

MEDIA RELEASE

Second Murray Health Report out now

Thursday 28 October 2021

The aim of primary health care is to help people in our communities to be as healthy as they can be, with the resources to manage their own health – physical, emotional, spiritual and mental wellbeing.

In Australia, access can be world class, but it is uneven, with people living in cities having better and more consistent access to services than the people living in rural and regional areas.

As we move towards living with COVID-19 in our communities, it's vital that good aspects of health and wellbeing are maintained.

Murray PHN is pleased to publish the second edition of its Murray Health Report, which looks at the current health issues, challenges and opportunities for people in our 100,000 sq km region.

The data-driven report describes that people living in the region are likely to have a higher chance of having a chronic illness, such as diabetes, or heart or lung problems and mental ill-health – which in some places is diagnosed at twice the state average.

It looks at other risk, behaviour and social disadvantage factors, including the higher risk and frequency of environmental disasters such as bushfires, floods and storms, and the longer term social, emotional and financial impacts of those experiences – such as increased family violence - on communities.

While the pandemic has helped to accelerate telehealth and made health care more accessible for some, for others unreliable internet remains, or the cost of internet and the devices required to use it, means access is still not equitable.

Murray PHN CEO Matt Jones says that rural health in Australia needs drastic and urgent reform to develop more local, collaborative and co-design services.

“The complexity of health funding can prevent effective solutions outside of cities.

“As Victoria’s largest PHN, we’re working towards the integration of local health networks, whether they are primary or acute, commonwealth or state funded.

“Our goal is that integrated health networks can help to address some of the workforce challenges that impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of our local primary health care services”, Matt said.

In the 2020-21 financial year, Murray PHN has a budget of more \$60 million, with \$45 million of that funding to support collaborative work to improve health outcomes.

The Murray Health Report also includes information on the importance of exercise on mental health, minimum physical activity guidelines across the ages, and tips for good health.

To read the Report, visit: murrayphn.org.au/murrayhealthreport/

2021 images of Matt Jones

- https://www.murrayphn.org.au/murray-phn-ceo_matt-jones_2021/
- https://www.murrayphn.org.au/murray-phn-ceo_matt-jones_2_2021/

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