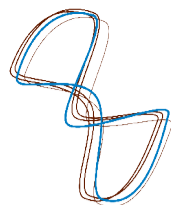


Community Health News

October 2010



Mitchell
Community Health

Providers of health and social support services within the shires of Mitchell and Murrindindi. Working actively with communities to improve health and wellbeing outcomes and to prevent illness.

Smoking - it effects more than your health

Cigarette smoking is a major cause of vascular disease. Smoking kills more than 15,000 Australians a year or more than 40 Australians each day (Better Health Channel, 2010).

Here in the Mitchell Shire, 14% of all annual avoidable death is caused by smoking. This makes this shire one of the highest ranking for deaths attributable to smoking in Victoria (The Big Kill, 2010).

This includes deaths from lung cancer, to stroke to emphysema. With 164 avoidable deaths, 23 deaths are caused by smoking. This is in contrast to 5 people who died on the roads (The Big Kill, 2010). This 14% of deaths is avoidable: 23 people didn't have to die from smoking.

Cigarette smoking effects the body in a number of ways and increases risk factors. If you smoke you increase your risk of:

- Heart attack by two to six times
- Heart disease if you are a woman using the contraceptive pill
- Stroke by three times
- Peripheral arterial disease, which can lead to gangrene, by more than five times (Better Health Channel 2010).

On top of this, smoking doesn't only effect those who smoke. It also effects those they live with. Passive smoking is a serious health hazard for non smokers. People who inhale smoke from others are at increased risk of disease.

- Non-smokers living with smokers have about a 30 per cent increase in risk of heart disease.
- Exposure to secondhand smoke is especially risky for children and babies and increases the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), bronchitis, pneumonia and asthma (Better Health Channel, 2010).

While many readers will know these facts, let's remember that 23 people in this shire alone died in one year because of smoking.

It's understood how hard it is to give up smoking, as has been highlighted in the 'Never Give Up Giving Up' campaign by QUIT Victoria. But have a think about these changes that occur in your body after quitting smoking:

Within one day of quitting smoking:

- Your heart rate slows down and your blood pressure drops slightly.

Within two to three months:

- Your lungs regain the ability to clean themselves, so you can cough up mucus.

Within one year:

- If you smoked a packet of 25s a day, you would have saved over \$4,500.

Within two to six years:

- Your risk of developing coronary heart disease returns to a similar level as that of a non-smoker (Better Health Channel, 2010).

Better Health Channel statistic show savings of \$4500.00 in one year of quitting smoking (CIV data).

In the Mitchell Shire, the average weekly household income is \$563.00 - \$4500.00 is nearly 8 weeks worth of income.

There is help available for people to give up smoking. The Better Health Channel has compiled the following list:

- Read the Heart Foundation's booklet 'Smoking and your health'. For a free single copy, email health@heartfoundation.org.au or call 1300 36 27 87.
- Consider nicotine replacement products (gums, patches or lozenges), or bupropion tablets. These products can increase your chances of quitting successfully.
- Discuss quitting smoking with your doctor or pharmacist. They can tell you about the options available to help you quit, and can help to check your progress.
- Talk to your family and friends and ask them for your support and encouragement.
- Read self-help materials and attend quit smoking courses.
- Call Quitline on 13 7848 (13 QUIT) for information and advice.

And remember, local help is available as well. Mitchell Community Health Service can run QUIT classes on request.

Financial Counselling Update

This month our Financial Counselling team would like to draw your attention to some significant changes to credit legislation that may have an impact on your access to credit.

The new national credit legislation commenced on 1 July 2010 and is called the National Consumer Credit Protection Act 2009.

The Act converts the current Victorian legislation into National legislation that will be regulated by the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC).

The Act promotes principles of 'responsible lending' which places the onus on the lender to gather adequate information to ensure the consumer has a capacity to repay.

As a result, consumers applying for credit may find it more difficult than before as they need to be able to produce evidence of their capacity to repay a loan.

Some of the other changes include:

- Establishing a national licensing regime to require providers of consumer credit and credit-related brokering services and advice to obtain a license from ASIC.
- Requiring mandatory membership of an external dispute resolution (EDR) body by all providers of consumer credit and credit-related brokering services and advice. This will mean membership to either Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) or the Credit Ombudsman Service Limited (COSL).

Consumers will benefit from the requirement for credit providers to be members of an EDR scheme as it provides an independent body to hear complaints that cannot be settled by the credit provider's internal channels.

For more information regarding the new legislation, you can check out ASIC's website www.asic.gov.au under the heading 'credit' or contact your local financial counsellor.

The Mitchell Community Health Service Financial Counselling Team are available to assist you in matters relating to debt and or any sort of financial dispute.

Please contact MCHS on **1300 773 352** to make an appointment.

Caring for our Children

Paediatric Bushfire Support Services (PBSS)

Children affected by traumatic events such as bushfires often require specific support.

This may include a variety of emotional and physical supports to address the effects of the trauma.

The newly established Paediatric Bushfire Support Service (PBSS) provides support for children and their families affected by the February 2009 bushfires.

The program is funded by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and will run until July 2011.

Allied Health support provided as part of the Paediatric Bushfire Support Service (PBSS) includes the following services and programs:

- Counselling
- Speech Pathology
- Physiotherapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Dietary Advice

The key features of the Paediatric Bushfire Support Service (PBSS) include:

- self referral
- continuity of support services
- for children aged 0 - 8 years
- allied health support continues when children commence schooling
- staff travel as required to support children in their natural environment eg: child care, preschool, primary school and the family home
- the service is available to bushfire affected children from the Shires of Murrindindi and Mitchell

To find out if your child is eligible for this service, please contact the Service Access and Care Coordination (SACC) team on **1300 773 352** and ask about the Paediatric Bushfire Support Service.

Service Access and Care Coordination (SACC)

P: 1300 773 352 F: 5784 5525 E: serviceaccess@mitchellchs.org.au

Mitchell Community Health Service is located in Broadford, Wallan, Seymour, Kinglake, Alexandra, Yea and other sites in Murrindindi by negotiation.

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