



Southern Mallee Primary Care Partnership (SMPCP) **Mental Health & Related Services in the Buloke Shire** **Networking Forum - 2014** **Report**

Overview

The SMPCP Buloke Strategic Health & Wellbeing Partnership facilitated the ***Mental Health & Related Services in the Buloke Shire Networking Forum*** on the 27th of February, 2014 in Wycheproof. This forum provided an opportunity for service providers that deliver services in the Buloke Shire to: ***come together, network, learn from each other and plan how to work better together in the future.*** The event was attended by 43 service providers and other representatives and covered the following interest areas.

- **Buloke Shire Overview**

The Buloke Shire Council provided a demographic snapshot of the Buloke Shire, so that participants could gain an understanding of the various communities that make up the target area.

- **Local Service Provider Presentations**

Local providers presented an overview of their service, what they do, and what services they provide at a local level.

- **Outreach Service Provider Presentations**

Outreach providers presented an overview of their service, their strategic work, what they do, and what services they provide in the Buloke Shire.

- **Networking**

The forum provided an opportunity for Mental Health & Related Service Providers to learn about the service system across the Buloke Shire and to develop new and/or stronger networks.

- **Discussion / Planning**

The forum provided an opportunity for facilitated discussion, in order to identify the various strengths and challenges associated with working within the Buloke Shire, as well as to identify opportunities to work better together and enhance service coordination across the entire Buloke Shire.



Outcome Summary

A number of actions have been derived from the forum, of which the SMPCP Buloke Strategic Health & Wellbeing Partnership, the SMPCP Mental Health & Wellbeing Committee and other agencies could consider. These are listed as follows:

SMPCP Mental Health & Wellbeing Committee

There are a number of actions that could be undertaken by the SMPCP Mental Health & Wellbeing Committee, including:

- Support the continual update the Mental Health & Related Services (Eligibility & Entry) Criteria Resources, as required.
- Contribute to a regular feature in the SMPCP Newsletter that will allow service organisations to identify a staff member and/or a specific program.
- Promote SMPCP meetings and video conferencing options.
- Review this and other Forum reports to identify any catchment wide initiatives.

Buloke Strategic Health & Wellbeing Partnership

There are a number of actions that could be undertaken by the SMPCP Strategic Health & Wellbeing Partnership, including:

- Provide an annual Mental Health Forum.
- Identify other opportunities to engage in Buloke Shire events.
- Undertake further discussions regarding place-based funding with relevant funding organisations, when relevant.
- Undertake further discussions around ways to increase recruitment and retention of staff in the Buloke Shire, and how to fully support current staff.

Organisations

There are a number of actions that individual agencies are encouraged to undertake, including:

- Seek more service information from relevant organisations (to assist referral), as required.
- Promote eligibility criteria, in order to assist other service provider referral processes.
- Actively improve connections with other agencies – ‘Make It Happen’.
- Seek feedback after referral, as needed.
- Promote the use of technology (i.e., video conferencing, teleconferencing, emails, newsletters, etc) to improve networking and communication.
- Evaluate current delivery of services across the funded area, particularly if service delivery has been restricted in any way.
- Work towards the retention of information, in order to promote continuity of knowledge, in the case of staff resignation.

Please let SMPCP Staff know what you are doing in your ‘patch’ and we’ll celebrate your achievements via the regular SMPCP Newsletter.

Forum Information & Evaluation Summary

Background

Jean Bray, Acting Community Health Manager (East Wimmera Health Service) provided background information of the SMPCP Mental Health & Wellbeing Committee and the SMPCP Buloke Strategic Health & Wellbeing Partnership, which provided the strategic planning for the Buloke Forum.

Bronwyn Hogan, Executive Officer (Southern Mallee Primary Care Partnership) provided an update of the previous Mental Health & Related Services Information Forum in Buloke in 2012, as well as the work that has been done since then. Both of these presentations provided valuable information on the strategic partnership work that has occurred across the Buloke Shire in recent times.

Formal Agency Presentations

A number of local and outreach service organisations provided formal presentations (which included valuable demographic and service delivery information) to all of the participants. Interactive discussion was enjoyed by all throughout the presentations, providing a wonderful opportunity for the exchange of information and an increased awareness of the services available to the Buloke Shire.

Please refer to the table below for more information on the presentations.

Presenter	Presentation Topic
Paula Yorston Unit Leader Aged & Disability Services Buloke Shire Council	Overview of the <i>demographics</i> of the Buloke Shire. This presentation can be downloaded by clicking the above hyperlink.
Paula Yorston Unit Leader Aged & Disability Services Buloke Shire Council	Overview of the community services provided by the Buloke Shire Council.
Danny Stone Primary Care Manager East Wimmera Health Service	Overview of all of the services provided by the East Wimmera Health Service to the Buloke Shire.
Grant Doxey Program Leader Social Work & Community Services Mallee Track Health & Community Services	Overview of the services provided by the Mallee Track Health & Community Services to the Buloke Shire.
Marty Andison Mgr, Bendigo Adult Community Mental Health Team Bendigo Health	Overview of the services provided by Bendigo Health to the Buloke Shire.
Lyn Andrew Team Leader, Mental Health Support Services Mallee Family Care	Overview of the services provided by Mallee Family Care to the Buloke Shire.
Bill Dower & Cecilia Connellan Partners In Recovery Coordinator Loddon Mallee Murray Medicare Local	Overview of the work of the Loddon Mallee Murray Medicare Local, and what services that they provide to the Buloke Shire.

Round-table Agency Presentations

The participants at the forum represented a number of the organisations listed on the Mental Health & Related Services (Eligibility & Entry Criteria) Resource – Buloke. A representative from each agency at the forum was invited to provide a presentation on their service. This was one of the many highlights of the day and provided an *increased awareness of what services are provided to the Buloke Shire*.



Forum Participants.

Changes to the Mental Health & Related Services (Eligibility & Entry Criteria) Resources - Buloke

The SMPCP Mental Health & Wellbeing Eligibility & Entry Criteria (Buloke Shire) Resource lists all of the mental health and related service providers that deliver services to the Buloke Shire. This resource is currently undergoing a review, so participants were asked to identify any relevant amendments, and these included:

- Clarification of the Northern District Community Health Service Drug and Alcohol Program – youth eligibility across the Buloke Shire.
- Mallee Family Care now provides a new program called ‘Cradle to Kinder’.
- Loddon Mallee Murray Medicare Local now includes Access to Allied Psychological Services (ATAPS) Program and Partners in Recovery (PIR) Support Facilitator Agencies.
- Golden City Support Services now provide a new program for carers.
- Haven is now called ‘Haven Homesafe’.
- Clarification of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development School Nursing Program (i.e., coverage).
- Standby Response Service needs to be included on all resources.

Please click on the hyperlinks below for a copy of the various resources.

- [***SMPCP Mental Health & Related Services \(Eligibility & Entry Criteria\) – Buloke Shire***](#)
- [***SMPCP Mental Health & Related Services \(Eligibility & Entry Criteria\) – Gannawarra Shire***](#)
- [***SMPCP Mental Health & Related Services \(Eligibility & Entry Criteria\) – Swan Hill Shire***](#)

Think Tank Session

A 'Think Tank' session was facilitated in the afternoon, where participants were asked to consider four key themes, including:

- 1. any new connections, networks and partnerships since the Buloke Forum in 2012,**
- 2. the strengths within the current service system in the Buloke Shire,**
- 3. the challenges associated with providing services to the Buloke Shire, &**
- 4. the opportunities on how to work together better.**

A snapshot of the 'Think Tank' responses is as follows:

1. New Connections, Networks & Partnerships

Although many of the participants had not attended the previous forum in 2012, those that did highlighted a number of new connections, networks and partnerships since the forum. These included:

- *A new connection between the Buloke Shire Council and Youth Connections.*
- *A new connection between the Donald community and the youth network.*
- *The development of a more integrated youth service response.*
- *A new connection between the Buloke Shire Council & Northern District Community Health Services.*
- *A new connection between the Buloke Shire Council and Bendigo Health.*

2. Identified Strengths

Participants identified a number of strengths within the Buloke Shire service system, including the following:

- *Working together & actively seeking partnerships.*
- *Better outcomes and 'the village raises the child' approach.*
- *Local community is appreciative of services being provided.*
- *People remember the staff (local knowledge).*
- *Willingness to embrace technology.*
- *Being able to think outside the box (adaptable).*
- *Local knowledge, willing service providers & a good relationship with Police.*
- *Good leadership from key agencies.*
- *Reduced risk of resident's isolation.*
- *Easier to access services, and reduced cost of accessing local services.*
- *Meeting needs, and a healthy community.*
- *Goodwill, building trust, collaboration, flexibility and adaptability of services.*
- *A large range of services provided and an easier referral process.*
- *Constructive criticism is shared and improved processes.*

3. Challenges Identified

Participants were asked to consider what challenges were faced when delivering services to the Buloke Shire. These included the following:

- *Lack of available services, large distances and lack of transport.*
- *Demographics are changing & ageing population.*
- *Confidentiality and privacy issues.*
- *Inability for clients to meet service criteria (eligibility criteria needs breaking down).*
- *Creating relationships & impersonal nature of the referral system in some instances.*
- *Lack of feedback from referrals.*
- *Lack of local knowledge of services available.*
- *Issues with service coverage – intended vs real area coverage.*
- *Low number of services entering the area [actual or perceived?].*
- *Lack of preventative service focus.*
- *Connectingcare referrals.*
- *When issues arise, they become more serious.*
- *Drug and alcohol issues are not being addressed.*
- *Intellectual disability.*
- *Black spot with IT.*
- *Financial resources, financial modeling and restrictions.*
- *Government policy doesn't fit local needs.*
- *Centralisation of services, and funding models that are not place based.*
- *Funding model with rural load doesn't reflect the need.*
- *Sustainability of services.*
- *Isolation, lack of diversity / exposure, and provider burnout.*
- *Workload and waiting lists.*
- *Staffing expertise that is appropriate to the position.*

4. Opportunities To Work Better Together

The participants were asked to identify opportunities for service providers to work better together. These are grouped as follows:

a) Opportunities for the SMPCP Staff & the associated Committees / Partnerships.

- Continue to update and market the Buloke Resource.
- Provide a regular agency / staff member feature in the SMPCP Newsletter.
- Provide annual forums.

b) Opportunities for all Service Providers.

- Increase your knowledge of (and communication with) other services.
- Visit other agencies, both rural and regional, in order to increase your service understanding.
- Improve connections and partnerships – make the networks happen.
- Develop clearer expectations of services and systems – know what you can expect.
- Track feedback from referrals, when needed.
- Take time to strengthen relationships and remain positive.
- Utilise teleconferencing, email, newsletters and speakers to increase knowledge and communication.
- Accept the changing demographics and develop pathways of continuous improvements.
- Retain knowledge of staff before they 'move on'.

c) Opportunities for Advocacy (By all Service Providers).

- Develop further discussion around place-based funding.
- Develop discussions around service coverage (i.e., 'full and limited' service provision).
- Undertake longer term thinking, even if the government doesn't work that way.
- Develop further discussions around what makes the Buloke Shire better able to recruit and retain staff.

Feedback

Twenty of the forty-three participants completed the forum's feedback form, with feedback as follows:

Mental Health & Related Services (Eligibility & Entry Criteria) Resource – Buloke Shire.

- Sixteen of the twenty respondents had seen the Buloke Resource before.
- Eighteen of the twenty respondents intended to use the Buloke Resource.
- Eight respondents highlighted changes for the Buloke Resource.

Key outcomes of the forum

- Sixteen respondents stated that they had an improved awareness of services providers.
- Seventeen respondents stated that they had a better understanding of local service providers.
- Sixteen respondents stated that they had a better understanding of outreach service providers.
- Thirteen respondents stated that they could now establish better networks with local services.
- Thirteen respondents stated that they could now establish better networks with outreach services.
- Sixteen respondents stated that they now had an increased commitment to engage with local and outreach service providers.
- One respondent stated that the forum had provided ideas for innovative programs, another respondent stated that service providers displayed a real connectedness and willingness to work better together, and another respondent stated that it was great to put some faces to names.

Future Directions of the SMPCP Mental Health & Wellbeing Committee

- Seven respondents stated that they would like to be involved in the SMPCP Mental Health & Wellbeing Committee.
- One respondent stated that the SMPCP Mental Health & Wellbeing Committee could continue to contact other service providers in the Buloke Shire, another stated that video conferencing could be offered for all meetings, and one respondent suggested regular networking sessions to keep agencies up to date with changes in services and staffing.

Further Comments

- One respondent stated that the forum had a fantastic vibe and that it was efficient, positive and friendly – keep it up!
- One respondent stated that the forum was very interesting – thank you!
- One person stated that it was a great forum and lots of networking ideas for improving practices.

Venue / Catering / Format / Administration

Various suggestions were provided on the venue, catering, format and administration, and included:

- Start a little later to allow for travel time.
- Needed a morning tea break.
- Time keeping for presentations, to keep to agenda time lines.
- Maybe option for a local business to provide brewed coffee.
- Provide info re: participants, so that people could organise 'shared rides'.

Appendix 1 - Forum Participants

Participants

The following organisations and staff attended the forum.

Bendigo Health – Marty Andison, Eugene Meegan, Nadia Khodja, Xavier Moloney.

Buloke Shire Council – Paul Yorston, Julie Briggs, Patrice Rickard.

Charlton College – Jenny Ritchie.

Department of Health – Melissa Knight.

Department of Human Services – Fiona Lush.

East Wimmera Health Service - Danny Stone, Jean Bray, Peter Noble.

Golden City Support Services – Leisa Christian.

Haven Homesafe – Craig Hunt, Haydee Bell.

Loddon Mallee Murray Medicare Local – Bill Dower, Cecilia Connellan.

Mallee Accommodation & Support Program – Stacey Kontogianis.

Mallee Family Care – Lyn Andrew, Sandy Schmidt.

Mallee Sexual Assault Unit – Mallee Domestic Violence Service – Karen Simpson, Sonja Mock.

Mallee Track Health & Community Service – Grant Doxey.

MASP – Greg Robinson, Natalee Romes.

MIND – Bronwyn Foran.

Northern District Community Health Service – Diane Dean, Shun Naicker, Jim Hirst.

Rural Financial Counselling – Teresa O'Brien, Alan Stevens.

Southern Mallee Primary Care Partnership – Bronwyn Hogan, Sallie Amy, Sarah Holloway, Pauline Thorson.

Standby Response Service – Natalee Hudson.

St Lukes Anglicare – Marlene Lamprell, Chris Jacksen.

Swan Hill Neighbourhood House – Lea Johnson.

Wimmera Secondary College – Arnna Pickering.

Wimmera Uniting Care – Jesse Hinch.

Women's Health Loddon Mallee – Linda Beilharz.

Appendix 2 - Forum Apologies

Apologies

The following organisations and staff registered their apologies for the forum.

Bendigo Health – Tim Lenton, John Hermans, Lorraine Flynn.

Buloke Shire Council – Bill Keane.

Carers Victoria - Rose Terzoglou.

Centacare – Kayleen Tulloch.

CVGT - Deb Quin.

Department of Human Services - Nicole Maple, Joanne Dacey.

General Practice Nurses (Medical) - All practice nurses (Birchip, Charlton, Donald, Sea Lake & Wycheproof)

Golden City Support Services - Kerri Hicks.

Housing For The Aged - Fionnuala Spillane.

Lower Murray Medicare Local - Steven Parr.

MADEC - Darryl Nicholson.

Mallee District Aboriginal Service - Xavier Bisson.

Mallee Family Care - Metaxia Tsoukatos, Michael Adamson.

Mallee Sexual Assault Unit – Mallee Domestic Violence Service - Jenny Petitt.

Regional Information Advisory Council - Sharon Laughher.

Rural Financial Counselling - John Byrne.

St Lukes Anglicare - Mette Hotker, Heather Brown.

Sunraysia Murray Group Training - Steve Curry.

Swan Hill District Health - Jann Barkman.

Take Two, Berry Street - Mitch Bayliss.

Appendix 3 – Other Information

Who is the Southern Mallee Primary Care Partnership (SMPCP)?

The Southern Mallee Primary Care Partnership (SMPCP) is located in north-western Victoria, and covers three local government areas including: the Buloke, Gannawarra and Swan Hill municipalities (excluding Robinvale). The SMPCP is an established network of local health and human service organisations, working together in an effective way to improve the health and wellbeing of the local Southern Mallee communities. The SMPCP member and associate member agencies are represented by a range of sectors including: health, local government, justice, education and many more. The SMPCP 2013-2017 Strategic Plan and SMPCP 2013-2017 Operational Plan reflect member agency's commitment and contribution by way of aligning priority issues and sharing responsibility for implementing objectives and strategies. The following are the two agreed priorities and activity areas to be worked on by the Partnership during 2013-2017.

Strategic Priority - Strengthen Partnerships, the Sector & Governance.

Strategic Priority - Promoting Health Lifestyles.



For more information, please click on the following hyperlinks:

[Southern Mallee PCP 2013-2017 Strategic Plan](#) [Southern Mallee PCP 2013-2017 Operational Plan](#)
[Southern Mallee PCP Integrated Planning Model](#)

SMPCP Mental Health & Wellbeing Committee

The SMPCP Mental Health & Wellbeing Committee is a catchment wide committee with representation from SMPCP member agencies, associate members and others who provide services in the Buloke, Gannawarra and Swan Hill municipalities (excluding Robinvale). The SMPCP Mental Health & Wellbeing Committee enables agencies to come together to discuss strategies that address broad mental health and wellbeing issues in a collaborative way, with a focus on mental health service coordination and integration, as well as mental health promotion. Meetings are held bi-monthly and rotate around the catchment; video conferencing is also available. More than 140 agencies are included on the committee's distribution list, therefore providing opportunities for participation and dissemination of information to a large number of individuals and organisations.

SMPCP Buloke Strategic Health & Wellbeing Partnership

The SMPCP Buloke Strategic Health & Wellbeing Partnership is comprised of local service providers in the Buloke Shire. Representatives meet bi-monthly and work together in an effective and innovative way to improve the health and wellbeing of local communities, support collaboration between Buloke agencies (relating to health and wellbeing of the local communities) and provide a forum to work on agreed objectives. Members achieve this by sharing information, undertaking joint planning, discussing issues and gaps, discussing strategic activity, collectively advocating together, prioritising effort and resources, integrating activities, identifying potential partnership opportunities, strengthening relationships and increasing collaboration.

Further Information

For further information about this report, or about the Mental Health & Related Services in the Buloke Shire Networking Forum – 2014, please contact Sallie Amy, Executive Officer (SMPCP) on

Email: eo@smpcp.com.au

Telephone (03) 5033 0722

Appendix 4 - Promotional Flyer



The Southern Mallee Primary Care Partnership
Buloke Strategic Health and Wellbeing Committee
wish to invite you to attend the

Mental Health & Related Services in the Buloke Shire Networking Forum - 2014

*Working together to identify and overcome the challenges in
mental health service delivery in the Buloke shire*

This forum will build on the initial mental health information and networking session held in October 2012, and will provide an opportunity for service providers to come together, network and learn from each other, and plan how we can work together in the future.

- An opportunity to meet and network with local and outreach service providers.
- Learn more about who the local and outreach providers are, what they do, and how they provide services as listed on the Buloke Southern Mallee PCP's Mental Health and Related Services Resources - [Buloke Eligibility & Entry Criteria](#)
- Recap on the 2012 Forum identifying what connections have been made and what strategies have worked?
- Discuss how we can work in Partnership to enhance service coordination.
- Plan how we can more effectively network and share information in the future.

When	Thursday 27th of February, 2014 10am-2.30pm (light lunch provided) <i>Registration and morning tea from 9.30am for a 10am start.</i>
Where	Buloke Shire Council, Wycheproof Hall Supper Room Broadway Street, Wycheproof
Facilitated by	The Southern Mallee Primary Care Partnership
Registration	RSVP by 21st February to: Pauline Thorson, Project Officer Phone: 5033 0902 Email: pauline.thorson@smcpc.com.au Please indicate whether your agency can provide a short presentation.
Supported by	Proudly supported by the Southern Mallee Primary Care Partnership Mental Health & Wellbeing Committee & Buloke Strategic Health & Wellbeing Partnership Members: Buloke Shire Council, East Wimmera Health Service, and Mallee Track Health & Community Service.



Appendix 5 - Forum Feedback Form



Buloke Mental Health & Related Service Networking Forum

27th February, 2014

Feedback Form

The Southern Mallee Primary Care Partnership would like your feedback in relation to today's forum. We would really appreciate it if you could take the time to complete this feedback form. You can either give it to a SMPCP staff member, or leave it on the table for collection.

1. Mental Health & Related Services (Eligibility & Entry Criteria) Resource – Buloke Shire

Have you seen this resource before today's information session?

Yes

No

If yes, where? _____

Do you use, or intend to use this resource?

Yes

No

If yes, then please indicate how the resource will assist your organisation?

Do you have any changes for your organisation's details on the resource?

Yes

No

If yes, then please specify _____

Please list your organisation's name and the most relevant contact person and contact details for future updates to the resource

2. Buloke Mental Health & Related Services Networking Forum

Please indicate what you feel were the **key outcomes** from today's Networking & Information Session.

- Improved awareness of services providers that you may refer to in the future
- Better understanding of **local** service providers from the Buloke shire
- Better understanding of **outreach** service providers to the Buloke shire
- Can now establish better networks with **local** service providers from the Buloke shire
- Can now establish better networks with **outreach** service providers to the Buloke shire
- Increased commitment to engage with local and outreach services providers
- Other (please specify) _____

3. Future Directions

Would you like to be involved in the work of the SMPCP Mental Health & Wellbeing Committee (if you aren't already)? Yes No

If yes, please provide your name and contact details:

Do you have any suggestions on how the SMPCP Mental Health & Wellbeing Committee can strengthen their work in the Buloke Shire?

Would you like to make any further comments? _____

4. Venue / Catering / Format / Administration

Please describe how this forum can be improved, with regard to the venue, catering, format and administration.

The SMPCP Mental Health & Wellbeing Committee and the SMPCP Buloke Strategic Health & Wellbeing Partnership would like to thank you for your attendance and involvement in the Buloke Mental Health & Related Services Networking Forum, and for completing this feedback form. No personal information will be circulated from this feedback form.

Southern Mallee Primary Care Partnership
PO Box 1752, Swan Hill Vic 3585 Ph: 5033 0902 Email: pauline.thorson@smpcp.com.au