

As this report will show, the general health and wellbeing of Carers lags far behind the rest of society with increased rates of depression and anxiety, poorer sleeping habits, higher risk factors for chronic disease and, with added time restraints, lower levels of healthy lifestyle choices such as healthy diet and adequate exercise levels.

This report will outline the results of 75 Health Assessment/Health Coaching participants ranging in age from 16 to 75+ years. All participants identified as a Carer; caring for someone who suffers from mental illness either as their primary condition or as a secondary outcome of their disability.

The Mental Health Carers Wellbeing Program was developed to support Carers to continue in their role by maintaining their own health and providing support to increase their satisfaction within their role; ultimately leading to a greater sense of health and wellbeing. As this report will prove, with adequate support, information and improved referral pathways, we are able to decrease the risk of chronic disease and mental health concerns within the Carers population and increase their personal sense of wellbeing; leading to an increased longevity in their ability to sustain their caring role and allowing better outcomes for all - physically, mentally, socially and financially.

ABOUT BENDIGO COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

Bendigo Community Health Services have over forty years of local health experience, understanding local health issues, and responding to community needs through a range of programs, services and partnerships.

The Bendigo Community Health Services (BCHS) Carer Wellbeing Program is an organizational wide approach, utilizing current and well-established service infrastructure to produce a quality model in support of mental health carers. The program endeavours to improve the health and wellbeing of carers, resourcing and empowering them and their families to have better quality lives, and assist them to continue as resilient and healthy carers. The program recognizes that carers can be children, adolescents or adults; thus providing a service relevant across the age continuum. The Carer Wellbeing Program assists mental health carers to manage their own health and wellbeing needs by having the opportunity to access health promoting programs that better enable the carer to manage their caring role alongside their own health needs. BCHS is committed to creating a self-sustaining structure to reduce isolation and provide opportunities for mental health carers to access resources that would enhance their and their families' mental health and wellbeing. The program is committed to building sustainable systems, both formal and informal, to promote optimal health and wellbeing and reduce the risk of carers developing mental health issues.

This report will outline the findings, implementations and recommendations made in the last 12 months for Carers involved in the Mental Health Carers Program and highlight the importance of health assessment and health coaching in this process.

Target Group of Bendigo Community Health Services Mental Health Carers Wellbeing Program:

- Mental Health Carers
- Aged 16 years and over
- Residing in the City of Greater Bendigo and surrounding areas

HEALTH OF CARERS

The constitution of the World Health Organisation states that the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition. In order to achieve this, it is vital that greater emphasis is placed on health promotion and disease prevention rather than concentrating our resources predominantly on a medical paradigm that incorporates clinical and curative services. The aim of the Mental Health Carers wellbeing program has been to support Carers to achieve a high standard of health, to create an opportunity for change and to focus on positive health outcomes for all through health promotion and disease prevention practice.

Wellbeing

Wellbeing - Is not just the absence of disease or illness. It is a combination of physical, mental, emotional and social factors

It is estimated that 2.7 million or 12% of Australians were identified as carers; providing essential support for friends & family with disabling conditions.

Care givers have higher levels of poor Mental and Emotional Health: Estimates show that between 40-70% of Caregivers have significant symptoms of depression and anxiety related disorders.

Care givers have higher levels of stress and frustration and voice feelings of loss of self-identity, lower levels of self-esteem, constant worry and feelings of helplessness and uncertainty.

Care Givers often ignore their own health and wellbeing and are 40% more likely to suffer from a chronic health conditions such as Heart Disease, Diabetes, Cancer and Arthritis. (Carers Victoria).

Care givers also have a higher rate of obesity and lifestyle related illness, as well as higher rates of physical ailments such as reflux, headaches, sleep abnormalities and musculoskeletal disorders.

ABOUT THE MENTAL HEALTH CARERS PROGRAM

Aim

To provide flexible, responsive options to enable enhanced quality of life for families, carers, children and young people impacted by mental illness.

Objectives

- Improve family functioning and social support for families, carers, children and young people affected by mental illness.
- Improve capacity for prevention and early intervention for mental illness.
- Facilitate a partnership of agencies to deliver a range of support services to carers.
- Increase resilience and coping skills for program participants.
- Increase awareness and understanding of mental health issues in the community.
- Improved emotional health, well-being and quality of life.
- Improved ability to sustain the caring role and ability to live as a functioning community member.
- Reduction of stress in the short and long term.
- Improved familial relationships and functioning.
- Balance between caring role and other aspects of a carers life.
- Improved resilience of children and young people.
- Improved linkage with relevant services.

Wellbeing

The average wellbeing score for Australians is 75, for Carers in Australia it is 58.5.

What happens?

- Comprehensive Health & Wellbeing Assessment
- Plan & Referrals
- Follow-up Health Coaching

WHAT IS A CARER

Definitions

Carer (Program Guidelines)

*“A carer is a person who is actively caring for a person with a mental illness,
with whom they have an ongoing relationship”*

Carer (BCHS Definition)

A person of any age, who without being paid, cares for another person who needs ongoing support because of a mental illness. A carer may or may not be a family member and may or may not live with the person. For the purposes of the Mental Health Community Based Program, a carer is someone who provides psychosocial support and assistance in activities of daily living. The carer's own needs and daily activities are interrupted by the support and assistance they provide in their role as a carer.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU ATTEND THE MENTAL HEALTH CARER PROGRAM

Health and Wellbeing assessments provide the opportunity to look at both the health status and behaviours of mental health carers and provide a base framework on which to support health modification, behaviour change where need is identified.

Part 1 – 90 min Health & Wellbeing Assessment

- Physical health, emotional health, nutrition, physical activity, sleep, random Blood Glucose & Cholesterol, blood pressure, risk factors and family history is collected.
- Identify strengths & focused change.
- Develop a Health & Wellbeing Plan.

Part 2 – Phone call 1 month

- Support
- Check progress
- Referrals

Part 3 – Review appointment 3 months

- Revisit Plan
- Celebrate changes
- Further follow-up
- New referrals as required

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WHY ATTEND THE MENTAL HEALTH CARERS PROGRAM:

Health & Wellbeing Assessment

It is vital for carers to maintain good health, but it can be difficult to stay healthy as a carer. By carers having access to a health and wellbeing assessment the benefits for the carer are:

- Promotion of their health
- Reduction in the risk of chronic health conditions
- Reduction in 'burn out' & poor health
- To energise, enjoy life & remain connected

When compared with the general Australian population carers reported significantly lower subjective wellbeing across all domains. Thirty-seven percent of carers reported experiencing severe to extremely severe symptoms of depression and stress. Their chronic health conditions included:

- Physical inactivity
- Poor diet & nutrition
- Excess weight
- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol
- High risk alcohol consumption
- Tobacco smoking

Health Coaching

Health coaching allows the carer to discuss their individual circumstances and journey. From here they are able to gain assistance in:

- Their goals
- Planning with support how to work towards these changes
- Identifying & overcoming barriers
- Other supports & referrals as needed

Through the life coaching sessions some personal goals for the carer may include:

- Increased personal time
 - Eating smaller meals
 - Having healthier snacks
 - Improving strength
 - Smoke less, Quit
-

- Make my next appointment for... (health screen, follow up appointment, etc)

WHERE TO FROM HERE

Referral Options

- Doctor
- Dentist
- Counsellor
- Physical Activity Groups
- Carers Services
- Support Groups
- General Counselling
- Financial Counsellor
- Hearing & Vision
- Specialist Services
- Sleep Services

Referral Options within Bendigo Community Health Services

- Men's & Women's Health
- Walking Group
- Strength Training
- Tai Chi
- Diabetes Educator
- Diabetes 4 Life Prevention Program
- General Counselling
- Podiatry
- Legal Information
- Alcohol & Other Drugs Counselling
- Quit Program
- Nutrition Group
- Community Cooking

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

A total of 75 Carers participated in the health assessment, health coaching program over the past twelve months. Of those participants 67 were female and 7 male. Age ranges were from 16 – 75 years with 51% of participants being over the age of 60 years.

Findings indicated that both smoking and alcohol consumption were low level health risk indicators with a very low percentage of participants actively smoking or consuming dangerous levels of alcohol.

Inadequate dietary intake and physical activity levels were both indicated as risk factors for carers with 54% participating in less than the recommended physical activity levels and 78% reporting inadequate fruit and vegetable intake.

Areas of particular concern included mental health (50% at risk of depression and 40% anxiety using verified assessment tools; GAD and Beyond Blue Depression checklist). Ninety-one percent of participants were at medium or high risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes and over 58% reported irregular sleeping patterns with 26% being assessed as suffering moderate or severe insomnia.

	% High Risk	%Medium Risk
Blood Pressure	6%	22%
Cholesterol	20%	
Type 2 diabetes risk	57%	34%
Waist Circumference	33%	30%
People who did not meet Australian Dietary Guidelines	Fruit 45% Vegetables 78%	
Inadequate Physical Activity	54%	
Depression	50%	
Anxiety	40%	
Insomnia	58%	Sub Threshold 34%
		Clinical insomnia Moderate 18%
		Clinical Insomnia Severe 8%

FINDINGS

BLOOD PRESSURE

Blood pressure is the pressure of the blood in the arteries as it is pumped around the body by the heart. Blood pressure is measured by two numbers. The larger number, systolic, is the pressure in the arteries as the heart squeezes blood out during each beat. The lower number, diastolic, indicates the pressure in the arteries as the heart relaxes before the next beat.

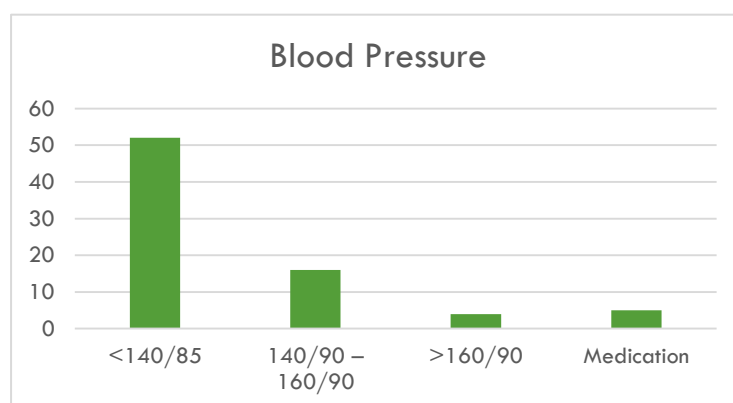
Blood pressure does not stay the same all the time – it changes to meet the body's needs and is affected by various factors including breathing or emotional state, exercise and sleep.

The risk factors for high blood pressure include:

- *High cholesterol*
- *Smoking*
- *Diabetes*
- *Overweight*
- *Physical inactivity*
- *Social isolation*

Two out of five people can successfully lower their blood pressure by making adjustments to their lifestyle.

The Carers Health and Wellbeing assessment showed that 25% of participants had a blood pressure reading that was considered to be at significant risk during the initial assessment.



At the 3 month follow up, 35% of those identified to be at risk had taken steps to improve their blood pressure with good effect.

Identified interventions to reduce blood pressure included increased physical activity levels; GP assisted reduction (including medication) and decreased stress and anxiety levels.

CHOLESTEROL

Cholesterol is a fat, made in the body by the liver. Cholesterol also comes into the body through some foods – this is called dietary cholesterol. Dietary cholesterol is found in animal products, such as eggs, meats and full-fat dairy.

There are two types of cholesterol:

Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) – often called the ‘bad’ cholesterol as it sticks to the walls of arteries causing them to narrow

High-density lipoprotein (HDL) – often called the ‘good’ cholesterol because it helps to take the ‘bad’ cholesterol out of the blood stream. HDL cholesterol is protective of the heart and helps prevent heart disease.

	Normal range	At risk
Total	5.5 or less	More than 5.5
HDL	1.0 or more	Less than 1.0

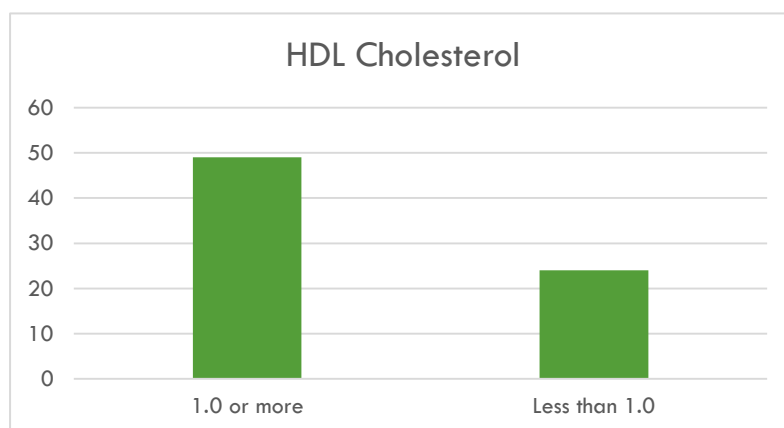
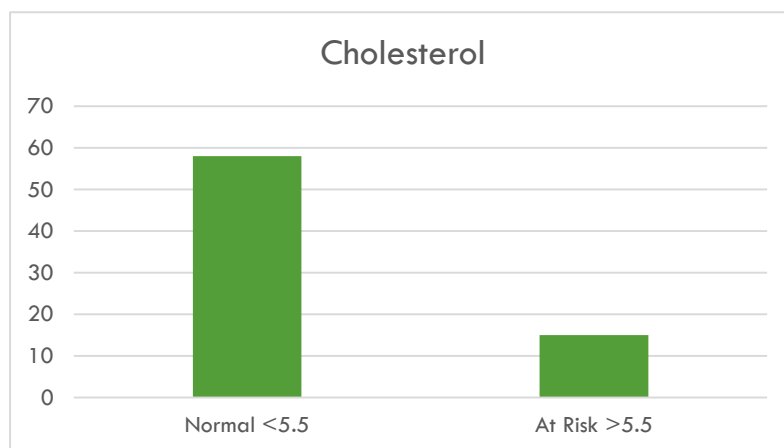
The health assessment measured two cholesterol levels:

Total cholesterol – which is the combination of LDL and HDL cholesterol and indicates the amount of cholesterol in a person’s blood

HDL cholesterol – the ‘good’ cholesterol which helps protect the heart and prevent heart disease.

Blood cholesterol levels are largely influenced by diet and can be lowered by people decreasing their saturated fat intake.

Although only 20% of participants were found to be at risk of high cholesterol on initial assessment, follow up suggested that all participants had undertaken steps to reduce their risk, with 15% already improving their total cholesterol.



TYPE 2 DIABETES

There are two main kinds of diabetes – type 1 and type 2. Type 2 diabetes is the most common kind of diabetes and is the only type that can be prevented.

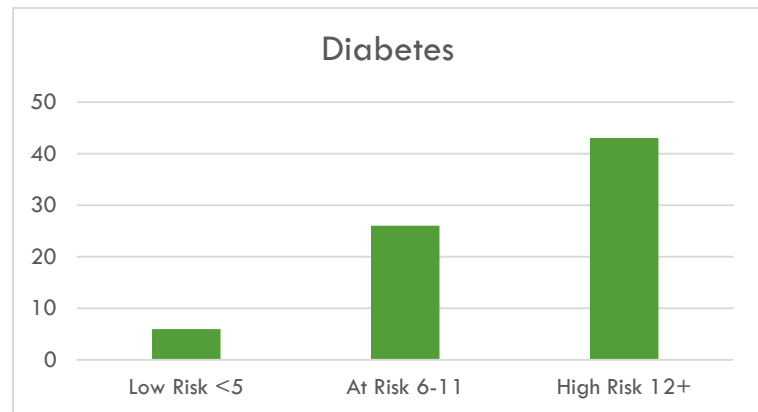
There are modifiable lifestyle factors that increase a person's risk of type 2 diabetes including:

- Being overweight, especially around the waist
- Physical inactivity
- Unhealthy eating habits
- High blood pressure and/or high cholesterol
- Smoking

Type 2 diabetes can be prevented through positive lifestyle changes.

The diabetes risk score assesses a person's risk of developing type 2 diabetes within the next five years.

Participants received a type 2 diabetes risk score, calculated using the AUDSRISK assessment tool. On initial assessment 57% of Carers were found to be at high risk of developing Type 2 diabetes (Score of 12 or more) and 34% were in the Medium risk category (Score 6-11).



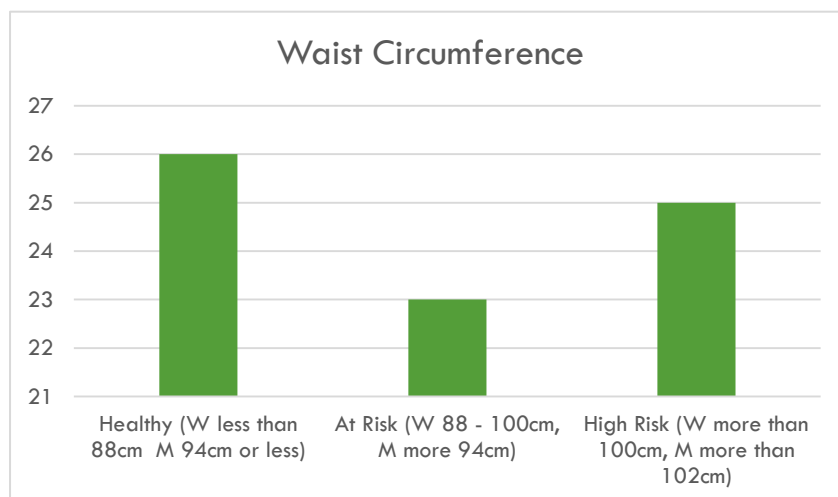
At the 3 month follow up it was found that 47% participants had decreased their risk factor score through undertaking recommendations made during the Carers Health and Wellbeing assessment including the facilitation of increased physical activity and encouraging healthy food consumption. Over 50% of participants identified as at risk or high risk of Type 2 diabetes had also participated in the LIFE diabetes program.

Diabetes risk score	Low risk	At risk	High risk
	5 or less	6-11	12 or more

An increased waistline, regardless of height or weight, increases a person's risk of developing serious ongoing health problems, including chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure and some cancers.

Addressing issues that contribute to excess weight will have a positive impact on the health of carers and can help reduce their waist measurements and lower their risk of chronic diseases. Even the smallest reduction can have huge health benefits.

One of the highest identified contributing factors to chronic disease is an increased waist circumference. Following the initial health assessment it was found that 63% of participants in the Carer Wellbeing Program exceeded recommended guidelines (as identified below) with 52% of these deemed to be at high risk.



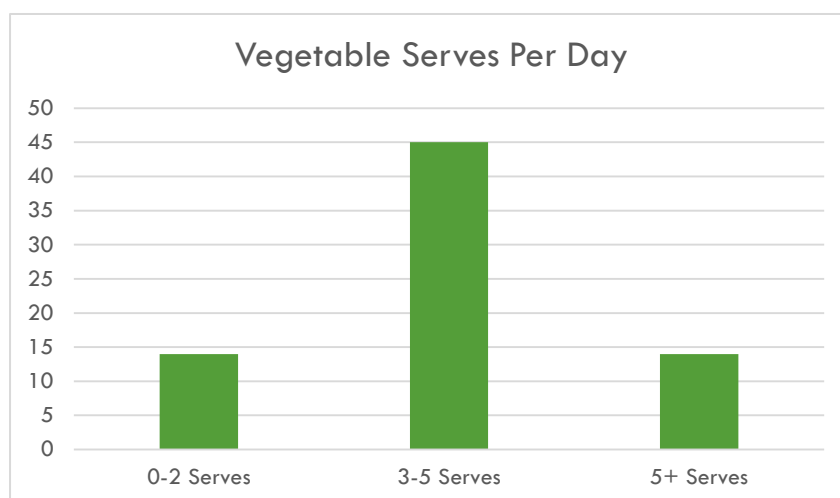
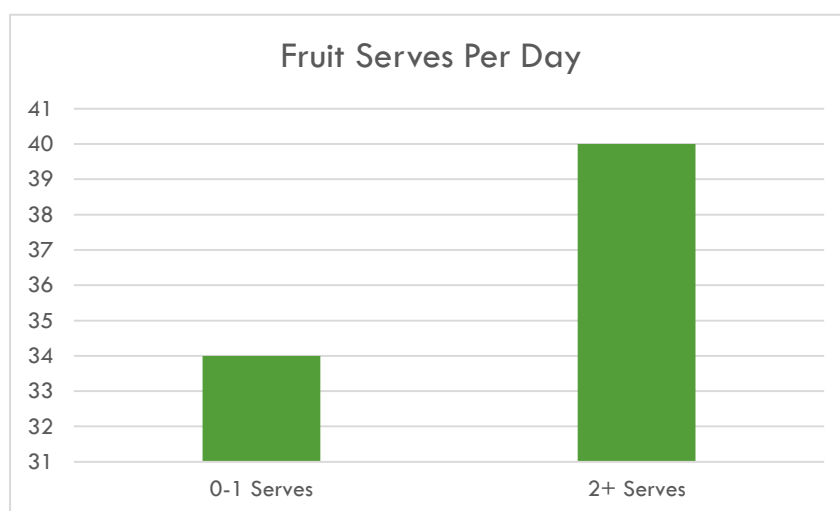
At the 3 month Follow up 55% of participants had been able to take steps to reduce their waist circumference leading to a decrease risk of chronic diseases such as Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

	Normal range	Medium risk	High risk
Men	94cm or less	More than 94cm	More than 102cm
Women	80cm or less	More than 80cm	More than 88cm

Healthy eating helps you maintain a healthy weight and reduces your risk of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Fruit and vegetables are an important part of your daily diet. The Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend that adults eat two serves of fruit and five serves of vegetables each day.

At initial assessment It was identified that 45 % of participants did not eat the recommended daily serving of 2 pieces of fruit and 80% of participants failed to eat the recommended daily intake of 5 serves of vegetables.



At the 3 month follow up assessment and as a result of education and recommendations made during the Carers Health and Wellbeing assessment and health coaching, 53% of participants had increased their fruit intake and 60% had increased their vegetable intake to meet the recommended Australian dietary guidelines. Participants had utilized time management strategies, increased nutritional knowledge and health indicators as motivation to improve nutritional intake.

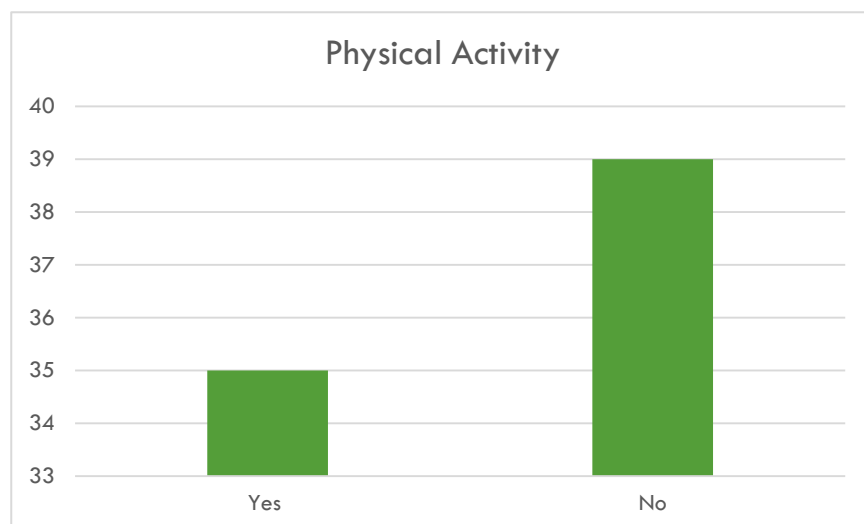
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Regular physical activity is one of the best things a person can do to improve their health.

Just 30 minutes of moderate physical activity each day is important for health and wellbeing and has many positive effects on a person's health. People who are physically active have a reduced risk of developing diseases such as cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes, as well as improving overall mood and reducing stress levels. 30 minutes of physical Activity has also been shown to reduce depression and anxiety levels.

It is recommended that Australian adults put together at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, preferably all, days.

At initial assessment 51% of participants were not undertaking the recommended levels of physical activity of 30 minutes 5 times per week, stating limited time and decreased energy levels as barriers to achieving this.



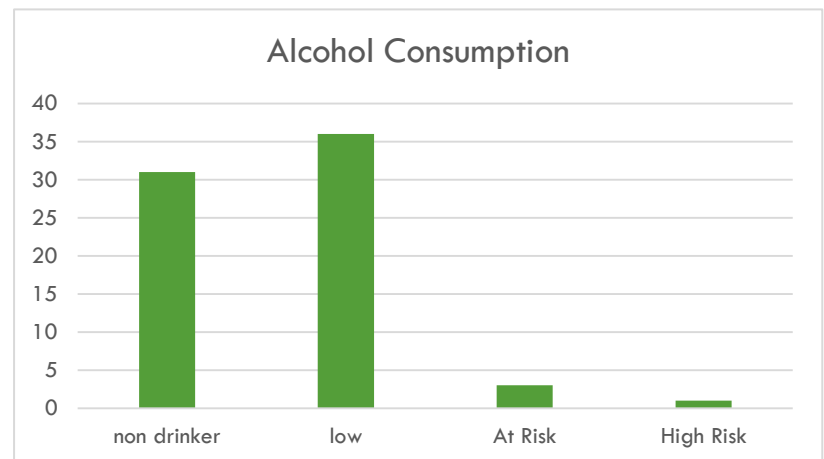
At the 3 month follow up 50% of participants had been able to increase their physical activity levels utilizing information and support given during the initial health and wellbeing assessment. Carers reported feeling more energetic and having higher levels of satisfaction with their role as a result of not only increasing their physical activity levels but through spending time doing something for themselves.

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Alcohol is the most widely used social drug in Australia. It affects different people in different ways. While a small amount of alcohol may be beneficial to the heart for some older people, 'risky' drinking can cause serious health, personal and social problems. Heavy drinkers, binge drinkers and very young drinkers are particularly at risk.

Recommended alcohol consumption limits to reduce health risks from drinking vary according to age, gender and other factors. Binge drinking is a particular problem among younger people, but anyone who drinks heavily or drinks too much in one session is at risk of both immediate and long-term alcohol-related harm. Drinking alcohol during pregnancy may also affect your baby.

95% of participants in the Carer Health and Wellbeing Program identified themselves as either non-drinkers or reported consumption levels of less than 2 drinks per week. Alcohol intake amongst the participants in the Carers wellbeing program did not present as a health concern.



MENTAL HEALTH

Caring for a family member or friends can be physically and emotionally draining and over time can have a negative impact on a Carers Mental Health

Mental health refers to the maintenance of successful mental activity.

This includes maintaining productive daily activities and maintaining fulfilling relationships with others.

It also includes maintaining the abilities to adapt to change and to cope with stresses.

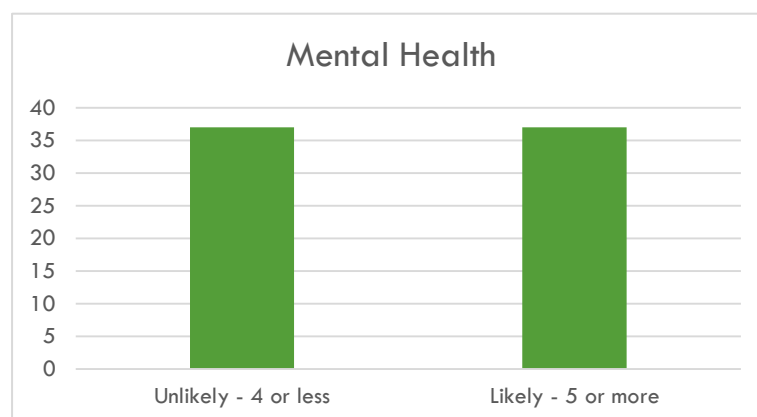
Sometimes it's tough to avoid feeling stressed, and pressure can build up in many areas of life (socially, at work, at home, and while making life decisions).

Worrying about these pressures is very NORMAL.

But feeling VERY sad, hopeless or worthless might be a sign of a mental health problem.

Resources, posters are available free from Beyondblue at <http://www.beyondblue.org.au/resources>

Mental Health was identified as a major risk factor for negative health impacts on Carers. During the initial health and wellbeing assessment, utilizing recognized assessment tools (GAD and Beyond Blue), 52% of Carers were found to be suffering from depression and 37% from anxiety.



At the 3 month follow up 50% of participants showed an overall improvement in both their depression and anxiety levels; this was attributed to the engagement and utilization of counselling services. Carers reported having an increased feeling of support and a greater knowledge of support services as well as improved physical health through improved diet and increased physical activity levels.

The demands of Caring can be relentless and stressful and many Carers will experience sleep disturbance as a result.

Insomnia is the most common sleep disorder in adults – characterised by difficulty falling and/or staying asleep.

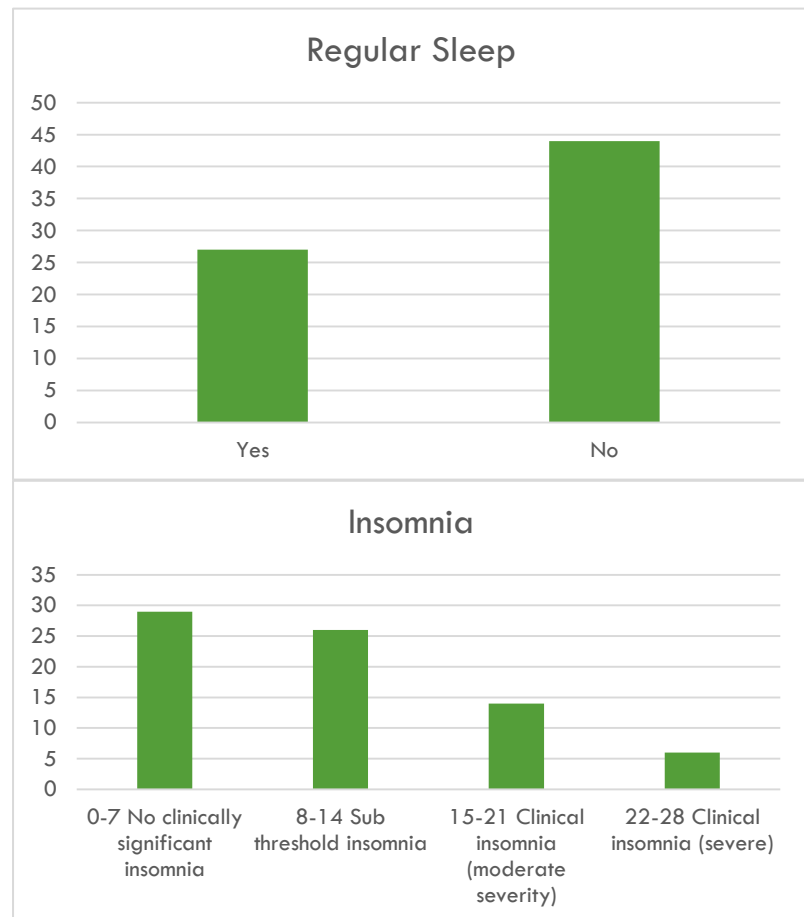
After just one night of inadequate sleep you are:

- Hungrier and apt to eat more
- More likely to have an accident (17 hours without sleep = .05)
- Not looking your best – or your most approachable
- More likely to catch a cold
- Losing brain tissue
- More likely to get emotional
- Less focused and having memory problems
-

Sleep deprivation after a while increases your:

- Stroke risk quadruples
- Obesity risk jumps
- Risk of some cancers may increase
- Diabetes risk increases
- Heart disease risk increases
- Sperm count decrease
- Risk of death increases

Insomnia and sleep disturbances were identified as the largest health concern for carers. On initial assessment, utilizing the insomnia index, 58% of Carers were identified as experiencing various degrees of sleep disturbance, ranging from sub-threshold insomnia to severe clinical insomnia.



At the 3 month follow up assessment 40% of participants reported improved sleeping patterns through utilizing information and resources provided at their initial health and wellbeing assessment. They also attributed a greater sense of wellbeing with their improvement in sleep; and an overall sense of improvement in their health and wellbeing; building their resilience and capacity to cope with caring.

REFERRALS MADE

Referrals made over the last 12 months are reflective of the data. A high number of participants requested information and referral for support within their carer role including financial aid and counselling, carer support services and respite services.

A large number of carers utilized the support services offered in regards to their own health and wellbeing including:

- Counselling
- GP referral,
- Dietician
- Diabetes Prevention
- Sleep solutions
- Women's and Men's Health Services
- Dental
- Optical
- QUIT smoking
- Podiatrist
- Walking Group
- Cooking Programs/ Nutrition Sessions
- Support Groups

CONCLUSION

A carer is someone who provides unpaid assistance to family or friends with care needs. They are parents, children, partners, relatives or friends who all assist with a variety of personal care, health care, transport, household and a multitude of other activities with the belief that they can provide better care for their loved one than other available services may be able to. It is estimated that 94% of people requiring care are currently being cared for by an unpaid carer and in financial terms saving the Australian economy \$60.3 Billion dollars annually. (Carers Victoria, 2016)

While caring for someone is a role that can be both rewarding and positive, quite often it also leaves the carer at a disadvantage not only financially but with regard to their own health and wellbeing. The Carer Health and Wellbeing Program recognized the impact of the caring role and developed a program that not only identified the unmet needs of the carers themselves but supported them to make change to ease the stress and decrease the impact caring for someone was having on their own health needs.

The data not only identifies a number of health concerns that were commonly reported by carers but also reinforces the benefit of health assessment and health coaching in supporting carers to address these concerns and create change resulting in positive health outcomes for all.

COSTING

Wages for 100 Health Assessment/ Health Coaching

Including hours for :

Engagement, Recruitment, Booking, Travel (50 hours)

Health assessment, Health coaching, Follow up

(500 hours)

Reporting (35hours)	\$35,691.00
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Support and Supervision	\$2,948.00
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Equipment	\$1,000.00 (\$10 per person)
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Catering	\$1,500.00 (\$15 p/p engaged)
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Gift packs	\$1,000.00
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Resources	\$500.00
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Total for 100 participants	\$42,639.00
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Total per person	\$426.39
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EVALUATION:

The evaluation was undertaken via questionnaire and phone interview reviewing the following themes:

- Reach – number of participants
- Participant satisfaction
- Uptake of health knowledge
- Intended and actual behaviour change

Evaluation included quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Process evaluation provided information as a reflection of the health assessment health coaching model satisfaction and identified components such as reach and numbers attended.

Impact evaluation is concerned with the immediate effects of the health assessment and was undertaken using participant questionnaires. Uptake of knowledge and intended and actual behaviour change was measured.

Evaluation results can be found in Appendix 2.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To continue to recruit carers into the Carer Wellbeing Program in order to support carers to embrace a healthy lifestyle behaviors, ultimately leading to sustainability in the caring role.
 2. To disseminate results on a departmental and sectorial level to increase knowledge and understanding of the positive shift in self-awareness and health promoting behaviours already reported.
 3. To utilize the findings of this report to inform future planning in relation to the NDIS and address the carer support needs in the NDIS rollout.
 4. Engage tertiary institutions to provide a more comprehensive research and evaluation report to inform funding streams to support carers within the NDIS.
 5. Use the findings to seek a sustainable funding source to ensure continuity of the service e.g Medicare rebate.
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APPENDIX 1: CARER WELLBEING PROGRAM BROCHURE

Who to contact...

Contact:

**Bendigo Community
Health Services**



Phone: **(03) 5434 4300**

Email:

carerwellbeingprogram@bchs.com.au

*Carers often do not realise the
importance of their role*

EAGLEHAWK
3 Seymoure Street

Eaglehawk

Tel: 5434 4300
Fax: 5434 4355

KANGAROO FLAT
13 Helm Street

Kangaroo Flat

Tel: 5430 0500
Fax: 5430 0544

CENTRAL

171 Hargreaves Street

Bendigo

Tel: 5448 1600
Fax: 5448 1699

ELMORE

46 Jeffrey St

Elmore

Tel: 5432 6001
Fax: 5432 6101

PO Box 1121
Bendigo Central, Vic 3552
www.bchs.com.au



Carer Wellbeing Program



Accessing the program

WHO IS A CARER?

A Carer volunteers their time to give care and support to a family member or friend with a disability or illness.



The Program supports:

Carers, aged 16 years and over, residing in the City of Greater Bendigo and surrounds.

*Maintaining good health and
wellbeing is vital for Carers.*

What the program offers

The Program provides a free comprehensive health & wellbeing assessment and follow-up health coaching sessions.

This includes:

- ♦ Health History / Family Health History
- ♦ Blood Pressure Check
- ♦ Type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment
- ♦ Sleep scale
- ♦ Cholesterol
- ♦ Emotional Health Needs Assessment
- ♦ Social Health Needs Assessment
- ♦ Referral to support services
- ♦ Health coaching sessions to support carers to continue to focus on their own health and wellbeing

*The assessment is private
and confidential*

How the program can assist you

Bendigo Community Health Services recognises:

- ♦ The important role carers provide
- ♦ How vital it is for carers to maintain good health
- ♦ How difficult it can be to stay healthy as a carer

The program strives to assist carers to maintain a healthy lifestyle while providing care for a loved one.

*Carers often ignore their own health
and are 40% more likely to suffer from
a chronic health condition. Some health
problems, like back pain, anxiety and
depression, can be directly linked to
caring (Carers Victoria).*

APPENDIX 2: END OF PROGRAM EVALUATION



Mental Health Carers Program Evaluation Report

July 2016 – July 2017

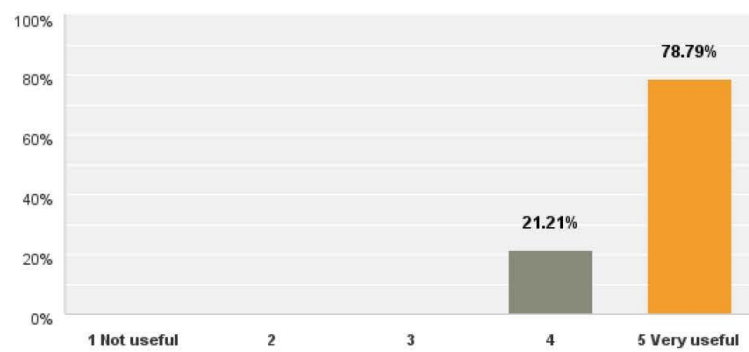
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Senior Manager
Prevention and Population Health
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Email: kayegraves@bchs.com.au

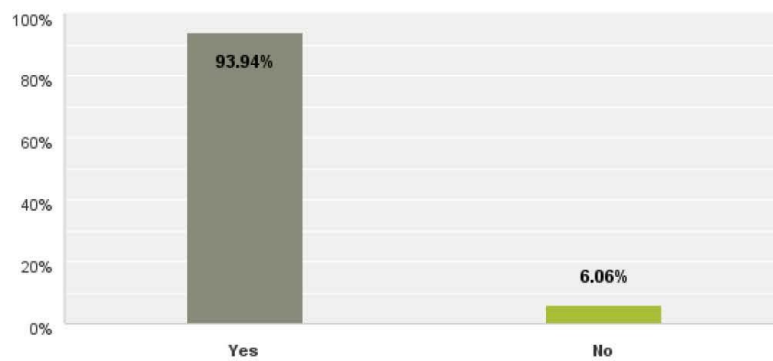
Megan O'Keefe
MHCP Health Promotion
Phone: (03) 5434 4300
Email: MeganO'Keefe@bchs.com.au

Mental Health Carers Program Evaluation Report

Did you find the health assessment beneficial?



Did this health assessment provide you with any new information or new directions?



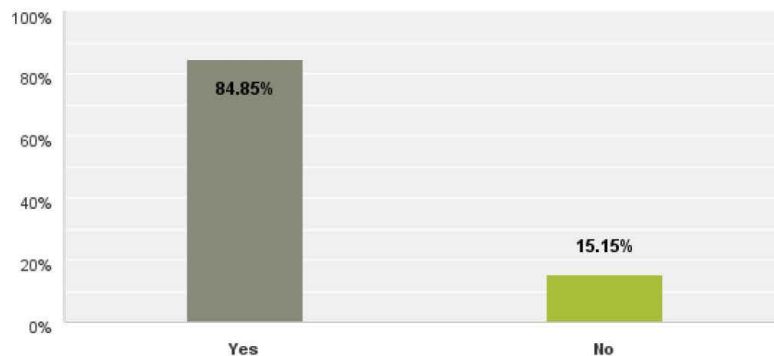
Mental Health Carers Wellbeing Program Evaluation Report

Comments on new information or new directions:

- New information about good cholesterol levels and blood pressure
- Benefits of becoming more healthy, the possibility of diabetes
- Hearing
- I am looking forward to counselling and sleep help
- Sleep
- Yes, to keep my own health on track so as to be able to care for my grandson
- Cholesterol, diabetes, physio
- Different ways of looking at eating and other services available
- Need to get more motivated to exercise
- Sleep pattern and diabetes
- Will go to a counsellor
- Reminder to have blood pressure checked regularly
- Food intake, glasses
- Plan and motivate
- Talked about sleep
- Be aware about my sleep
- Prompted to get eyes checked
- Put me in touch with counsellor, new way of dealing with my problems
- When looking after/caring for others it is easy to forget to take care of yourself. This assessment made me realise how important my health is in the equation! You get so caught up with caring for the other person, also made me aware of other services to which i can have access to eg dietician
- Greater awareness of steps necessary to improve health
- Pain clinic has been arranged in Bendigo and start swimming depending on warm weather
- Several useful handouts
- My cholesterol, information about diabetes, my diet
- To try to make time for me
- Certainly gave me lots of information to go forward with
- Very helpful and most pleasant

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Do you intend to do anything different as a result of today's health assessment?



Comments on what you intend to do differently as a result of the health assessment?

- Increased activity and self-care
- Smoke less/give up, lower cholesterol, exercise more
- Get my hearing checked
- Don't like vegies
- More gentle exercise (on chair). Bowel screening kit from the GP, see the GP about counselling
- My eating
- Lose weight and follow up on my sleep apnea
- More exercise, blood tests
- Very useful. Had bone density test
- Got a referral to see someone
- Food intake cut out sugar
- Get motivated
- Make a doctor's appointment
- Will try to increase water and exercise
- Follow advice or endeavor too
- I will be more aware of my own health and to remind myself that my healthcare counts. Im now exercising on a regular basis and more aware of my food intake
- Continue with better diet and exercise
- Not really
- Exercise more, intend to lose weight
- More fruit and exercise per week and sleep!!
- Try and lose weight and walk more
- Yes eat less, exercise more, and keep healthy and lose weight

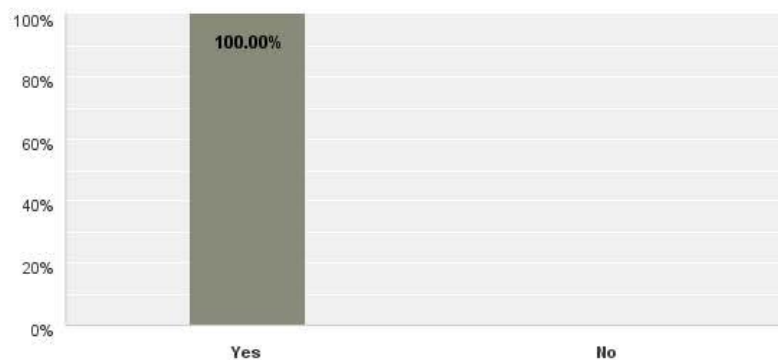
Mental Health Carers Wellbeing Program Evaluation Report

- Using retractable lead when walking my dog,

Do you feel the health and wellbeing assessment will improve your ability to support the person you care for?

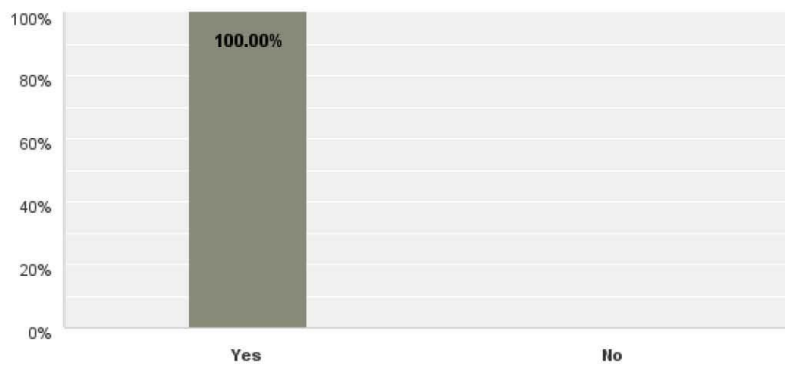
- Yes x 17 responses
- I hope so
- No as they are not living with me
- Yes, I can pass on some information about diet
- Definitely
- Supports me as a person
- Yes, to know there is someone who can help/listen
- Yes reminds me to look after myself
- The person involved has left my care but the above will help me deal with the situation
- Definitely, without looking after myself I will be in no fit state to care for my husband
- Yes got some very good information
- Absolutely
- Yes a healthy mum will be better much happier, more patience with my 2 boys, being run down skipping meals makes it harder to cope
- Yes if I'm feeling good then I can cope better

Did you feel comfortable and respected during the consultation?

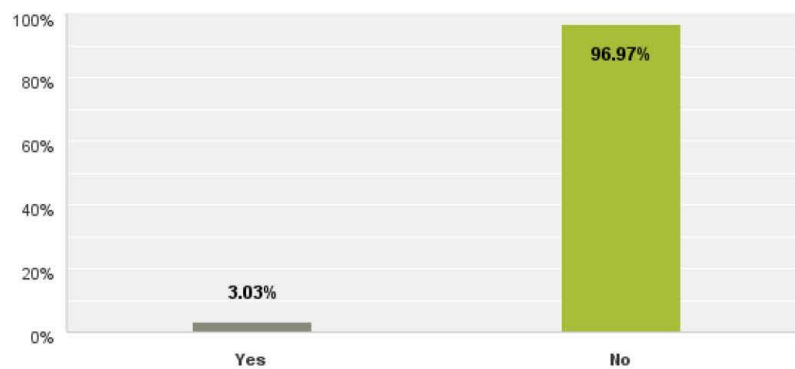


Mental Health Carers Program Evaluation Report

Was the venue suitable?



Did anything threaten or make it difficult to attend this health assessment?



Any other recommendations? Are there any other topics that need to be covered today?

Mental Health Carers Wellbeing Program Evaluation Report

- Difficult to make it to appointment because of my carer obligations
- No thank you
- No x 9 responses
- Found it excellent. Friendly, helpful and informative
- All very useful
- Up to person to talk about individual needs
- No, I think all covered
- No thank you
- No other topics
- Everything was covered, having the follow up appointment ensured that I was on track
- Got very good information and suggestion. Would be helpful if these sessions could be more often
- No not really
- No I am feeling very well and happy
- No everything covered, very caring lady

APPENDIX: TESTIMONIES

25/11/15

Dear Sue,

Please find enclosed the Carer Wellbeing Program Evaluation, if you have time could I ask you to complete and send back to me please, many thanks. If time permits, may I invite you to write a brief Testimonial in your own words as to benefits of participating in the program; we would use this to encourage other carers to improve their health and wellbeing by being involved. The Testimonial can be anonymous if you prefer, it is entirely up to you. I wish you all the best for the future Sue; it was lovely meeting you, take good care. Kindest regards, Julie.

Carer Wellbeing Program Testimonial

I found the Carer Wellbeing Program exceptional. It made me feel valued and more aware of my own healthcare. When caring for someone it seems as though your whole life is focused on that person, and you can neglect your own healthcare.

I found the whole process & the assessment & the advice was extremely well done. Julie was friendly, courteous and professional at all times.

I found having a follow-up appointment was particularly beneficial as it reinforced and encouraged me to stay on track.

Julie was able to give further advice on what resources are available e.g. Dichtian, which I am committed to continuing to.

All in all a fabulous program.

Many, many thanks.

Carer Wellbeing Program Testimonial

I completed my first health check with the carer wellbeing program was in July, 2015. I explained to the nurse that I felt constantly tired and always exhausted; I had no energy and was sleeping poorly. During my health check I was found to have elevated blood pressure, my blood sugar was higher than what it should be. My diet was high in sugar; I had 2 teaspoons of sugar in my coffee and ate foods high in sugar and fat such as doughnuts. I was not drinking water and needed to increase my fruit and vegie intake each day.

I was determined to get healthier and have more energy and stay well. I developed an action plan with the program nurse that included changing what I ate and drank, eating less sugar and saturated fats, walking my dog longer each day and drinking more water. I saw the GP for my insomnia and was referred to a sleep clinic, and was contacted by the dental clinic for an appointment to treat my dental pain that often prevented me eating certain foods.

At my carer wellbeing follow-up appointment in October, I was very happy with my progress. I had reduced my waist by 3cm, reduced weight by 3kg, reduced blood pressure to within normal range and reduced BGL from 9.6 to 6.0. I had made significant dietary changes by removing sugar from my coffee and doughnuts, pastries and takeaways from my daily diet. I ate more fruit and vegetables and drank more water.

As a result of the carer program I am less tired and have more energy. I enjoy longer walks with my dog and more gardening. I am not yawning all the time now and am more alert during the day. I have made great progress and am happy that my health has improved; I now have a health plan that will support the changes I have made and that I can use in the future.

8/12/15

Dear Max,

Please find enclosed the Carer Wellbeing Program Evaluation, if you have time could I ask you to complete and send back to me please, many thanks. If time permits, may I invite you to write a brief Testimonial in your own words as to benefits of participating in the program; we would use this to encourage other carers to improve their health and wellbeing by being involved. The Testimonial can be anonymous if you prefer, it is entirely up to you. I wish you all the best for the future.

Kindest regards, Julie.

Carer Wellbeing Program Testimonial

I FOUND MYSELF IN A VERY DIFFICULT SITUATION WITH MY GRANDSON WHO I WAS CARING FOR WHICH DETERIORATED INTO A POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS SITUATION. A DESPERATE CALL TO BCHS PUT ME IN TOUCH WITH CARER WELLBEING COUNSELLOR WHO ORGANISED APPOINTMENT WITH THE APPROPRIATE PERSON WHO EXPLAINED STRATEGIES IN A WAY THAT WAS EXTREMELY HELPFUL.

I AM NOW BACK IN TOUCH WITH MY GRANDSON WHO IS NOW CARED FOR BY HIS FATHER. WE HAVE REGULAR CONTACT AND UNDERSTAND EACH OTHERS NEEDS + ASPIRATIONS MUCH MORE CLEARLY.

MY HEARTFELT THANKS GO TO THE CWP FOR THEIR HELP AND INFORMATION OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS.