

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Collaborative approaches help create healthy communities

Thursday 28 November

Murray PHN today released its biggest ever Report to the Community.

This year's report details many of the primary health programs that Murray PHN has supported and funded across the region this year and looks at some of the very personal stories of its staff and of the dedicated health and community professionals that they work with every day.

It demonstrates the shared commitment of people, inside and outside of the organisation, who work together to ensure their work has impact, achieves positive outcomes and improves lives.

In launching the 2024 Report to the Community, Murray PHN Chief Executive Officer Matt Jones acknowledged that people living in regional and rural areas often had a stronger sense of community and pulling together than those who live in metropolitan areas.

“Regional and rural people are built differently, and those differences are expressed in many different ways. We value community and supporting local organisations; we know we have to work together to get things done. And we put our hands up to contribute to the common good and help to share a load.”

When we rally together in times of crisis, be it a fire, a flood or supporting drought-stricken farmers, this collaborative action and shared experience helps communities to build stronger, more resilient networks and achieve better outcomes.

“This type of mindset is evident at Murray PHN in the way our staff work together, the strength of relationships we have with our stakeholders, our relational approach to commissioning and the collaborative approach to everything we do,” he said. “We can't do our work without each other.”

Some of Murray PHN's shared programs and achievements, both large and small, include:

- Hospital Street Doctors (a general practice clinic in Wodonga) had a vision for a multidisciplinary lymphoedema and cancer survivorship clinic. With Murray PHN funding and the support of our staff, the Wodonga clinic became a reality and is now a finalist for a national quality improvement data award (winners announced early December) (pages 18-19).
- Psychosocial supports are programs and activities designed to help people with severe mental illness and associated psychosocial disability to achieve their recovery goals. Murray PHN funds two service providers, one of which is Stride, whose staff helped a client who had a chronic fear of people and leaving the house to join a choir and perform on stage (page 47).
- Murray PHN launched a training program called BERTIE (Better lives for residents through innovative education) earlier this year, in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. Sixteen subject matter experts were involved, including geriatrician Dr Jesse Zanker who grew up in Echuca and who talks about the challenges and opportunities in aged care (pages 67-69).
- The Caring Circle project focuses on palliative care, including looking after the needs of carers. Through it, GV Hospice is funded to provide a wellbeing project that is led by a passionate coordinator who has lived experience of being a carer and dealing with grief and loss (pages 74-75).

Read the report at: <https://bit.ly/MPHNR2C24>

Murray PHN's other recent publications include the [Murray Health Report on Multiculturalism](#), and earlier Murray Health Reports that can be accessed on our [website](#). These documents all describe the ways that Murray PHN supports primary healthcare.

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### **About us:**

*Murray PHN is one of 29 PHNs (Primary Health Networks) around Australia working to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of primary health care and service systems. Across our region, we work with general practitioners (GPs), community health, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs), pharmacy, aged care and allied health practitioners, and with acute services such as hospitals, specialists and emergency care.*

*The role of PHNs is to help to support and integrate the work of these important services to ensure that the people get the right care, in the right place, at the right time. In the Murray PHN region, which covers almost 100,000 sq km of regional Victoria, we work to develop and maintain sustainable models of primary health care for our communities.*

### **Contact details**

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### **Images of Matt Jones**

- [https://www.murrayphn.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Murray-PHN-CEO\\_Matt-Jones\\_2024.jpg](https://www.murrayphn.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Murray-PHN-CEO_Matt-Jones_2024.jpg)
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