



Applying a Population Health Approach REAL CASE STUDIES

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PURPOSE OF RESOURCE

The purpose of this resource is to provide a range of real-life examples demonstrating the application of a population health framework across a variety of projects, population health approaches and organisations/community groups.

The case studies provided assist learners to understand how to apply population health knowledge, frameworks and theory into practice.

The case studies also provide a valuable learning tool demonstrating how other organisations and community groups have applied these in the past, including what has worked well and not so well.

Facilitators can use these case studies to assist learning and enable discussion during facilitated training.

UNITS OF COMPETENCY

This resource specifically supports learning for the following unit of competency:

- HLTPOP501C Apply a Population Health Framework

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following real-life case studies have been compiled by CheckUP using a range of existing case studies sourced from other organisations and existing resources available publicly on the internet. The source/reference for each is cited below each of the case studies. Further details and information on each of the case studies can be accessed by sourcing the original case study via the internet.

CASE STUDY 1: HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS – EATONS HILL

Introduction

Eatons Hill State School opened in 1998 with 310 primary and 100 preschool students. The school's enrolment is expected to reach about 800 by 2005. The school is located in an outer suburb of north Brisbane and operates multi-age classes with lower, middle and upper primary sections. Staff base their teaching practice on the values of cooperative learning, the principles of effective learning and teaching, sound early childhood practice, health promoting schools and learning through, with and about technology.

An active and involved Parents and Citizens' Association holds high expectations of the school. A school council has been established as a result of the school's commitment to school-based management. The council operates on the knowledge that the community desired to be involved in strategic processes. They also had an interest and a legitimate contribution to make to their school and its future.

The principal had heard about the health promoting schools approach soon after his appointment as the inaugural principal of Eatons Hill State School. He recognised the value of the health promoting schools approach and has encouraged members of staff and the school community to become involved in health promoting schools activities, since the inception of the school.

To ensure the health promoting schools approach was an integral part of the school, a key staff member worked with a parent and the health promoting schools project officer from Education Queensland to develop an interim action plan prior to the school's opening. The health promoting schools approach was presented to and fully endorsed by the Parents and Citizens' Association prior to the school opening.

Project Overview

As a new and establishing school, Eatons Hill only has a short history. Despite this, the school community has implemented the following strategies and actions.

- The health promoting schools approach was introduced to staff and the school community. Information about the approach has been spread through staff meetings, Parents and Citizens' Association meetings, workshops and newsletters. The school continues to foster understanding about health promoting schools among members of the school community and raise awareness of health issues.
- A Health Promoting Schools Working Party was established consisting of staff members and parents.
- Surveys of students, parents and staff to identify priority health issues and strategies were conducted. Those identified were:
 - Healthy Tuckshop
 - Environmental Care and Recycling Program
 - Sun Safety
 - Bullying
 - Stranger Danger.

- **A healthy tuckshop** menu was developed in consultation with staff, parents, a representative from the Australian Nutrition Foundation and food suppliers. The tuckshop menu was designed to appeal to students and staff. The school was awarded Queensland's first Gold Pyramid Award by the Australian Nutrition Foundation for its tuckshop menu.
- **The School Communities Recycling All Paper (SCRAP) project** was introduced. Students are actively involved in recycling and composting waste within the school. Students from different year levels are rostered to manage the deposit of waste and recycling materials.
- **Sun safety** procedures for students were implemented and expectations that staff model sun safe practices were developed. Students are expected to wear appropriate hats while outside. The school uniform includes a range of sun-safe hat styles.
- Numerous publications on health issues were collected and made available for access by parents in the administration building.
- A school community Terry Fox Fun Run was organised. This idea was generated by students who wanted to support a classmate whose father had recently died from cancer.
- Student participation was organised in JUMP ROPE for HEART activities that are coordinated by Heart Foundation.
- SunSmart and smoke-free policies were drafted ready for consultation.
- An environmental club for students was established as a lunch time activity. Students from all year levels have been invited to participate. In addition, students from lower school classes are allocated time to assist in improving the school environment by gardening and weeding.
- A staff social club was introduced. One activity of the social club is a 'secret friend' system that encourages members to 'get to know each other'. A secret friend is allocated each term.
- Endorsement was obtained for an Eatons Hill State School *Health Promoting Schools* Charter which was developed by the Health Promoting Schools Working Party.

Enablers and Barriers

The enablers that have provided the greatest support to the *health promoting schools* initiatives are the commitment, enthusiasm and active participation of members of the school community. In particular, the Health Promoting Schools Working Party is made up of school community members who are committed to the ideals and philosophy of the *health promoting schools* approach. The principal is also supportive of all *health promoting schools* activities and encourages participation of staff and parents in related professional development.

Services offered by a wide range of government departments, councils, businesses and community organisations have been invaluable. The assistance and advice offered by professionals and groups has continued to inform and motivate the members of the Health Promoting Schools Working Party. Many of the resources utilised have been gained through these contacts. Contact with and visits to schools who have implemented successful *health promoting schools* activities have informed the strategies selected by Eatons Hill State School.

One barrier was that, at times, the Health Promoting Schools Working Party failed to consult sufficiently with all stakeholders before implementing *health promoting schools* activities. At the start of the school year, staff expressed concern that they had not been sufficiently involved in the decision to adopt the *health promoting schools* approach or in the development of the interim action plan. To address this concern, a *health promoting schools* workshop was held to provide the school community with the opportunity to explore their vision for their new school. This was a useful activity to gain greater support and involvement from staff, but unfortunately was not well attended by other members of the school community.

Benefits

Students are proud of their efforts to improve the school environment. The school is actively working towards providing comprehensive health messages to students and the school community. Members of the school community have reported that health issues that have been addressed at school are being discussed at home and in the playground.

The Working Party feels that staff are also developing a greater understanding of health and well-being and their importance in the lives of members of the school community. This shift in thinking by the school community is seen as an important step forward by the Health Promoting Schools Working Party.

The Future

The Health Promoting Schools Working Party plans to consolidate and extend its activities as the school grows. In the future, the school plans to address the 'curriculum, teaching and learning' component of the *health promoting schools* framework in a more deliberate way. The upcoming release of the Year 1-10 Health and Physical Education Syllabus (in July 1999) will provide a strong rationale for a more comprehensive health education program across all year levels.

Reflections

Consulting with and involving all members of the school community is essential for the *health promoting schools* approach to be successful. Members of the working party acknowledge that undertaking such an approach is time consuming. They feel it is necessary to take time to educate the school community about the *health promoting schools* approach.

In dealing with particular health issues, members of the school community need time to access information, resources and talk with other people to develop their own understanding of issues. Providing this time allows people to gain an appreciation of what is trying to be achieved and time to consider how they might like to be involved.

CASE STUDY 2: DON'T BET ON IT – NOARLUNGA HEALTH SERVICE

Introduction

The prevalence of problem gambling in the South Australian community is influenced by a range of determinants, including the health and social characteristics of vulnerable populations. Research indicates that gambling-related harm impacts disproportionately on lower socioeconomic groups and communities. The impact of gambling losses on low-income individuals, families and communities is greater, due to their relative lack of disposable income. This results in a loss of basic necessities such as food, rent, utilities, clothing, healthcare and education.

This initiative was instigated by the Clinical Psychology Department of the Noarlunga Health Service (NHS). It was funded by grants provided by the Gamblers' Rehabilitation Fund, a joint initiative of the Australian Hotels Association (SA), Clubs SA and the Government of South Australia.

Project Overview

Don't Bet On It! is an early intervention program that aims to prevent problem gambling behaviours from developing among young people and address the associated inequalities in the process. The objectives of the program are to:

- Deliver information about gambling to children in Year 6 to Year 9 who attend schools within the Noarlunga Health Services (NHS) catchment area
- Increase students' knowledge about the risks and impacts of gambling
- Provide the Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) with a sustainable education package
- Provide the wider community with a health promotion tool that can be used within a range of settings and populations.

A literature review was completed in the early stages of the project. Few resources were found that would be suitable for young people in addressing the issues of problem gambling. Any resources that were available (nationally and internationally) were obtained for reference in planning this program.

The final Don't Bet On It! Program design was based on research relating to problem gambling, and informed by current knowledge of childhood development and pedagogy. This innovative resource was designed to educate students in the middle school years (Year 6 to Year 9) about the risks of participating in gambling. As the resources are available to take home, their parents are also indirectly targeted. The resource was developed in consultation with clinical psychologists and teachers from three local schools (primary and secondary).

A pilot study evaluating the effectiveness of the resource material was completed with schools located in the NHS catchment area. Feedback from students was also obtained in the early stages of the development of the resource materials.

Project Outcomes

The classroom resource addresses key themes about problem gambling. It was designed to be interactive and engaging, and allows students to critically reflect on the issues raised. The final design incorporates a large floor mat game that engages students in the topic of problem gambling and introduces the key themes. A series of follow-up lesson plans allow students to explore these themes and to think about gambling within a wider social perspective. All aspects of the resource have subsequently been linked to the South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework.

The program was evaluated through a pilot study using a range of indicators including student attitude to gambling (pre and post comparison) and student and teacher feedback. Over 200 students participated in the pilot project. Prior to and at the completion of the pilot, students were asked to complete a questionnaire that measured their attitudes to gambling. Over half of the students completed the questionnaire and, of these, the majority recorded post-intervention scores that demonstrated an increased awareness that gambling was unprofitable. This represents a statistically significant result. Students indicated that they had enjoyed participating in the activities that form these resources, and that they felt they had learned more about the effects of gambling. Many of the students were able to articulate their increased understanding.

Barriers and Enablers

Collaboration with teachers was invaluable in the design of these materials. The availability of funds to pay for teacher relief time to allow teachers to work on the project assisted in its successful development.

Benefits

Teacher feedback indicated that the material had been easy to use and their students had enjoyed participating in the activities. They said the material was relevant to their students and the students had gained an understanding of the material presented to them. The 'Don't Bet On It!' resource has been used in the curriculum of the DECS Responsible Gambling Education in Schools Strategy.

The Future

The program is now being further developed, and a large scale evaluation is currently underway. The resource is suitable for use throughout schools in South Australia.

CASE STUDY 3: HEALTHY BUSINESS PILOT PROJECT – SMASH REPAIRERS

Introduction

A tyre and smash repairs business was invited to participate in the Healthy Business Pilot Project. This smash repairer is a small privately owned organisation based in Perth's southern suburbs. The company has 20 staff with 17 **blue collar** employees whose tasks involve repairing mechanical, panel and paint damage to motor vehicles. These blue collar employees are predominately male, although there are three female staff, two administration/office staff and the manager/part owner. The workplace health program targeted all 20 staff and specifically the blue collar employees.

In August 2003, an assessment of the smash repairer's physical and organisational structures and surrounding environment was conducted. A standard audit form was created to measure items such as the number of bike rack spaces available, healthy choices at the canteen, health promoting posters on notice boards, vending machines onsite, healthy items in the vending machine as well as measuring the use of the workplace's surrounding environment such as cycle and dual use pathways and open spaces. A summary of the audit was presented to the workplace coordinator to consider potential changes to create a more supportive environment.

The lunchroom has adequate facilities and one drink vending machine. There is no canteen, gym facilities or surroundings for physical activities. There are local delicatessens nearby where food can be purchased. In April 2004, the smash repairer developed a Healthy Business plan based upon the feedback from staff, management and the audit review process.

Project Overview

Aim: To develop and implement an Occupational Health and Safety Program which includes a workplace health program at the smash repairs

Objectives:

- To increase the healthy food options available at staff meetings and social gatherings by the 31 December 2004.
- To raise awareness to all employees of the benefits of healthy eating by 31 December 2004.
- To integrate health promotion activities into the occupational health and safety framework by 30 June 2005
- To implement health promotion activities and education session to the employees at the smash repairs by 31 December 2004.

Healthy Eating Strategies - To have clear purchase and catering guidelines and policy developed and implemented to include the following:

- Fruits and salads to be served at all staff events
- To purchase low fat and low salt alternatives where possible.
- To have available low alcoholic drinks at staff events.
- To have available fruit juices, water and diet soft drinks at staff events.

- Organise a dietician to present a healthy eating education session.
- To organise cooking or food demonstrations at the workplace.
- Organise printed material including posters, brochures and fact sheets available on nutrition.

Health Promotion Strategies

- To review and upgrade the occupational health and safety policy and manual to ensure that health promotion and education is included as a vital part of the program.
- Purchase a new Occupational Health and Safety computer program system
- Develop a questionnaire to identify the education sessions or health issues staff would like information on.
- Using the results from the questionnaire, invite various health educators to present education sessions to the staff.
- Source various health education materials including the internet and print material (posters, brochures, fact sheets)
- Organise the promotional material on pin up boards
- Organise subscriptions to various healthy lifestyle magazines.

Project Implementation

The strategies that were implemented included:

- Fresh fruit and vegetables daily snack break.
- Employee health questionnaire completed.
- Subscription magazines including Men's Health, cook book, sporting – fishing, Western Australian travelling magazines.
- Healthy food options at the social barbecues.
- Healthy drink options in vending machine.
- Wall space available for pin-up board for health promotion information.
- New Occupational Health and Safety computer program system installed.

Fresh fruit and vegetables

In November and December 2004, the workplace coordinator bought fresh fruit and vegetables weekly from the local fruit and vegetable shop. Each afternoon, the workplace coordinator with the assistance of the administration staff would prepare fruit and vegetable platter for the employees. At 3pm, the workplace coordinator would organise the employees to stop work for a healthy snack and coffee/tea break. The workplace coordinator reported that the employees really enjoyed the healthy snacks and most would be eaten by the end of the working day. Unfortunately, the sustainability of continuing to supplying employees with fresh fruit and vegetables went on hold. The workplace coordinator is looked into fruit and vegetable delivery to ensure the supply of fruit and vegetables is continuous and not the responsibility of one staff member as well as to save time.

Healthy food and drink options at social barbecues

The workplace coordinator organises regular monthly or bi-monthly social barbecues as a way for the organisation to provide “team building”. Previously, the barbecues consisted of red meat, sausages and bread rolls. The barbecues included healthy green salads and fresh fruit. The workplace coordinator noticed that the salads were a popular addition to the barbecue menu. The workplace coordinator provided low alcoholic drinks, diet soft drinks and water for the social barbecues. A healthy catering policy was not developed as the healthy options are occurring.

Healthy food options – vending machines

The smash repairers have one drink vending machine which is owned by a large corporation. The workplace coordinator contacted the vending machine sales representative and requested that three drink items be changed. After a lengthy period, a representative changed the three items to bottled water, orange juice and flavoured mineral water. As this is a recent change, the workplace coordinator has not recorded the sales of the healthy drinks. The vending machine has now moved to a different location which is creating space for a health promotion pin-up board for health promoting brochures and posters.

Magazine subscriptions for employees

The workplace coordinator implemented monthly subscriptions to a variety of health and lifestyle magazines. These include a Men’s Health, cooking, fishing, Western Australian travelling, hiking and camping magazines. The workplace coordinator and employees report that all employees read the magazines in their lunch break. The workplace coordinator found it was a good strategy for employees to talk about health issues, which may also encourage them to take up healthy lifestyle activities such as fishing, hiking, camping and travelling.

Enablers

Overall, there were many factors that assisted the planning and implementation of the smash repairer’s workplace health promotion program and include:

- The support and encouragement from the other workplace coordinators during the pilot project training workshops
- The training and information provided by the pilot project

Barriers

Overall, the smash repairer had a number of barriers to implementing the workplace health promotion program. These include:

- Finding the time as a small business owner/manager to incorporate planning, implementation and evaluation of a workplace health promotion program.
- The increased time taken to organise and implement a new Occupational Health and Safety computer system.
- Workplace coordinator was solely responsible for coordinating the workplace health promotion program.
- Workplace coordinator was sick during the year which impacted on the implementation of the healthy strategies.

Outcomes

The smash repairer's workplace health promotion program enjoyed several key successes included fresh fruit and vegetables snack breaks, healthy food options at social club barbecues and the inclusion of healthy drink options in existing vending machines and subscriptions to health and lifestyle magazines.

Source: *WA Healthy Business. Workplace Health Promotion Case Studies: The Real Story. WA Healthy Business Pilot Study Project October 2005.*

CASE STUDY 4: SMOKE-FREE OUTDOOR AREAS – SURF COAST SHIRE

Introduction

In early 2008 the Surf Coast Shire received a request from a local community group, the Surfrider Foundation, to consider implementing a policy of smoke-free beaches within the shire.

A working group was formed to investigate the issue. Members of the group included the Surf Coast Shire, the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee, Barwon Region Waste Management Group, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Parks Victoria and Surfrider Foundation.

Project Overview

The objectives of the smoking ban were to:

1. Provide community leadership by taking measures to protect the health and social wellbeing of the community members;
2. Minimise cigarette butt pollution in public places including beaches and open space areas;
3. Improve public amenity and maintenance of public property;
4. Improve the health of community members; and
5. Raise community awareness of the issues associated with smoking.

Surf Coast Shire adopted an educative approach with the initial implementation of the local law. Signage has been in place since adoption in 2008 with brochures and other promotional material distributed throughout the shire.

Outcomes

Additional signage and butt bins were installed for the 2010-11 summer season. Audits undertaken by the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (which manages the foreshore) have indicated a drop in the amount of litter from cigarette butts since the introduction of the smoke-free policy.

Cr. Libby Mears, the Mayor at the time when the changes were introduced, said: “The success of the restrictions is a testament to the co-operation of local agencies, including the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee and the Surfrider Foundation, the community’s respect for the coast and the work of council staff”. The council was awarded the state winner of the Heart Foundation’s Local Government Award in 2009.

Source: Heart Foundation and Quit Victoria. *Smoke-free Policies in Outdoor Areas: A resource kit for Victorian local governments. 2010*

ADDITIONAL READING AND LINKS

WA Healthy Business, Workplace Health Promotion Case Studies: The Real Story, WA Healthy Business Pilot Study Project October, 2005. <http://docs.health.vic.gov.au>

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