

## Inside This Issue

New Research Highlights Peer Influence in Smoking and Vaping Uptake	1
Feedback & Acknowledgments	2
Join Our Consumer Advisory Subcommittee	3
Supporting Women's Health at Every Stage of Life	4
Let's Talk About Loneliness	5
Social Prescribing	6
Parents & Carers Morning Tea (Cohuna & Kerang)	7
Do you have an NDIS Plan?	8
Welcoming Future Health & Community Workers	8
Raising Awareness for Diabetes Week	9
Hubs Continue to Provide Accessible Healthcare to Rural Regions	10
Quit Smoking or Vaping	11
Youth Mental Health in the Spotlight	12
One More Weekend	13
Homelessness Week 2025	14
NDCH Medical Clinic	14 - 15
Contact Us	16

## New Research Highlights Peer Influence in Smoking and Vaping Uptake



*KTHS students participating in NDCH's Seeing Through the Haze Education Program.*

In April this year our BLG partnership research project was published. The project, funded by Department of Health, was led by NDCH research Morgan Spencer and supported by Emily Wood (NDCH), Dr Nerida Hyett (Murray PHN) and John Baker (DoH).

The research, undertaken in townships across Buloke, Loddon and Gannawarra, explored the socio-ecological enablers of Smoking and vaping in rural young adults-looking into the factors that contributed to the uptake of tobacco use in younger populations. The methodology included interviews with young people and youth service workers as well as an online survey for young people from the BLG region.

Results found that peers are the biggest factor in influencing the uptake of tobacco product use in the young people sampled.

[The Socio-Ecological Enablers of Smoking and Vaping in Rural Young Adults: A Mixed-Methods Study - Spencer - 2025 - Health Promotion Journal of Australia - Wiley Online Library](#)

# Your Feedback Matters

We welcome your feedback - good or bad. You can tell us if:

- You are happy with our service
- Something went wrong
- You were treated unfairly
- Your rights were not respected
- You think we could do better

How to give feedback:

- Email us at [feedback@ndch.org.au](mailto:feedback@ndch.org.au)
- Fill out our Client Satisfaction Survey (available in waiting rooms or online at [www.ndch.org.au](http://www.ndch.org.au) or by scanning the below QR code)
- Write to us or drop off your feedback at:  
Northern District Community Health  
24 Fitzroy Street  
Kerang VIC 3579



# Connect with us on social media!

Want to see what we're up to between newsletters? Follow us on social media for the latest updates, behind-the-scenes moments, community stories, and more. It's a great way to stay in touch and be part of the conversation.

## Follow us on



[Facebook](#)



[LinkedIn](#)



[Instagram](#)



## CHILD SAFE COMMITMENT STATEMENT

Northern District Community Health is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people and has zero tolerance for child abuse. We are committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. In particular, we pay attention to the cultural safety of Indigenous children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children who identify as LGBTIQ+, as well as children with a disability. Every person involved at Northern District Community Health has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do. See our [website](#) for our full Child Safe Commitment Statement.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

NDCH acknowledges that our work occurs on the country of the Traditional Owners of the area, the people of Barapa Barapa, Wamba Wamba, Yorta Yorta and DjaDja Wurrung and acknowledge their ancestors who have been custodians of this land for thousands of years.

We acknowledge and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and through them, to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



## LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITIES

NDCH proudly supports the LGBTIQ+ communities.



# JOIN OUR CONSUMER ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE



Do you have lived experience as a client, patient, carer or community member? Your voice matters — and we want to hear from you.

NDCH is seeking people to join our new Consumer Advisory Subcommittee, which will work alongside our Board to help shape safer, higher-quality healthcare for our region.

You don't need any formal experience — just a willingness to share your insights and ideas.

## WHY GET INVOLVED?

Consumers help improve healthcare when they:

- ✓ Feel supported to partner in their own care
- ✓ Choose how they're involved in decision-making
- ✓ Receive health information they understand
- ✓ Share their experience to help design better services
- ✓ Know their opinions are valued by health providers

Your feedback could help guide how we deliver services, improve health literacy, and ensure community voices are at the heart of what we do.

## IF YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE OR EXPRESS INTEREST

Visit our website by clicking the link below or by scanning the QR code.

<https://ndch.org.au/join-our-board/>

SCAN  
ME!



# Supporting Women's Health at *Every Stage of Life*


Northern District Community Health is proud to have Dr. Zoya Sadeghi Pour as part of our medical team. With a special interest in gynaecology and women's health, Dr. Zoya provides expert, compassionate care for women across all life stages.

Her services include:

- Contraception advice and procedures (including **Mirena** and **Implanon** insertion/removal)
- Menstrual and reproductive health
- Antenatal care and pregnancy support
- Pelvic floor prolapse assessment and management
- Menopause management
- General women's health checks and advice

Whether you're looking for guidance on contraception, support with ongoing symptoms, or help managing life changes, Dr. Zoya is here to help.

Contact the NDCH Medical Clinic to book an appointment with Dr. Zoya today!

 03 5452 1366

 34 Fitzroy Street, Kerang



# Let's Talk About Loneliness



## Loneliness Awareness Week & Social Prescribing at NDCH

### Loneliness isn't always obvious.

It can affect anyone – young parents, farmers, retirees, even those surrounded by people. In rural areas, distance and limited services can make it harder to reach out.

#### That's why Loneliness Awareness Week matters.

It reminds us that feeling lonely is human – not a weakness – and there are ways to reconnect.

### Social Prescribing: A New Way to Support Wellbeing

NDCH's Social Prescribing program helps people build wellbeing through social connection – not just medical care.

This might include:

- Finding local clubs or groups
- Help with transport
- Support returning to a hobby
- Navigating services
- A regular friendly chat.



Because health is also about belonging, community, and purpose.  
(See our flyer on the next page for more information)

### Need Ideas? Try the Community Connections Directory

This local guide is full of social opportunities and support services across Gannawarra. Whether it's craft, a Men's Shed, volunteering or just a cuppa – there's something for everyone.

Pick up a copy at NDCH, the Shire Office, or download it from our [website](#).  
Not sure where to start? Just ask – we're here to help.

### The Small Things Matter

A smile. A conversation. An invitation.

Small actions make a big difference in creating a more connected community.

If you or someone you know could benefit from Social Prescribing, get in touch. Let's talk about loneliness – and tackle it together. **More on page 5.**



# SOCIAL PRESCRIBING

**Social isolation and loneliness increase the risk of poor health outcomes.**

An important step to improving health is through social connection as identified in the **5 Ways to Wellbeing**. Claire our Chronic Disease Nurse connects people to local groups and activities that will help support health and wellbeing.



Social prescribing shifts the focus from chronic illness to wellness and self-care.

## Claire our Chronic Disease Nurse will:

- ✔ Identify the local activities and services you can benefit from. Such as art, conversation, volunteering, physical activity, games, music, nature walks etc.
- ✔ Support and give encouragement to start using services.

### ELIGIBILITY:

- ✔ Living in Buloke, Gannawarra and Northern Loddon Shires including Boort and Pyramid Hill

### CONTACT US

- ☎ 03 5451 0200
- 🌐 [www.ndch.org.au](http://www.ndch.org.au)
- ✉ [referral@ndch.org.au](mailto:referral@ndch.org.au)
- 🕒 8.30am-5pm  
Mon to Thurs
- 📍 24 Fitzroy St, KERANG

### FREE SERVICE.

**SELF REFERRAL OR ASK YOUR GP.**

### What are the 5 Ways to Wellbeing?



[5waystowellbeing.org.au](http://5waystowellbeing.org.au)



NDCH welcomes people of any age, gender, sex, sexuality, culture, religion and ability. We acknowledge that we are on Aboriginal land and pay our respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.

# Parents and Carers Join us for morning tea

Many people don't see themselves as carers,  
yet one in eight people in Australia are.

A carer is someone who provides unpaid support to a family member, friend  
or partner with disability, mental illness, a medical condition or is frail due to age.

**Bendigo Health Carer Support Services** provide free services and support  
to help carers manage daily challenges and improve wellbeing.

**If you are a carer, know someone who is, or you would  
like to know more, drop in for a cuppa and a chat with us.**

**Tuesday 19 August 10.30am - 12noon**  
**Northern District Community Health, 33 King Edward St, Cohuna**  
*\* Registration essential by Wednesday 13 August*

# Parents and Carers Join us for morning tea

Many people don't see themselves as carers,  
yet one in eight people in Australia are.

A carer is someone who provides unpaid support to a family member, friend  
or partner with disability, mental illness, a medical condition or is frail due to age.

**Bendigo Health Carer Support Services** provide free services and support  
to help carers manage daily challenges and improve wellbeing.

**If you are a carer, know someone who is, or you would  
like to know more, drop in for a cuppa and a chat with us.**

**Monday 18 August 10.30am - 12noon**  
**Northern District Community Health, 16 - 30 Fitzroy St, Kerang**  
*\* Registration essential by Wednesday 13 August*

**For more information or to register contact Georgia Anderson,**  
**Northern District Community Health**  
**0455 549 254 or [georgia.anderson@ndch.org.au](mailto:georgia.anderson@ndch.org.au)**

# Do you have an NDIS Plan?

Our Support Coordination Team has capacity!



**Emily Mathiske**

Support Coordinator



**Kellie Crellin**

Support Coordinator



**Taylah Collier**

Support Coordinator

The NDIS helps people with a disability to join in with their community and live independently.

Our NDIS services are:

- Support Coordination
- Occupational Therapy (*currently not available*)
- Community Nursing Care
- Paediatric Physiotherapy (*currently not available*)
- Podiatry
- Dietitian

**Reach out to our team today!**



03 5451 0200 - ask to speak with a member of the Support Coordination team



[ndis@ndch.org.au](mailto:ndis@ndch.org.au)

**We are proud to be NDIS Registered & Accredited**



REGISTERED  
NDIS  
PROVIDER

## Welcoming Future Health & Community Workers

In the coming months, NDCH is proud to host several passionate students completing their work placements across our programs and sites. This is a fantastic opportunity to gain real-world experience and for our local communities to support the next generation of professionals in health, wellbeing, and community services.

We're calling on **Gannawarra residents, local businesses, and community members** who may be willing to accommodate a student during their short-term placement. Whether it's a spare room, a granny flat, or even just a recommendation – we'd love to hear from you.



To learn more or express interest, please contact NDCH on 03 5451 0200.

# RAISING AWARENESS FOR DIABETES WEEK

Education, prevention, and support close to home



As part of National Diabetes Week, NDCH was proud to support Diabetes Australia in raising awareness about the importance of prevention at every stage of the diabetes journey. Whether it's preventing type 2 diabetes or helping those already living with diabetes reduce the risk of complications, education and early support are key.

Our Credentialed Diabetes Educators (CDEs) play a vital role in this, offering tailored support to help individuals better understand and manage their condition. From medication management and blood glucose monitoring to education around diabetes technology and long-term complications, CDEs work closely with GPs and allied health professionals to support patients every step of the way.

To help spread this message, our very own Diabetes Educator, Alex, recently visited WD Activity Thomas in Kerang. She spoke with participants about what diabetes is, the role of a diabetes educator, and simple, practical steps we can all take to stay healthy and reduce our risk. The visit was a great opportunity to raise awareness in a relaxed, engaging environment – and we're grateful to the team at WD Activity Thomas for welcoming Alex.

If you'd like to know more about diabetes support or would like to make an appointment with one of our Credentialed Diabetes Educators, call us on (03) 5451 0200.



# Hubs Continue to Provide Accessible Healthcare to Rural Regions

The Sustainable Rural Healthcare Hubs—known as Hubs—are bringing accessible and coordinated healthcare to people living with chronic conditions in our small rural towns. By utilising our skilled Nurse Practitioners (NP) workforce, the Hubs support local General Practitioners (GP) to continue delivering best practice care despite common rural challenges such as transport, workforce shortages, and sustainability.

Working alongside a dedicated Care Coordinator the Hubs Nurse Practitioners are now delivering care in 5 rural locations, with the newest Hub recently opening in Inglewood through the Marong Medical Clinic. NDCH also offers Hubs in Kerang, Pyramid Hill, Quambatook, while Boort District Medical Clinic and Boort District Health operate a Hub in Boort.



The Hubs provide a team-based model of care, ensuring the GP remains involved in treatment while also connecting clients to other services such as allied health and care coordination.

Yvonne has been part of the Hubs program for over two years and says the model allows clients more time and support to manage their conditions. “It just gives them the extra time to manage their conditions and to review things that they may not have time for in their regular GP visits. It also means we can bring in other services such as dietitians or diabetes educators to provide a wholistic approach to care,” Yvonne said.



As a Nurse Practitioner, Yvonne can also prescribe most medications (including authority and specialist review scripts), order pathology and many radiology tests, provide medical certificates, and offer a range of procedures including pap smears, immunisations, Prolia and Depo injections, and de-sensitisation treatments. She can also refer clients to specialists as needed.

Michelle, another member of the Sustainable Rural Healthcare Hubs team, highlighted the value of working together for better client outcomes. “We’ve had great feedback from patients—being listened to, building trust, professionalism, and consistent care. It’s also about having open discussions around future outcomes and recognising the importance of working together as a team to get the best result for the patient,” she said.

She added that the recent conference reaffirmed the value of team-based care. “The overall outcome was that all health professionals engaging together is the right direction for our rural communities. By working together, we’re moving forward.”

Michelle also plays a key role in helping people and families in rural communities navigate the healthcare system. “My role is to support people so they don’t feel alone, and to help advocate for them. It’s about making sure they’re connected to the care they need, with the whole team working together.”

For more information on the hubs check out the website:

[\*\*Home - Rural Healthcare Hubs\*\*](#)

# QUIT SMOKING OR VAPING

Start Healing Today - Free Support  
from NDCH

At NDCH, we offer free and confidential support to help you quit smoking or vaping—your body begins healing the moment you stop.

Claire, our trained nurse, offers:

- One-on-one support tailored to your needs
- Practical strategies to manage cravings
- Access to helpful tools and resources
- No referral needed, and no cost to access
- Ongoing support if you've tried before

Appointments are available in Kerang, Boort, Cohuna, Pyramid Hill, Quambatook and Koondrook.

## Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) Support

Claire can support you to access NRT like patches, gum or medication—just make an appointment or speak with your GP about a PBS script.

## Community Education

Our Health Promotion Team also provides smoking and vaping education for schools. Call (03) 5451 0200 to enquire.

### Helpful Links

QUIT Victoria



NSW Health



Take the first step today - contact our  
office and ask to speak with Claire.



03 5451 0200



info@ndch.org.au



## Why quit?

When you quit, you can:

- Lower your risk of lung disease, stroke, and heart attack
- Reduce your risk of 12 types of cancer
- Improve fertility and sexual health
- Boost your overall quality of life
- Reduce the risk of dementia
- Help your body start healing immediately
- Increase your lifespan

## Protect Family & Friends

Secondhand smoke harms children and loved ones. Quitting reduces their exposure and helps everyone breathe easier.

## What You Need to Know About Vaping

- Vapes contain over 200 harmful chemicals—some found in cleaning products and bug spray
- Most contain nicotine—as much as 50 cigarettes in one vape
- Nicotine worsens stress, anxiety, and depression
- It affects brain development, memory, and learning
- Young people who vape are 5x more likely to start smoking

Sourced from [health.nsw.gov.au](https://health.nsw.gov.au)

# Youth Mental Health in the Spotlight

NDCH is delighted that our very own Claire Gillen became an accredited trainer in the Youth Mental Health First Aid course in July. Claire has been delivering the Standard MHFA course to community and other organisations for over 17 years and has reached Master status for delivering over 30 courses! Thanks Claire!

Youth MHFA training is for community members, parents, carers, sporting club members, teachers, workplaces and volunteers or staff working with young people. This 14-hour workshop demystifies youth mental health and provides practical ways to keep young people safe and supported. NDCH can offer the workshop in the Gannawarra Shire or northern end of Loddon Shire.

NDCH was also delighted to be able to support headspace Swan Hill to have one of their staff to complete the youth MHFA alongside Claire.

Are you interested in more information about Youth MHFA or our Standard MHFA courses. Perhaps you have a group in the community who might like to host the workshop or you would like to register to attend a future course? If so, we'd love to hear from you, contact the Health Promotion Team at NDCH on 5451 0200 or email: [healthpromotion@ndch.org.au](mailto:healthpromotion@ndch.org.au)



# ONE MORE WEEKEND



## AUNTY MEREDITH TOUR AUGUST 2025

WITH RYAN MCPARTLANE, ELIAS LANYON & CONNOR BULGER



**AUG 8<sup>TH</sup> - M&G - PYRAMID HILL  
M&G - EAST LODDON  
GIG - BENDIGO - HANDLEBAR \***

**AUG 9<sup>TH</sup> - GIG - COHUNA - RECREATION RESERVE ^  
GIG - GUNBOWER - RECREATION RESERVE \***

RYAN MCPARTLANE  
ELIAS LANYON  
CONNOR BULGER



# Homelessness Week 2025



## WHATS WITH THE DOOR?

**AUGUST 4<sup>TH</sup>-10<sup>TH</sup> IS HOMELESSNESS WEEK. 5 DOORS, CREATED BY YOUTH AND DISPLAYED ACROSS BULOKE, LODDON AND GANNAWARRA SHIRES, WILL BE PLACED IN PUBLIC AREAS TO GET THE CONVERSATION GOING ABOUT HOMELESSNESS IN OUR COMMUNITIES**

## HOW CAN I HELP?

- 1** Donate to help provide emergency support for people experiencing homelessness locally
- 2** Look at how you can help at [homelessnessaustralia.org.au](http://homelessnessaustralia.org.au)
- 3** Spread the word, educate your friends, family & workmates about the issue of homelessness and encourage them to get involved and help break the cycle of homelessness.

**DONATE HERE**



**ALL MONEY RAISED WILL GO TOWARDS PURCHASING BACKPACK BEDS AND SLEEPING BAGS FOR PEOPLE AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN OUR LOCAL AREAS.**

THIS CAMPAIGN IS PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY:



**DOCTORS**

Dr John Shokry  
 Dr Zoya Sadeghipour  
 Dr Joe Dawson  
 Dr Feryal Zubair

**NURSE PRACTITIONERS**

Yvonne Fabry  
 Heather Spence

**NURSING TEAM**

*Medical Clinic, Community Health & Footcare*

Jen Brereton  
 Shannon Laursen.  
 Narelle Weekly  
 Sharee Edge  
 Rosina Bear  
 Michelle Whitelaw  
 Kristen Hipwell  
 Jenny Emonson  
 Marg Winship

**ADMIN STAFF**

Aliesha O'Neill (Practice Coordinator)  
 Nicole Betson  
 Leonie Garner  
 Taylah Clements (casual)

If you have a **MEDICAL EMERGENCY**, please phone **000** and ask for an Ambulance.

For bookings call 03 5452 1366 or make an online appointment by visiting <https://ndch.org.au/gp-clinic-book-now/>

**LIFELINE**

*Anyone having a personal crisis*  
 lifeline.org.au | 13 11 14

**HEAD TO HEALTH**

*Support from experienced mental health professionals*  
 headtohelp.org.au | 1800 59 52 12

**ORANGE DOOR**

*People experiencing family violence*  
 orangedoor.vic.gov.au | LODDON:  
 1800 51 23 59 | MALLEE: 1800 29 09 43

**NURSE ON CALL**

*Caring, professional health advice 24 hours a day*  
 1300 60 60 24

**MENSLINE**

*Men with emotional or relationship concerns*  
 mensline.org.au | 1300 78 99 78

**ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUGS INTAKE**

*For people needing help with alcohol & drug issues*  
 www.acso.org.au/aod-mh-support | 1300 022 760

**BEYOND BLUE**

*Anyone feeling anxious or depressed*  
 beyondblue.org.au | 1300 22 46 36

**KIDS HELPLINE**

*Counselling for young people aged 5-25*  
 kidshelpline.com.au | 1800 55 18 00

**VICTORIAN HOUSING SUPPORT**

*Crisis housing support*  
 1800 825 955

**NURSE ON CALL**

*Caring, professional health advice 24 hours a day*  
 1300 60 60 24

**REGIONAL MENTAL HEALTH TRIAGE**

*Assessment service for people experiencing mental illness*  
 1300 363 788



# Clinic Services



- GP Consultations
- Health Assessments
- Nurse Practitioner Consultations
- ABI (Ankle-Brachial Index Test)
- Medicals
- Immunisations
- Travel Vaccines
- GP Management Plans
- GP Mental Health Plans
- Specialist Referrals
- Ear Wash
- Skin Check Biopsy & Excision
- Cryotherapy
- Diathermy
- Spirometry (Lung Function Test)
- 24 Hour BP Monitoring
- 24 Hour Heart Monitoring
- ECG (electrocardiogram)
- Hearing Aid Specialist
- Telehealth Services
- Cardiologist
- Pathology services onsite
- Insertion and removal of Mirena and IUD's

Procedures have a practice fee. Call our Medical Receptionists for appointments or information: 5452 1366.

## OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCIES

In the event of a medical emergency please ring 000. For urgent after hours care, please attend or call Kerang District Health on (03) 5450 9200. If you are seen by one of our Clinic Doctors at Hospital, please be aware that a \$50 co-payment will be charged.

## COMPLAINTS

We welcome your suggestions, complaints and compliments. Complaints should be addressed to the CEO of NDCH. If you are unhappy with how we manage your complaint, you can contact the: Health Complaints Commissioner  
Phone: 1300 582 113  
Level 26, 570 Bourke Street, MELBOURNE VIC 3001.

## HOURS AND APPOINTMENTS

Monday to Friday: 8.30am - 5.00pm  
Consultations are by appointment only  
Double appointment times can be made by request.  
Please let staff know if there are any specific needs.  
We would appreciate early cancellations where possible to allow us to contact other patients we may have on a waiting list.



# Contact Us

## KERANG

### Community Health

24 Fitzroy Street  
Monday to Friday  
8.30am to 5.00pm  
Phone: 03 5451 0200  
Email: info@ndch.org.au

## Medical Clinic

34 Fitzroy Street  
Monday to Friday  
8.30am to 5.00pm  
Phone: 03 5452 1366

## COHUNA

25 King Edward Street  
Monday to Friday  
9.00am to 4.00pm  
Closed 12:00pm to  
1.00pm  
Phone: 03 5451 0250

## PYRAMID HILL

### Community Centre

6 - 10 McKay Street  
Monday to Friday  
9.00am to 10.00am  
(other times by  
appointment)  
Phone: 03 5455 7065

## BOORT

119-121 Godfrey Street  
Open by appointment  
only  
Phone: 03 5451 0260

## QUAMBATOOK

33 Mildred Street  
Mon, Wed and Friday  
9.00am to 10.00am  
(other times by  
appointment)  
Phone: 03 5457 1300

## SWAN HILL

107 McCallum Street  
Monday to Friday  
9:00am to 4:00pm  
Closed 12:00pm to  
1:00pm  
Phone: 03 5451 0200

We share professional  
spaces in Koondrook,  
Charlton, Sea Lake,  
Donald & Wycheproof too.



Northern District Community Health

# Thank you for reading.

[www.ndch.org.au](http://www.ndch.org.au)

NDCH acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government. NDCH is supported by funding from the Victorian Government under the HACC Program.

NDCH is supported by the Australian Government Department of Health.

\*Although funding for this nursing and allied health service has been provided by the Australian Government, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Australian Government.



Australian Government  
Aged Care Quality and  
Safety Commission

