

# Whitehorse City Council

Teaching Old Dogs New Tricks: Developing community and staff engagement in the Municipal Public Health Planning process

## **Justification – why do the project?**

This project was undertaken in conjunction with development of the City's third Municipal Public Health Plan (MPHP). The project sought innovative ways to engage the Whitehorse community and council staff in developing the MPHP to build capacity, increase participation and raise awareness of the social model of health. The project also aimed to explore new consultation methods for the development of the MPHP and use process evaluation techniques to measure the success of the strategies.

## **Methodology – how we did it**

A community reference group guided development of the MPHP. A new Health Status Profile was developed using the Environments for Health framework, and two Leading the Way workshop sessions were conducted for staff. To further engage council staff, a competition to name the MPHP was also undertaken.

A community launch was held to commence the consultation process. Four public consultation sessions were held, including a Whitehorse Women's Forum. Specialist sessions were held with young people, older people and the multicultural community and consultation sessions were held with council staff. Those not able to attend could provide input by completing a feedback form. Evaluation conducted at critical points throughout the process showed that while methodologies employed to engage communities and staff were generally successful, there was a poor response rate from the website online feedback form.

## **Partners – who was involved?**

Council staff and the community through forums and feedback.

## **Where to now?**

The challenge for the City of Whitehorse is to continue the momentum created to engage staff through the Municipal Public Health Planning process into the implementation phase.

## **Contact**

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