

GANNAWARRA & NORTH LODDON

Community Health - Health Promotion (CH-HP) Action Plan



NODCH

Northern District Community Health

2026 - 2027



Acknowledgment Of Country

Northern District Community Health acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung; Barapa Barapa, Yorta Yorta and Wamba Wamba peoples as the traditional owners of the land now known as Loddon Shire and Gannawarra Shire respectively.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge their rich culture and connection to Country. We also recognise the many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members across the Shires who make up the vibrant communities to which our organisation provides services.

Diversity

NDCH is committed to embracing diversity and eliminating all forms of discrimination in the provision of health services.

NDCH welcomes all people irrespective of ethnicity, lifestyle choice, faith, sexual orientation and gender identity.

Recognition of lived and living experience

NDCH acknowledge the individual and collective contributions of those with a lived and living experience of mental ill-health and suicide, and those who love, have loved and care for them. Each person's journey is unique and a valued contribution to Australia's commitment to mental health suicide prevention systems reform.



Gannawarra & North Loddon catchment

The Gannawarra and North Loddon Community Health – Health Promotion 2025-2026 Action Plan is a collaborative effort to improve the health and wellbeing of communities within the Gannawarra and North Loddon regions.

The action plan is grounded in the overarching goals of the NDCH Strategic Plan 2022–2026, ensuring our health promotion priorities directly support the organisation's wider vision of building healthy, inclusive, and connected rural communities.

This plan aligns with the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027 and is informed by multiple local strategic frameworks:

- Northern District Community Health Strategic Plan 2022-2026
- Gannawarra Shire 2025-2029 Council Plan
- Loddon Shire Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 (MPHWP)
- Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit (Murray and Loddon Sub Regions) Population Health Plan 2025-2029
- Victoria State Government Wellbeing Action Plan 2025/26 - 2026/27

The CH-HP Plan has been informed by NDCH’s Gannawarra and North Loddon Community Health – Health Promotion Strategic Plan 2025-2029.

Key Priority Areas:

The action plan focuses on five main priorities, with Climate Change and Health, an important theme across all priorities:

- Increase Healthy Eating
- Increase Active Living
- Reduce Tobacco and Vape Related Harm
- Mental Wellbeing and Connection
- Gendered Violence Prevention

The Gannawarra catchment covers approximately 3,735 square kilometres with a population of 10,683 (2021 census). Towns within the catchment include:

Cohuna, Kerang, Koondrook, Lake Charm, Lalbert, Leitchville, Macorna, Murrabit, Mystic Park and Quambatook.

The North Loddon catchment includes Boort (population of 940) and Pyramid Hill (population of 598)* (2021 census), including the communities of Durham Ox and Yando.

Partnerships

Northern District Community Health (NDCH) collaborates closely with a diverse network of stakeholders to improve community health and well-being. These collaborative relationships are vital in amplifying our impact, enabling the sharing of resources, coordinated efforts, and stronger outcomes for our communities, even in the face of limited resources.

The stakeholders NDCH collaborates with include, but are not limited to:

- Achievement Program (AP)
- Boort District Health (BDH)
- Boort, Cohuna, Kerang, Pyramid Hill, and Quambatook Neighbourhood Houses (NHs)
- Cohuna District Hospital (CDH)
- Community groups
- Early Childhood Centres and Schools
- Gannawarra Shire Council (GSC)
- Gannawarra Local Agency Network (GLAM)
- Healthy Eating Advisory Service (HEAS)
- Healthy Loddon Campaspe (HLC)
- Kerang District Health (KDH)
- Local Learning Employment Networks (LLEN)
- Loddon Healthy Minds Network (LHMN)
- Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit (LMPHU) - Loddon Prevention Sub-Region
- Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit (LMPHU) - Murray Prevention Sub-Region
- Loddon Shire Council (LSC)
- Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS)
- Mallee Sports Assembly (MSA)
- Oral Health Victoria (OHV)
- Quit Victoria
- Smiles 4 Miles (S4M)
- Sports Focus (SF)
- The Loddon Mallee CARE (Collective Action for Respect and Equality) Partnership
- Vic Kids Eat Well (VKEW)
- VicHealth
- Victoria Police (VICPOL)
- Women’s Health Loddon Mallee (WHLM)

The 2026-2027 Gannawarra and North Loddon Community Health – Health Promotion Action Plan outlines our commitment to building healthier, more connected, and resilient communities through inclusive, forward-thinking health initiatives tailored to local needs.

Priority – Increase Healthy Eating

Input (Official Framework)	Program Component (target group)	Activities/Outputs	Lead/Support	Short-term Measures for success
Vic Kids Eat Well	Implementing the Vic Kids Eat Well (VKEW) program targeting children, students, youth, and local families across key community settings: • Primary and Secondary schools • Out of School Hours Care • Kindergartens, • Community and council owned settings (neighborhood houses, libraries), • Sports and recreation • Sport clubs	Work with settings to implement Vic Kids Eat Well • Ditch the soft drinks • Swap sugary drinks for healthier drinks/ switch to healthier drinks • Kick the confectionery • Rethink cakes and muffins • Switch to healthier snacks • Boost veggies and salad • Skip the deep fryer • Offer healthier pies and pastries • Add health appeal to meal deals • Make a positive impact with advertising and marketing • Get creative with healthy fundraising Deliver Gannawarra and Loddon Kids Eat Well lessons in schools to support the Vic Kids Eat Well program	NDCH , GSC, schools, LSC, LMPHU, HLC,	Increased uptake of VKEW and progress towards small bites in various settings Number of children receiving Gannawarra and Loddon Kids Eat Well program
Smiles 4 Miles	Coordinate and deliver the Smiles 4 Miles program targeting children aged 3-4 years and families across local early childhood settings: • Boort Kindergarten • Pyramid Hill Kindergarten • Dingee Kindergarten • Inglewood Kindergarten • Wedderburn ELC • Koondrook Kindergarten • Leitchville Kindergarten • Cohuna Kindergarten • Gannawarra Children’s Service	Work with Gannawarra and Loddon Kindergartens to achieve and maintain award status in the Smiles 4 Miles Program by completing: • Early childhood survey • Family Engagement • Learning Experience • Training • Policy • Menu assessment • Promotion of and visits to local dental services	NDCH , GSC, LSC, BDH, OHV	All Kindergarten settings achieve and maintain Smiles4Miles award status

Priority – Increase Healthy Eating

Input (Official Framework)	Program Component (target group)	Activities/Outputs	Lead/Support	Short-term Measures for success
Healthy Choices: Policy Directive for Victorian Public Health Services	Supporting local hospitals to adopt, implement, and maintain the Healthy Choices: Policy Directive for Victorian Public Health Services for patients, staff, visitors, and the wider community across: • Kerang District Health • Cohuna District Hospital • Boort District Health	Work with Victorian Hospitals and Health services to adopt, implement and maintain Healthy Choices: Policy Directive	CDH, KDH, BDH, NDCH	Support the implementation of the Healthy Choices: Policy Directive at KDH and CDH in Gannawarra; at BDH in Loddon
LMPHU 2025 - 2029 Population Plan Healthy Food Systems; Flourish Loddon Campaspe Regional Food System Framework	Contribute to place-based projects by supporting community stakeholders to improve access to fresh and healthy food for people of low socioeconomic status through: • Pyramid Hill Neighbourhood House • Boort Neighbourhood House • Quambatook Neighbourhood House • Cohuna Neighbourhood House • Kerang Neighbourhood House	Support the work of stakeholders (such as LMPHU, NHs, and HLC) by contributing to their initiatives that improve access to fresh and healthy food	LMPHU, NH, GSC, LSC, NDCH	Support FoodShare and community garden activities in Gannawarra and Northern Loddon

Priority – Increase Healthy Eating

Input (Official Framework)	Program Component (target group)	Activities/Outputs	Lead/Support	Short-term Measures for success
Loddon Shire Council: Community Vision 2035 :Council Plan 2025-2029 Grow Gannawarra Action Plan 2026-2030 Korin korin Balit Djak: Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan	Supporting partners, community organisations, and vulnerable populations (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and people of low socioeconomic status) to create healthier community environments, settings, and events through frameworks, guidelines, and collaborative health promotion initiatives.	• Use the Loddon and Gannawarra Healthy Events Guide to incorporate health-focused criteria into event design and implementation • Highlight key days such as Healthy Lunchbox Week, National Nutrition Week, and Dental Health Week • Collaborate with local partnerships in Gannawarra and Loddon and support their healthy eating initiatives • Support Healthy Loddon Campaspe initiatives to increase Healthy Eating in the Loddon Shire • Explore innovative models to increase healthy eating in children by supporting parents and carers, and engaging children through activities such as StoryTime at local libraries and playgroups • Support Indigenous Children's Program to increase healthy eating opportunities for families	NDCH , GSC, LSC, BDH, Schools, libraries, MDAS	Number of events supported using the guide Number of healthy eating initiatives organised and the engagement during those events Evaluation of school activations Number of programs or activities supported Number of children and families engaged

Priority – Increase Active Living

Input (Official Framework)	Program Component (target group)	Activities/Outputs	Lead/Support	Short-term Measures for success
Loddon Shire Council: Community Vision 2035 :Council Plan 2025-2029 Grow Gannawarra Action Plan 2026-2030 Korin korin Balit Djak: Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan Engage! Gannawarra / Amplify Gannawarra & Loddon VicHealth - Partner in Place initiative (Gannawarra Stronger Together)	Increase opportunities for children and young people , and people experience socioeconomic disadvantage to participate in inclusive, accessible and low-cost physical activity that promote healthy environments, social connection and wellbeing. Priority populations include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and women and girls.	• Partner with organisations such as Gannawarra Shire Council, Healthy Loddon Campaspe, Loddon Shire Council and Mallee Sports Assembly to deliver inclusive and accessible physical activity programs • Assist and promote local events such as Parkrun, and StoryWalks • Provide resources and support to community groups to help them incorporate physical activity into events (e.g. Giant Games, and The Healthy Events Guide) • Host pop-up play zones with NDCH’s giant games and portable activity kits at community events • Promote the use of outdoor fitness equipment and active spaces such as bike racks, outdoor gyms, and walking tracks • Share information on structured and non-structured recreation opportunities available across the region • Work with stakeholders to secure low-cost or no-cost exercise options like teen gym • Raise awareness of the benefits of delaying digital technology use among children and families via newsletters, social media, community events, partnerships, and resource distribution	NDCH, MSA, NH’s, SF, GSC, LSC, HLC	Number of community events supported Number of StoryWalk sessions delivered or supported Number of pop-up play zones or active game kits delivered to events Walking/running route resource or map developed and shared Number of outdoor infrastructure installments and promotions of physical activity initiatives. number of Social media and newsletter campaigns promoting low-cost active living

Priority – Reduce Tobacco and Vape-Related Harm

Input (Official Framework)	Program Component (target group)	Activities/Outputs	Lead/Support	Short-term Measures for success
Loddon Shire Council: Community Vision 2035 :Council Plan 2025-2029	Provide knowledge and information regarding smoking and vaping cessation support services for people of low socioeconomic status .	Deliver local communication and awareness activities that promote access to smoking, vaping and nicotine cessation support, including NDCH services, Quitline and quit.org.au, while increasing awareness of the health risks associated with smoking and vaping and the benefits of quitting.	NDCH, GSC, LSC	Number of social media posts
Grow Gannawarra Action Plan 2026-2030	Increase voluntarily smoke-free settings at events and improve the uptake of legislated 'No Smoking or Vaping' signage across public venues, local businesses, and community event spaces .	Amplify and localise statewide and national social marketing campaigns and resources delivered by Quit Victoria, including resources available through the digital cessation hub, quit.org.au.		Number of events where 'No Smoking and Vaping' signage was used
		Work with local government and community organisations to promote and support smoke and vape-free environments, including the use of updated No Smoking and No Vaping signage in relevant settings.		Number of settings that have updated signage

Priority – Improve Mental Wellbeing & Connection

Input (Official Framework)	Program Component (target group)	Activities/Outputs	Lead/Support	Short-term Measures for success
Wellbeing in Victoria: A Strategy to Promote Good Mental Health 2025–2035	Coordinate Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) for adults supporting young people (including teachers, youth workers, parents, and community groups), alongside delivering adult Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) for the People of low socioeconomic status .	Support an NDCH accredited trainer to deliver 2x YMHFA and 2 x MHFA courses. Organise, promote and support low or no cost training locally.	NDCH , GSC, LSC, NCLLEN, GLAM headspace	Number of MHFA & YMHFA sessions and attendance at these training sessions
Loddon Shire Council: Community Vision 2035 :Council Plan 2025-2029 Grow Gannawarra Action Plan 2026-2030	Work on projects relevant to local needs such as place-based mental health events and campaigns, leveraging partnerships and collective impact with a particular focus on children and young people, women, men and people of low socioeconomic status .	Organise and support locally relevant mental health events; e.g. Boots up Breakfast; Pride Events; International Women’s Day & FRRR HALT mental health events. Support national campaign days that focus on Mental Health and are relevant locally, such as RUOK? Day. Use social media and newsletters to promote self-care tips. Promote Wellbeing in the Healthy Events Guide.	NDCH , GSC, LSC	Number of events organised and supported and attendee numbers Number of national campaign days supported Number of social media and newsletter articles promoted. Including reach and engagement. Number of events that activated the Healthy Events Guide

Priorities (30%) - Prevent Gendered Violence and Promote Gender Equality

Input (Official Framework)	Program Component (target group)	Activities/Outputs	Lead/Support	Short-term Measures for success
Loddon Shire Council: Community Vision 2035 :Council Plan 2025-2029	Gendered Violence Prevention: Promote safe and respectful relationships and advance gender equality for the local community, with a specific focus on women, young people, schools, local organisations, and community groups.	Co-ordinate the Gannawarra and Loddon 16 Days of Activism campaign with our local partners	NDCH, GSC, LSC, GLAM, WHLM, BDH, NHs, Rotary Club of Kerang,	No of attendees at the Free From Family Violence Walks
Grow Gannawarra Action Plan 2026-2030		Work on projects relevant to local needs, such as place-based gender equity campaigns, contributing to local networks and meetings. E.g. WHLM elephant in the room project		Number of events and attendees over the 16 Days of Activism campaigns
		Contribute to, support and promote, Gannawarra Free from Family Violence Working Group strategy and Loddon Free From Family Violence Network meeting		Reach and engagememnt of the social media campaign
		Work in strong partnership with the CARE (Collective Action for Respect and Equality) network to build workforce capacity and collaborate on regional primary prevention initiatives to prevent violence against women.		Number of network meetings contributed to

Climate Change and Health: Implement a lens of climate change and health across all priority areas.

Our current strategies effectively integrate climate change and health considerations across all priority areas:

- Partnering on Gannawarra Shire’s Focus area of Tackling Climate and Its Impacts on Health: Focus on emergency preparedness and community resilience
- Partnering on Loddon Shire’s Focus area of Tackling Climate and Its Impacts on Health: Improved resilience and reduced health impact of climate change
- Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ self-determination in climate change adaptation – e.g. Reconciliation Action Plan and “Tyapa Kurra Kahl” - local Indigenous bush tucker garden
- Disseminate climate change and health communications through social media and newsletters
- VKEW: focus on sustainability and the reduction of processed food consumption
- Healthy Events Guide: actively promote and implement the use of the Healthy Events Guide to improve access to healthy food at community events, supporting the reduction of waste and promoting environmentally sustainable practices
- Local Food Security: investigating improved access to and education around fresh, healthy foods through community gardens and FoodShare activities, emphasising locally sourced produce to decrease food miles
- Educate on Environmental Impact: Profile the environmental impact of tobacco and vape-related waste in educational programs for schools and community groups
- Provide community health services support to those impacted by climate change disasters
- Scope the feasibility of the Medsalv model of recycling single-use medical waste with intentions to reduce the NDCH clinic's carbon footprint and model for local hospitals