



WORKING TOGETHER WITH TRUST AND RESPECT

Community Health *Matters*

BANYULE
Community Health

Joe Finds Health For Life

Joe is a great example of healthy living – someone who has taken control of their health and is actively working to ensure he stays healthy.

Joe had been diagnosed with diabetes and wasn't sure how to manage it.

"After seeing what my mother had been through with the insulin and diabetes, I decided I needed to do something about my own illness," said Joe. "I knew there were people who could help me."

Joe was referred to Banyule Community Health's "Health For Life" program, a program established to provide coordinated support to clients with chronic disease, through the BCH Diabetes Educator in consultation with his doctor.

Participants in the Health For Life program are provided with a comprehensive review of their health and lifestyle, which is used to identify areas for overall health improvement. In Joe's situation, some of the issues that were contributing to his illness included problems with diet and weight, as well as his lack of exercise.

After identifying these issues, Joe worked with the Health For Life team to develop a wellness plan – identifying changes he was going to make to his lifestyle that would improve his health and wellbeing.

"I knew that I needed to make changes to my lifestyle if I was going to stay healthy," said Joe, "but I just didn't know how to go about it."

Joe worked closely with Banyule Community Health's Pauline Courtney to achieve his health goals, knowing that there was a supportive voice available to him when he needed it. Together they established a wellness plan that Joe could implement.

The wellness plan is an important part of Health For Life. This plan is used to develop a coordinated program of consultations with relevant health services, support groups and doctor visits. Each participant in

the program is assigned a health coach who works with them to monitor their progress and to support them when needed.

"Pauline was a great support to me, helping me to identify simple things I could do to improve my health – and giving me the confidence to know that it was possible," said Joe.

During his involvement with Health For Life, Joe made great progress in achieving his health goals. Through the program, he maintained his contact with Banyule Community Health's Diabetes Educator who provided information about living with diabetes and helped to monitor his blood sugar levels.

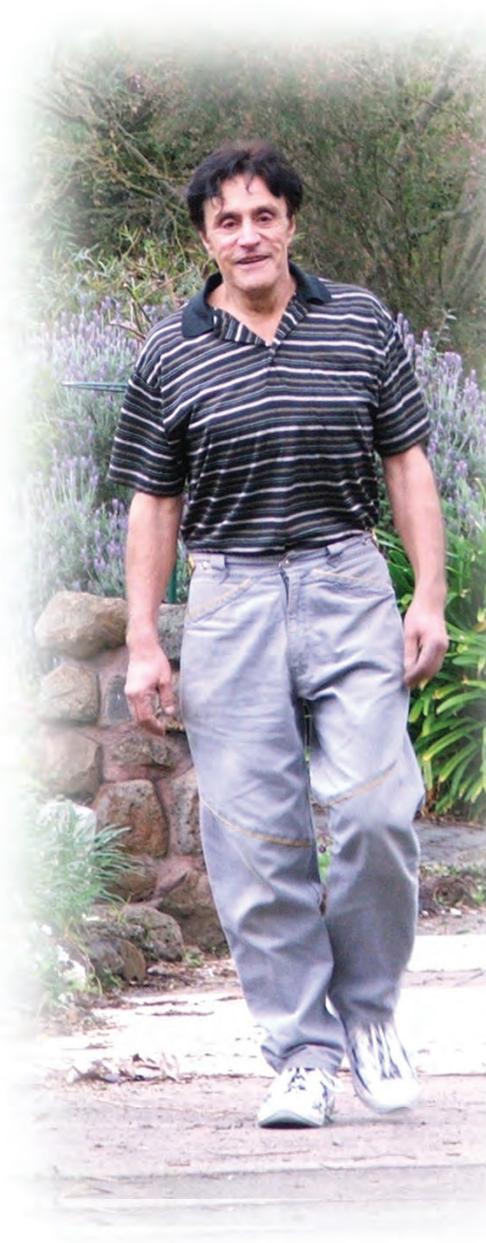
He also saw Banyule Community Health's dietician, who was able to work with Joe to make better food choices. However his attitude was beginning to change to thinking more positively about managing his diabetes better for himself.

"I found that walking and losing a bit of weight helped give me a lot more energy," said Joe, "and the exercise makes a big difference to lowering my blood sugar."

Over time, Joe's fitness has improved; he has lost weight and is feeling much better than he has in a long time. He's making positive choices about his health and even though he has completed the Health For Life program, he knows that he can still access the services and support that was provided through the program.

"If I didn't change, I would now be very sick," said Joe. "It would have been downhill, I would need insulin and possibly hospital," he said. "But now, I feel good."

Joe is a man who is now in control of his health – rather than being controlled by it. Well done Joe.



Above: (Right) Gentle exercise such as walking is a great way to improve your health.

Winter 2008



CEO Jim Pasinis with BCH President Melina Brooks.

From the CEO

The last issue of Community Health Matters included a quick self assessment test to measure your risk of diabetes.

Having taken the test myself, it made me stop and think about my own lifestyle choices and what I can do to make sure I'm living healthy. With that in mind we devote this issue of Community Health Matters to Healthy Living and the simple things we can all do to live a healthier lifestyle.

At Banyule Community Health, we believe that good health is more than the absence of illness. Health is about looking at all the things that can keep us healthy – rather than waiting until we are sick. Banyule Community Health strives to create healthy people and a healthy community through its many services and programs.

Finally, as you'll see from the article on this page, we have just introduced a new system for tracking client appointments. I want to take this opportunity to thank the staff involved in this project and congratulate all staff for managing such a major change so well.

Jim Pasinis
Chief Executive Officer
Editors Note:

Our CEO Jim Pasinis was recognised by his Community Health colleagues this month at the annual Australian College of Health Services Executive forum, where Jim was awarded "CEO of the Year". Jim has served as CEO of Banyule Community Health (formerly West Heidelberg Community Health Centre) since 1990 and has overseen the growth and development of the service.

Well done Jim!

New Client Management System

Over the past six months, staff at Banyule Community Health have been preparing for a major change to the system we use to track clients appointments. The system is known as TrakIT and has been introduced as part of the Victorian Government's HealthSMART initiative.

The HealthSMART initiative will standardise health information systems across all public health services and will assist agencies like ours to deliver better, more responsive services to the community.

This new system "went live" at Banyule Community Health in late July, with all staff now using it to make and monitor appointments, waiting lists and referrals.



Above: BCH Reception Staff - Deanne, Michelle, Michelle and Mary.

Many months of planning, testing and training has gone into preparing for this new system – but all the preparation in the world doesn't prepare you for the big day. While we are still learning the ins and outs of this new system, please forgive us for any delays or difficulties faced when trying to make appointments with us.

The tooth, the whole tooth and nothing but the tooth!

At Banyule Community Health we focus on health needs across a range of services and disciplines. One of the more significant improvements in our service that came about with the opening of our new building at West Heidelberg has been in our dental services.

Our once small "two chair" dental practice has grown to include eight dental chairs with the capacity to see many more clients than previously – leading to a reduction in waiting lists and improved services.

Dental health and oral hygiene is a major part of the overall health needs of an individual, so we asked our Dental Services Manager Daniela Gheorma to provide some dental health tips:

Q. At what age should a child first visit the dentist?

A. Even when there are no obvious problems a child's first dental visit and oral examination should take place at approximately six to twelve months of age.

Q. Does it make any difference if I use a hard bristle or a soft bristle toothbrush?

A. A soft bristle toothbrush is the best choice in order to reduce the risk of damage to your



teeth and gums. A hard bristle toothbrush can damage the delicate part of your teeth near the gum line.

Q. What about using an electric toothbrush versus a manual toothbrush?

A. An electric toothbrush could be a valuable alternative for people that find it difficult to use a manual toothbrush, but a manual toothbrush is equally effective. The willingness and ability to clean the teeth properly is more important than the choice between manual or electric.

Q. Which toothpaste should I use?

A. Any toothpaste that contains fluoride and assists in the removal of plaque is good toothpaste to use. When visiting your dentist, discuss any tooth damage or concerns and the dentist can advise you if the way you brush your teeth should be changed.

Our dental services are available to people who hold a Pensioner Concession Card or a Health Care Card – to organise an appointment contact us on 03 9450 2000.

Above: The dental team



Health for Life Tip



Your heart needs care for life. A healthy heart is about enjoying a healthy lifestyle and making this part of your everyday life. It is also about taking positive steps to reduce risk factors.

Here are the top five tips from The Heart Foundation that will help you sticking with your healthy living resolutions – and help your heart!

- Small changes to your eating habits can make a big difference. Try switching to reduced fat milk instead of full fat milk, ditching the cakes or biscuits for morning tea and choosing a piece of fruit instead, or opt for wholegrain bread instead of white.
- Look for ways to build physical activity into your day. Walking is a great and cheap way to do this. If you have to drive somewhere, park further away and walk the extra distance rather than driving around for the perfect park, or take a break during your day and go for a fifteen minute walk.
- Check the changes you've made and see how you are feeling - they need to sit comfortably with you. Changes need to be there for the long haul so it's important to be enjoying your life and feeling good about yourself.
- Reward yourself – when a change becomes a habit, buy yourself some new clothes, or visit a place you enjoy.
- Keep going with your changes – it's normal to have days when it can be difficult. Don't be disheartened and don't worry about it. Keep going with what you are doing.

If you are in doubt about how you can live healthy or are concerned further, talk to your doctor or health professional.

Your Doctor, Healthy Living and You!

Living a healthy lifestyle can happen in many ways. Being involved in your community, undertaking regular exercise, and watching what you eat are some of the simple things you can to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

But when the time comes to talk to a medical professional, you need to know that they are able to provide you with the care you need.

Banyule Community Health is proud to have been awarded accreditation for our

How Volunteering Leads to Good Health

When thinking about our health and how best to look after it, we often think of doctors, dentists and other health professionals. While these formal health services are a vital part of any healthy lifestyle, there are also lots of "non-medical" ways that you can stay healthy.

One of the easiest and most important ways is by staying active and being connected and involved in your local community.

Two local ladies who have embraced this idea are Betty Dodd and Betty Tydeman – both residents of West Heidelberg who have demonstrated their great commitment to their community through volunteering.



Betty Dodd is well known in West Heidelberg as the President of the Olympic Village Combined Pensioners Association, while Betty Tydeman has been involved in community programs with Banyule Community Health for many years. Both ladies are also involved with the West Heidelberg Neighbourhood Renewal Program – participating in working groups and on the steering committee, as well as the Women of West Heidelberg group.

Their commitment to the community was recognised earlier this year in the Banyule Community Volunteer Awards, organised by Banyule City Council, where both ladies were presented with "Volunteer of the Year" awards.

"My involvement with the Combined Pensioners Association, and more recently the Neighbourhood Renewal Programs, has provided wonderful social supports to me as well as helping to keep my mind active," said Betty Dodd.

"We all need an outside interest," she said, "and to be involved with your community is a great tonic."

The Combined Pensioners Association recently introduced a gentle exercise program as part of their weekly activities.

"The exercise program has been wonderful," said Betty. "Our ladies are seeing great results and it's helping us all to keep both our mind and body active."

Volunteering is also good for the community – providing opportunities to support programs that contribute to making our community a stronger, healthier and safer place to live.

"I've been lucky to be involved in so many programs in West Heidelberg," said Betty Tydeman, "particularly with Neighbourhood Renewal. I've been able to give back to the community which has given so much to me over the years," she said.

Olympic Village Combined Pensioners Association
Contact Betty Dodd on 03 9459 3486.

West Heidelberg Neighbourhood Renewal
Contact Bronwyn Morphett on 03 9450 2622.

Above: Betty Dodd (left) and Betty Tydeman after receiving their Volunteering Awards

medical practices at Greensborough and West Heidelberg by AGPAL, the accreditation body for medical practices.

"Maintaining and earning accreditation is a major achievement and a clear demonstration that Banyule Community Health is continually seeking to improve our level of service for clients and our community," said Clinical Services Manager Meni Stefanovski.

"Your GP is a great source of information and advice to help you lead a healthy lifestyle. Not only can they assist with specific health concerns and treatment needs, but can also refer you to other services that can help you with healthy living," she said.

The medical practices at Banyule Community Health provide comprehensive medical care

to members of our community and are open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm at both our Greensborough and West Heidelberg locations.

For further information you can contact Meni Stefanovski, Clinical Services Manager, on 03 9450 2000.



Above: Dr Padmini (Centre) with student doctor Jonathan and patient Karen-Joy

Get Involved

One of the easiest ways to live a healthy lifestyle is through community connections. Banyule Community Health offers a range of social and support groups to members of our community. We have support groups for people with particular illnesses, education and awareness groups, parenting groups and programs, as well as other more general groups. Some of our groups are described on this page, while a full list of our groups can be found on our website at www.bchs.org.au.

MILEAGE (Mental Illness Awareness Group)

Mental Illness Awareness Group of Experts (MILEAGE) is a group of residents and agencies in West Heidelberg who are working together to raise awareness about mental illness. The group has come together based upon their experiences with mental illness and the need to reduce the stigma which is often associated with mental illness within the community.

This action group meets regularly to work on projects that raise awareness of mental illness and started as an initiative of Neighbourhood Renewal and MetroAccess Banyule City Council. Planning has begun for a community forum and information session to be held during Mental Health Week (5 – 11 October), which will discuss medication, treatments and general wellbeing.

More information about Mileage is available from Bronwyn by calling 03 9450 2622.

WOMEN OF WEST HEIDELBERG

Women of West Heidelberg is a group of local

women who come together to celebrate women and their contribution to our community.

They meet for afternoon tea on the first Thursday of each month at BCH West Heidelberg, with the next meeting to be held on Thursday 4 September. Come along and meet other women in your local community for a cuppa and a chat!

To find out more about the Women of West Heidelberg group, contact Bronwyn on 03 9450 2622.

MEN'S HEALTH

Rob Patton has recently joined Banyule Community Health to help us connect with and promote positive health to men in our community. We are looking for your input into the health issues facing men in our community and will establish a Men's Health Group to address these issues.

If you'd like find out more or be involved in our Men's Health programs, contact Rob on 03 9450 2099 (Tuesdays and Fridays).

MOTHER GOOSE PROGRAM FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN

The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program is a group for parents with children between one and two and a half. Using rhymes, songs and stories, the program will support parents to build their skills and confidence as parents and will encourage communication and positive experiences between parents and their children.

The program, which is free to attend, will commence on Thursday 9 October at BCH

West Heidelberg. For further details and to register your interest, contact Carolyn Morris on 03 9450 2000.

3081 GETS THE JOB DONE! LIVING, LEARNING & WORKING LOCALLY

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING EXPO

Local residents and young people are invited to participate in a Youth Employment & Training Expo to be held at Banyule Community Health in West Heidelberg on Wednesday 10 September, from 6:00pm to 8:00pm.

Local employers and training providers will be in attendance with a focus on areas of skill shortages. This is a great opportunity to learn about possibly careers and training opportunities, with finger food provided and door prizes available on the night.

For information and to confirm your attendance, contact Jackie on 03 9450 2623 or visit www.bchs.org.au.



BANYULE
Community Health

Banyule Community Health

21 Alamein Road 25 Grimshaw Street
West Heidelberg Greensborough
Tel: 9450 2000 Tel: 9433 5111

Web: www.bchs.org.au

If undeliverable return to:
Banyule Community Health
21 Alamein Rd, West Heidelberg 3081

Community Health Matters

Print Post approved
PP 350254/2225

**SURFACE
MAIL**

**POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA**