



# COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLBEING PLAN 2017-2021



Mildura Rural City Council



Northern  
Mallee  
Community  
Partnership



## 53,326 POPULATION

We are the ninth largest city in Victoria



## 51% FEMALE 49% MALE

The ratio for the State of Victoria is the same



## 39 YEARS AVERAGE AGE

The average age of Victoria's population is 37 years



## MORE THAN 70 DIFFERENT CULTURES

We have the second largest population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in regional Victoria



## 16% BORN OVERSEAS

Majority of arrivals are from India, Afghanistan and England



## 9% SPEAK A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH

Italian is the second most common language spoken



## \$3 BILLION ECONOMY

Centred on our proud heritage as a major agricultural and horticultural centre



## 22,300 SQUARE KILOMETRES

Mildura Rural City covers almost ten per cent of Victoria

# CONTENTS

Acknowledgement of Country	2
Message from the Mayor	2
Introduction	3
Background	3
Community Health and Wellbeing Planning	5
Our Partners in Health and Wellbeing	8
A Partnership Approach to Collective Impact	8
What is Hands Up Mallee	8
How the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan has been informed	10
Development of the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan	11
Research	11
Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework	13
Priority Areas	15
The Health Domains	
Victorians are healthy and well	16-21
Victorians are safe and secure	22-25
Victorians have the capabilities to participate	26-29
Victorians are connected to culture and community	30-33
Victoria is liveable	34-35
Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation	37
Appendix 1	38-41
References	41

# WELCOME

## Acknowledgment of Country

Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land which now comprises the Mildura Rural City Council area, and to those of our neighbouring municipalities. We pay our respects to Elders past and present; we celebrate and respect their continuing culture and connection to the land.



## Message from the Mayor

The Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021 is one of Mildura Rural City Council's key strategic plans.

Together with the Community and Council Plan 2017-2021, it outlines our strategic planning framework – our vision for the municipality in which we all live - for the next four years.

The priorities and actions within this plan have been informed by state-wide and local data as well as comprehensive consultation with our key stakeholders - local residents and organisations.

Our communities health and wellbeing are our greatest assets. Physical health, feeling safe and secure, being connected to culture and community, and the ability to participate are crucial elements of a healthy community.

These factors, along with maintaining a liveable, resilient community, are the cornerstones of our Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017 – 2021.

As a municipality we face complex health and social challenges, and it's everyone's responsibility to play a part in protecting and supporting the overall wellbeing and health of our residents. Partnerships and collaboration are essential to achieving this.

I am proud to see collaborative efforts committed to as part of this plan, addressing priority areas such as:

- preventing violence and injury
- improving mental health
- reducing harmful alcohol and drug use
- tobacco free living
- healthier eating and active living
- women's sexual and reproductive health.

I would like to thank everyone who has made a contribution to this plan and offer our commitment to working together as a community to improve health and wellbeing over the next four years.

**Cr Glenn Milne**  
Mildura Rural City Council Mayor

# INTRODUCTION

Mildura Rural City Council has a responsibility to improve health and wellbeing outcomes, reduce health inequalities and create healthy environments for everyone who lives, learns, works or plays in our community.

The Victorian Public Health & Wellbeing Act 2008 (the Act) requires local government to develop a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan every four years. The Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (or Community Health and Wellbeing Plan) provides a framework that supports the health and wellbeing of the community. The Community Health and Wellbeing Plan (CHWBP) must be completed within 12 months of the general election of a new Council.

The Act requires that in addition to addressing local needs and contexts, the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan needs to:

- Have regard to the State Plan (Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015-2019);
- Draw on evidence; involve the community, and include evaluations to improve planning and coordination;
- Promote a collaborative approach including how Council will work in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services and other agencies that undertake public health initiatives, projects and programs;
- Be consistent with the Council Plan and the Municipal Strategic Statement.

Local Government's contribution to the promotion, improvement and protection of public health occurs through a myriad of activities including planning processes, environmental monitoring and management, health promotion activities and more traditional public health concerns such as waste management, prevention of infectious diseases, food safety and monitoring drinking water quality.

## Background

The Mildura Rural City Council Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021 is a high-level plan that sets the goals and priorities for protecting, improving and promoting health and wellbeing within the municipality.

The Community Health and Wellbeing Plan brings together the work being done within the municipality that impacts on the health and wellbeing of our community. It embraces a collaborative approach and informs, aligns with or complements other Council policies, strategies and plans.

Council is also committed to working in partnership with a range of health, human services, other organisations and community members to identify initiatives that will enable an integrated and multi-sectoral approach.

The aim of the Mildura Rural City Council Community Health and Wellbeing Plan is to achieve maximum levels of health and wellbeing through identifying and assessing the actual and potential public health issues in the community and outlining strategies and actions to prevent or minimise them. It also aims to identify the opportunities to support health and wellbeing through the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework five domains of health:

- Victorians are healthy and well
- Victorians are safe and secure
- Victorians have the capabilities to participate
- Victorians are connected to culture and community
- Victoria is liveable



# COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLANNING

Council has a range of functions determined by the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 that relate to the protection, improvement and promotion of the public health and wellbeing of the municipality.

They include:

- Creating an environment which supports the health of the local community and strengthens the capacity of the community and individuals to achieve better health
- Initiating, supporting and managing public health planning processes at the local government level
- Developing and implementing public health policies and programs within the municipal district
- Developing and enforcing up-to-date public health standards and intervening if the health of people within the municipal district is affected
- Facilitating and supporting local agencies whose work has an impact on public health and wellbeing
- Co-ordinating and providing immunisation services to children living or being educated within the municipal district; and
- Ensuring that the municipal district is maintained in a clean and sanitary condition

These responsibilities are actioned by Council through the delivery of health protection and health promotion programs addressing areas of food safety, tobacco control, infectious disease management, immunisation and regulation of businesses that pose a threat to public health.

Council also delivers a wide range of services and community infrastructure that directly or indirectly

impact the social, economic and environmental influences of health. This includes community infrastructure like roads and drainage, waste management services, land use planning, recreational facilities, parks and open space for leisure and emergency management planning and response.

Council services that support our community include services for aged, families, youth, children, arts and culture programs, community events, public libraries and community grants.

## Links to Council Planning

The Mildura Rural City Council Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021 is aligned to the Community and Council Plan 2017-2021. The Community and Council Plan guides Council's priorities over the next four years. Our Community Vision has also been used to guide the preparation of the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Vision: Making this the most liveable, people-friendly community in Australia



Strategic Alignment to local action to deliver measurable impacts and change



# OUR PARTNERS IN HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Council recognises that there are many other well-developed partnerships in place across Council which influence a range of health and wellbeing outcomes. This document has been prepared in conjunction with external partner organisations to highlight specific priorities common to our organisations which require a collaborative focus, strategic leadership and advocacy to achieve collective impact for the community.

The Community Health and Wellbeing Plan will evolve and develop as the partnerships strengthen and collaborative objectives and actions commence.

## Collective Impact and Systems Approaches

An increasing emphasis is being placed on collective impact and systems approaches. A collective impact approach commits to a Common Agenda, establishes shared goals and measures of success, undertakes mutually reinforcing activities, ensures effective community participation and commits to ongoing communication between partners. A systems approach offers the ability to think big about population health issues and find effective solutions by considering the various elements of the system, how they interact and the opportunities to influence and change the way the system operates.

## Hands Up Mallee

The local Collective Impact initiative, Hands Up Mallee, aims to make long term social change that will improve the quality of people's lives and overall wellbeing of our community.

The initiative brings together diverse views and ideas from across our community to identify the social issues that have the greatest impact on our long term wellbeing and determine how best to address them. It coordinates effort and resources across all sectors including non-profits, social services, business, communities, philanthropic and governments to improve the systems that serve us. It will require advocating for State and Federal alignment of policies and resources for the large-scale social change we need.

After over two years of intensive consultation with more than 1600 residents and key local organisations, Hands Up Mallee has announced our community's Common Agenda to create long term change.

Our vision is to have; "A connected community where families matter and children thrive", with a focus on four key age groups:

The First 1000 Days  
(Pre-conception-2 years of age)

Best Start to Life  
(3-8 years of age)

Young People Matter  
(9-14 years of age)

Tread Your Own Path  
(15-25 years of age)

Throughout our exhaustive research and consultation over the past two years, which included speaking to residents from a diverse range of backgrounds, several clear directions emerged:

Priority should be given to investing in our residents' early years

Prevention and early intervention are critical to breaking existing cycles of social and economic disadvantage, and ultimately creating long-term change

Parenting, play and home environments are critical elements to achieve this, directly influencing a child's development and health and wellbeing. Therefore strengthening families will be a focus of the Common Agenda.

Citizens helping Citizens will also be a focus, where we aim to foster support for one another and look out for others around us.

Hands Up Mallee's research and consultation also identified a number of key skills and factors that contribute to positive outcomes for young people. Developing these skills and exposing our younger residents to these environments will also be key priorities.

They include relationship skills, self-regulation, problem-solving, involvement in positive activities, strong parenting competencies, positive peers and caring adults, a positive community environment, school environment and economic opportunities.

Equally, Hands Up Mallee has also been able to identify factors that impact negatively on young people. Addressing and eliminating these factors will be another focus of our Common Agenda. These include no positive attachments or warm family relationships, poor parenting behaviours such as punishment or lack of stimulation for play and learning, the presence of contributors to toxic stress such as parental mental illness, family violence or substance abuse, unsafe neighbourhoods and schools, social isolation and poverty

Our Common Agenda calls the community to action to research these and other factors, look at the system that surrounds our children, young people and their families, and do our best to provide the best environment and opportunities so that all of our children, and therefore our community, thrives in the long term. The Common Agenda is a plan that we will commit to for the next five to seven years.

There are no quick fixes, this is long term work. It requires changing culture around the way we think and work together, how we make decisions about programs, policies, resourcing and ultimately how the system we are all part of serves our community. Changing the system will take years. We will try new ideas, succeed, fail, learn and adapt as we grow. Fortunately we can build on our already existing partnerships and successes which places us in a strong position.

## How has the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan been informed?



# DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN

Mildura Rural City Council's Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021 was developed through an analysis of comprehensive data and engagement with a broad range of stakeholders and community members. Each stage of the process included engagement, consultation and active feedback.

A Community Health and Wellbeing Project Control Group was established to create a partnership approach to the development of the plan. The membership of this group consists of organisations and agencies, which play a pivotal role in improving population health outcomes across the municipality.

Involving the community and internal and external stakeholders was fundamental in understanding the health and wellbeing needs of the community. It also provided an opportunity to identify the strengths in the municipality and understand the challenges along with building relationships that will be valuable in implementing the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan.

## Research

The research process undertaken to understand and determine the health and wellbeing priorities for Mildura Rural City Council included:

- Review of Mildura Rural City Council's State of Mildura Rural City Report 2017 – a comprehensive demographic, health and wellbeing profile for the Mildura municipality
- Review of Council plans and strategies from a health and wellbeing perspective
- Relevant Federal and State policies, health priorities and frameworks
- Review of the former Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017
- Consultations and planning sessions with representatives from key partner organisations and internal stakeholders



The Community Health and Wellbeing Plan is structured according to the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015-2019 framework's five domains of health:

- Victorians are healthy and well
- Victorians are safe and secure
- Victorians have the capabilities to participate
- Victorians are connected to culture and community
- Victoria is liveable

<p><b>Domain 1:</b> Victorians are healthy and well</p>	<p><b>Domain 2:</b> Victorians are safe and secure</p>	<p><b>Domain 3:</b> Victorians have the capabilities to participate</p>
<p><b>Outcome</b> Victorians have good physical health</p>	<p><b>Outcome</b> Victorians live free from abuse and violence</p>	<p><b>Outcome</b> Victorians participate in learning and education</p>
<p><b>Indicators</b> Increase healthy start in life Reduce premature death Reduce preventable chronic diseases Increase self-rated health Decrease unintentional injury Increase oral health Increase sexual and reproductive health</p>	<p><b>Indicators</b> Reduce prevalence and impact of abuse and neglect of children Reduce prevalence and impact of family violence Increase community safety</p>	<p><b>Indicators</b> Decrease development vulnerability Increase educational attainment</p>
<p><b>Outcome</b> Victorians have good mental health</p>	<p><b>Outcome</b> Victorians have suitable and stable housing</p>	<p><b>Outcome</b> Victorians participate in and contribute to the economy</p>
<p><b>Indicators</b> Increase mental wellbeing Decrease suicide</p>	<p><b>Indicators</b> Decrease homelessness</p>	<p><b>Indicators</b> Increase labour market participation</p>
<p><b>Outcome</b> Victorians act to protect and promote health</p>	<p><b>Domain 4:</b> Victorians are connected to culture and community</p>	<p><b>Domain 5:</b> Victoria is liveable</p>
<p><b>Indicators</b> Increase healthy eating and active living Reduce overweight and obesity Reduce smoking Reduce harmful alcohol and drug use Increase immunisation</p>	<p><b>Outcome</b> Victorians are socially engaged and live in inclusive communities</p>	<p><b>Outcome</b> Victorians belong to resilient and liveable communities</p>
	<p><b>Indicators</b> Increase connection to culture and communities Increase access to social support</p>	<p><b>Indicators</b> Increase neighbourhood liveability Increase adaptation to the impacts of climate change</p>
	<p><b>Outcome</b> Victorians can safely identify and connect with their culture and identity</p>	<p><b>Outcome</b> Victorians have access to sustainable built and natural environments</p>
	<p><b>Indicators</b> Increase tolerance of diversity</p>	<p><b>Indicators</b> Increase environmental sustainability and quality</p>



## PRIORITY AREAS

The six priority areas provide the framework for the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021 are:

- preventing violence and injury
- improving mental health
- reducing harmful alcohol and drug use
- tobacco free living
- healthier eating and active living
- women's sexual and reproductive health.

To ensure that work in the community is effective, the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan adopts a systems approach to address community needs and support healthy places and healthy people. This will be underpinned by a Community Health and Wellbeing Steering Committee consisting of internal and external stakeholders who play a pivotal role in improving population health outcomes across the municipality. The Steering Committee will work in partnership strategically to implement and evaluate mutually reinforcing activities across the life of the plan.

The Steering Committee outcomes will be driven by the shared measurement system which will be built from the State of Mildura Rural City Council Report 2017 and its alignment to the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes framework five domains of health.

It is acknowledged that these issues are not the only issues impacting on the health and wellbeing of the Mildura Municipal community. It is also acknowledged that these priority areas and issues do not sit in isolation from each other, they are intrinsically linked. The intention of the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan is to further promote collaborative work practices towards achieving better health and wellbeing outcomes for our entire community.

# DOMAIN 1: VICTORIANS ARE HEALTHY AND WELL

## Focus – Physical Health, Mental Health, Health Promotion and Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health.

Council's support and advocacy for mental health services is imperative, with mental health recognised as a key issue within the municipality.

Mental health is defined as "a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community".

(World Health Organisation, 2014, Mental Health: A state of well-being)

In 2014-2015 the Mildura Local Government Area (LGA) experienced more than twice the rate of registered mental health clients at 24.0 per 1,000 population to the Victorian rate of 11.9 per 1,000 population. These rates placed the Mildura LGA 6th of the 79 Victorian LGAs for registered mental health clients. The rate for Mildura LGA had declined slightly between the 2012-2013 and 2014-2015 reporting periods (from 25.5 to 24.0). In 2012-2013 the Mildura LGA had the second highest number of registered mental health clients of all Victorian LGAs. (State of Mildura Report 2017)

### Registered mental health clients per 1,000 population, 2014-2015



### Time Trend – decreasing rate of registered mental health clients per 1,000 population over the reporting period (2012-2013 – 2014-2015)



(Source: Department of Health and Human Services, 2014-15)

Council is committed to:

- supporting the mental wellbeing of all individuals, families and communities at all stages of life
- supporting residents to understand the factors that affect their own mental health and wellbeing and support them to access relevant services

continue to collaborate with partner organisations on projects and campaigns that promote the mental health and wellbeing of residents.

The impact of excessive alcohol, tobacco and drug use is central to the public health focus of Council. Tobacco use trends in the Mildura Local Government Area show an increase in the proportion of population aged 18+ who are current smokers between the Victorian Population Health Survey periods of 2011-2012 and 2014-2015.

In the Mildura Local Government Area during the 2013-2015 reporting period the proportion of mothers who smoked tobacco during their first 20 weeks of pregnancy was 22.9 percent. This is more than double the State rate of 10.1 percent. (Victorian Perinatal Data Collection, Consultative on Obstetric and Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity, commissioned through HOS data – May 2017)

“2.8% of Australia’s burden of disease is due to alcohol use and 2.6% to drug use”. (Department of Health and Human Services 2015)

“20% of the national self-harm burden, 14% of the interpersonal violence burden and 7.5% of the unintentional injury burden (other than road transport) is due to alcohol use”. (Department of Health and Human Services 2015)

Excess alcohol consumption is responsible for a considerable burden of death, disease and injury. Excessive long-term alcohol consumption increases the risk of cardio vascular disease, diabetes, liver cirrhosis and some types of cancers. Alcohol-related harm can also extend beyond the individual to impact families and the broader community through increased street-based violence, sexual assault, family violence, avoidable injuries, road trauma and reduced public safety. As more alcohol is consumed on a single occasion, skills and inhibitions decrease while risky behaviour increases, leading to a greater risk of injury during or immediately after that occasion. (Department of Health and Human Services 2017)

#### Clients that received Alcohol & Drug Treatment Services per 1,000 population, 2014-2015



#### Rank 5

(Source: Department of Health and Human Services 2014-15)

Data from the 2011 Victorian Population Health Survey regarding the risk of short-term harm from alcohol consumption sees the Mildura LGA faring considerably worse than their Victorian peers with 14.3% of Mildura LGA persons at risk compared to only 9.1% of Victorian – a result which places Mildura LGA 11th of the 79 Victorian LGAs. (State of Mildura Report 2017)

Council is committed to:

- supporting agencies to share information and work together on actions related to harmful alcohol and drug use and the dangers of smoking
- continuing to implement the Victorian Tobacco Act, monitoring smoke-free dining and smoke-free outdoor areas and providing education and enforcement in relation to the sale and advertising of tobacco in local premises
- continuing to work in partnership with organisations in relation to the social costs caused through alcohol and other drug use, with a focus on behavioural change that challenges social norms, attitudes and beliefs.



Increasing participation in physical activity has health, social and economic benefits including improved physical health, reduced risk of chronic disease, reduced risk of becoming overweight or obese, the development of stronger social connections and improved mental wellbeing. (State of Mildura Report 2017)

Healthy eating and access to affordable nutritious food is vital to health and wellbeing. Promoting healthy eating initiatives helps our community understand the importance of good nutrition and maintaining a healthy weight.

Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017 achievements include:

- Engagement with local primary schools to encourage active transport through the installation and promotion of 'Ride and Stride Zones'
- Developed an area-based approach to School Breakfast Programs, resulting in the formation of the Mildura Region School Breakfast Partnership which operates in fifteen schools and provides over 1000 nutritious breakfasts to our children and youth per week
- Working with local food business to reformulate food products and make the healthier choice the easier choice for everyone through the development of the Healthy Catering Handbook
- Engagement with Early Years Services, schools and workplaces to empower them to make change to the environments in which they learn, work and play through implementing the Cancer Council Victoria Achievement Program.

Council is committed to:

- improving food literacy, knowledge and skills across the municipality
- continuing to work in partnership to increase access to nutritious food and the opportunity for people to produce, sell and buy local food
- ensuring effective governance of food safety and hygiene preparation practices across the municipality and according to the requirements of the Food Act 1984.

## Our goal is to improve the prospects of long term health and wellbeing in our community.

Strategy		
Promote and support healthy environments and positive health.		
Action	Lead	Partners
Lead collaboration to develop a plan to respond to existing and emerging health and wellbeing issues and trends.	Community Health and Wellbeing Steering Group	Relevant stakeholder Groups
Develop a local Community Based Suicide Prevention Activity Plan.	Murray Primary Health Network	Northern Mallee Community Partnership Northern Mallee Mental Health Alliance Council Headspace Mildura Base Hospital
Lead collaboration to undertake an analysis of support-service needs around drug and alcohol use and develop a plan to address these needs.	Northern Mallee Community Partnership Local Drug Action Team	Council Sunraysia Community Health Services Relevant stakeholder groups
Increase community capacity to understand and respond to mental health and wellbeing.	Northern Mallee Community Partnership Northern Mallee Mental Health Alliance	Council Mildura Base Hospital Headspace Mildura Relevant stakeholder groups
Develop activities to improve the coordination and integration of community youth services to promote youth health and wellbeing, self-care and resilience based on the Youth Engagement Strategy 2015-2018.	Council	Health service providers Relevant stakeholder groups
Increase participation rates for maternal and child health services and immunisations for all.	Council	Mallee District Aboriginal Services Relevant stakeholder groups
Undertake a settings based approach to the promotion of healthy eating and physical activity.	Sunraysia Community Health Services	Council Schools Workplaces Early Years Services

Action	Lead	Partners
Engage in local Early Years Services in the promotion of oral health.	Sunraysia Community Health Services	Council Early Years Services Dental Health Services Victoria Relevant stakeholder groups
Develop a municipal partnership and Working Group to address the rising smoking rates in the region through environmental, settings based and individual approaches.	Sunraysia Community Health Services	Council Health service providers Mallee District Aboriginal Services
Improve the food supply to the priority settings of Early Years Services, schools, workplaces and sporting clubs through targeted partnerships with suppliers and the Victorian Healthy Eating Advisory Service.	Sunraysia Community Health Services	Council Early Years Services Schools Workplaces Sporting Clubs Food Suppliers Healthy Eating Advisory Service
Establish a working party to address local health needs related to Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health.	Sunraysia Community Health Services	Northern Mallee Community Partnership Relevant stakeholder groups

### Other Strategies and Plans

Youth Engagement Strategy  
 Early Years Plan  
 Community Access and Inclusion Plan  
 Healthy Ageing Strategy

## DOMAIN 2: VICTORIANS ARE SAFE AND SECURE

### Focus – Impacts of Family Violence, Community Safety and Homelessness

Council has taken a very strong stance against family violence in our community. "Family and domestic violence is any violent, threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour that occurs in current or past family, domestic or intimate relationships. This includes not only physical injury, but also direct or indirect threats, sexual assault, emotional and psychological torment, economic control, damage to property, social isolation and any behaviour which causes a person to live in fear." (Department of Health and Human Services website)

Family Violence is a complex issue that will require a coordinated and committed approach by a very broad range of stakeholders and community to address at our local level. While a lot of research has been done to understand what drives a person to commit violence against someone they are supposed to love, we still do not have all the answers. But we do know that a large part – the part which women and children are predominately the victims and men the perpetrators – is driven by gender inequality. (Victorian Premier's introduction to Free from Violence)

Violence against women is experienced by a significant number of women in Australia despite it being preventable. For Victorian women aged between 15 and 44 years, intimate partner violence is the leading cause of preventable death, disability and illness. The impact of violence against women is widespread and long-standing, generating profound personal, social and economic costs to individuals, the community and our nation. (Victorian Women's Health Atlas Gendered Fact Sheet Mildura)

#### Family Violence 2016 Reported Incidents

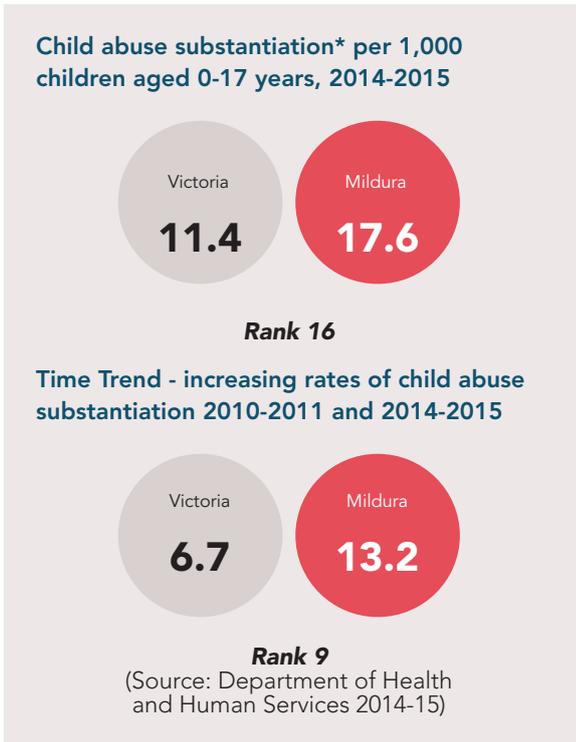
Mildura		Victoria	
Female	1263	Female	745.1
Male	392	Male	245.6

Council, as a White Ribbon accredited organisation, will continue to:

- Maintain accreditation for the White Ribbon Workplace Program
- Recognise White Ribbon Day and International Women's Day and conduct events to raise awareness with our staff and community at these times
- Provide family violence leave and support to staff through our Enterprise Agreement
- Provide training to staff on family violence
- Work with new and existing White Ribbon ambassadors to develop avenues to engage more broadly in the organisation and community
- Review Council's Gender Equity Policy
- Introduce and mentor new workplaces through the White Ribbon accreditation process.

While child abuse and family violence are generally considered separately, it is important to acknowledge the inter-relationship between family violence and child abuse. These forms of violence often coexist, with violence being directed towards both women and children. (Department of Health and Human Services website)

A substantiated child maltreatment notification is made if a child has been, is being, or is likely to be abused, neglected or otherwise harmed. The impact of child abuse can have life-long consequences and result in poorer mental and physical health. (State of Mildura Rural City Report 2017)



The Victorian Government announced that Mildura is a pilot site for the newly created Support and Safety Hubs (Hubs). The Hubs are designed for women, children, young people and older people experiencing family violence, families in need of support with the care, wellbeing and development of children and young people, and perpetrators of family violence.

Council is committed to:

- working in partnership with key stakeholders, agencies and the community to address and reduce our child maltreatment statistics
- playing a vital role in the delivery of Mildura’s Support and Safety Hub

Strong relationships can be observed between people feeling safe in their community and the overall health and wellbeing of a community. “When individuals feel safe within their communities, they are more likely to connect with friends, engage with other community members and experience greater levels of trust and social connection. When individuals perceive their neighbourhoods to be unsafe, they experience higher levels of anxiety and interactions between members of the community become more limited, placing them at risk of social isolation and mental illness.” (State of Mildura Rural City Report 2017)

Through the Hands Up Mallee Community Conversations, feeling safe was a common aspiration for the future of our community. A measure of feeling

safe is asking people if they feel safe while walking alone during the day and after dark.



Council will continue to promote community safety and develop initiatives in partnership to address crime based on the Community Safety Strategy 2015-2018.

“Adequate housing meets people’s essential needs for shelter, security and privacy. Shelter is recognised throughout the world as a basic human right. Homelessness is one of the most potent examples of disadvantage in the community, and one of the most important markers of social exclusion.” (Department of Health and Human Services, 2017)

Mallee Accommodation Support Program (MASP) states that homelessness occurs when a person or family does not have access to a safe, secure, affordable home. This might represent people staying in temporary accommodation such as refuges, emergency accommodation, caravan parks and/or staying with friends/family temporarily, couch surfing, and/or staying in inappropriate and unsafe dwellings. Community awareness and service sector coordination is essential.

Council is committed to continuing to promote housing as a fundamental component of community health and wellbeing.



## Our goal is that all community members feel safe and can live their life free from abuse and violence

Strategy		
Reduce prevalence and impact of family violence and improve perceptions of community safety.		
Action	Lead	Partners
Promote an integrated approach to drive improved coordination of family violence services across the municipality.	Mallee Family Violence Executive	Council Northern Mallee Community Partnership
Support and contribute to the implementation of the Victorian Government local Support and Safety Hub pilot.	Family Safety Victoria Agency	Council Relevant stakeholder groups
Continue to work towards an integrated community approach to reduce substantiated child maltreatment incidents.	Department of Health and Human Services Children and Youth Area Partnerships	Council Northern Mallee Community Partnership
Support implementation of the actions outlined in the Loddon Mallee Action Plan for the Primary Prevention of Violence against Women 2016-2019.	Mallee Family Violence Executive	Council Northern Mallee Community Partnership Relevant stakeholder groups
Develop, implement and review closed circuit television (CCTV) Strategy.	Council	Victoria Police Relevant stakeholder groups
Develop, implement and review the Public Lighting Strategy.	Council	Relevant stakeholder groups
Investigate and support service delivery models of social housing that meet the community needs for emergency and longer term accommodation.	Mallee Accommodation Support Program	Council Haven Northern Mallee Community Partnership

### Related Strategies and Plans

Gender Equity Policy

Community Safety Plan

Municipal Emergency Management Strategy

## DOMAIN 3: VICTORIANS HAVE THE CAPABILITIES TO PARTICIPATE

### Focus - Learning and Education, Developmental Vulnerability and Employment

Education and training are important opportunities for individuals to realise their full potential, develop their health literacy and make positive and informed choices about their health. While many Mildura residents enjoy the local schools, libraries and learning hubs, others talk about the difficulties in accessing local, appropriate and relevant education and training.

Supporting children's optimal physical, emotional and social health in the early years has long lasting positive effects on their health, social and emotional wellbeing and achievements throughout life. The benefits include increased school success, increased future productivity and reduced cost of health and public services. Physical and social developmental deficits or delays may be more difficult to address as children grow older.

In 2015, 10.4 percent of children in their first year of school in the Mildura Local Government Area (LGA) were developmentally vulnerable in two or more domains. These figures had improved significantly since 2012 when 13.4 percent of the children were vulnerable in two or more domains. Over both time periods Mildura LGA children were faring worse than their Victorian counterparts, although the 'gap' had decreased. (State of Mildura Report 2017)

Young people who are not engaged in education, employment or training are at greater risk of poor health, depression or early parenthood. A school leaver's range of options can include work, university or vocational training and many combinations of work and education. This measure is included to quantify young people's engagement in education, training and work. (Department of Health and Human Services 2017)

The activities of young people who have left school have been sourced from the 2011 Australian Bureau of Statistics. This data describes the level of engagement in work and study activities of 15-19 year-olds who are not attending school. This population can be categorised into three major groups:

- fully engaged school leavers are defined as those who are involved in work and/or non-school study on a full-time basis
- disengaged school leavers are defined as those who are not involved in any work or study activities at all and
- the remaining school leavers are defined as partly engaged.

The percentage of fully engaged and disengaged school leavers are presented below.

Destination of School Leavers rates (based on 2011 Census data), Community Indicators Victoria (LGA)

Council will continue to:

- Through the Mildura Best Start Partnership work and respond to improving health, development, learning and wellbeing for children aged 0-8
- Advocate for funding to enable all young people to access quality and affordable education and
- Improve access to youth friendly information and support services for young people and their families.

#### Fully Engaged School Leavers (aged 15-19 years), 2011



#### Fully Disengaged School Leavers (aged 15-19 years), 2011



(Source: Destination of School Leavers rates (based on 2011 Census data), Community Indicators Victoria (LGA))



## Our goal is to create an economic and learning environment that supports people to realise their full potential

Strategy		
Increase community access to a diversity of high quality lifelong learning, vocational and employment opportunities.		
Action	Lead	Partners
Facilitate Hands Up Mallee and utilise the principles of Collective Impact to build 'A connected community where families matter and children thrive'.	Northern Mallee Community Partnership	Council Community
Facilitate the participation of young people in decisions that affect them and facilitate actions they may take to implement these.	Northern Mallee Community Partnership Hands Up Mallee Youth	Council Headspace Mildura Relevant stakeholder groups
Improve how we engage and re-engage young people to increase levels of education retention and completion.	Council	Northern Mallee Community Partnership Northern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network Department of Education Schools
Facilitate sustainable employment opportunities to encourage education advancement and future employment choices through the Jobs Victoria Real Jobs Real People Employment Program.	Council	Jobs Victoria Employment Network Job Service Providers Local employers Education and Training Providers

### Related Strategies and Plans

Youth Engagement Strategy

Real Jobs Real People Employment Program

Municipal Early Years Plan

## DOMAIN 4: VICTORIANS ARE CONNECTED TO CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

### Focus – Socially Engaged and Inclusive Communities, Connection to Culture and Community, Increase Tolerance of Diversity

We live in a diverse and vibrant community. Council is committed to creating a socially inclusive and connected community in which all members feel valued and have the opportunity to fully participate in life. Knowing your neighbour, having a secure job, playing sport at a local club and having your voice heard at a community event all help us to connect with others and support good health and wellbeing.

Issues that compound and “hinder social inclusion in Australian communities are poverty and low income, lack of access to the job market, limited social supports and networks, the effect of the local neighbourhood and exclusion from education, childcare, health and transport services” (Australian Social Inclusion Board, 2012). Based on this understanding increasing acceptance of diversity in our community is a priority.

#### Proportion of adults who thought multiculturalism definitely made life in their area better, 2014



(Source: Victorian Population Health Survey 2014)

Council is committed to:

- Promoting and fostering social inclusion through policy and strategies that engage with and support the needs of our diverse community, including but not limited to culturally diverse communities, new and emerging communities, our Indigenous community, gender and sexuality diverse, our aged community and those with a disability and
- Working with partner organisations to improve collaboration between services and community.

“Statistics state that as at 2012 approximately four percent of the Mildura Local Government Area residents are of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, making the area home to the second largest population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in regional Victoria. Local community knowledge indicates that the population is significantly higher than what is captured through census data” (Mildura Rural City Council Reconciliation Action Plan).

Council is committed to:

- Promoting and fostering social inclusion through policy and strategies that engage with and support the needs of our diverse community, including but not limited to culturally diverse communities, new and emerging communities, our Indigenous community, gender and sexuality diverse, our aged community and those with a disability and
- Working with partner organisations to improve collaboration between services and community.

“Statistics state that as at 2012 approximately four percent of the Mildura Local Government Area residents are of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, making the area home to the second largest population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in regional Victoria. Local community knowledge indicates that the population is significantly higher than what is captured through census data” (Mildura Rural City Council Reconciliation Action Plan).

Council is committed to:

- working towards improving the health, social and economic outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities through our commitment to reconciliation and through our Reconciliation Action Plan
- continuing to lead and encourage campaigns that positively support diversity in our community such as Refugee Welcome Zone and Racism it Stops with Me
- continuing to support activities that build community and social networks and address barriers to accessing sport and recreation activities.
- continuing to create opportunities for engagement and participation in arts and heritage that contribute to cultural vitality and viability in our community.

- continuing to foster and support the arts, culture and heritage organisations through collaborations, policy and strategies that engage with, promote and support the needs of our diverse community

“It has long been recognised that open spaces are important for our wellbeing. Open spaces provide opportunities for a wide range of social interactions and pursuits that support community health and wellbeing. They allow people to interact with their natural environment and provide habitats for wildlife. They can also be an important expression of social and cultural identity.”  
(Planning and Open Space Strategy 2008).

Open spaces include the riverfront, parks and gardens, recreation ovals and open spaces, tracks and trails and footpaths. Council will continue to maintain, upgrade and plan for the future of our community's open spaces.

Council is committed to:

- managing existing townships and areas and planning for new growth areas with the health and wellbeing of the community in mind and
- building on and supporting community spaces that provide opportunities for social connection.

**Our goal is that all people are socially engaged, live in inclusive communities and can celebrate and connect with their culture and identity.**

Strategy		
Increase engagement with and connection to community and culture.		
Action	Lead	Partners
Develop, implement and review the Public Open Space Strategy 2017-2022.	Council	Relevant State Government Agencies Relevant stakeholder groups
Continue to collaborate with local sport and active recreation settings to address barriers to participation by vulnerable groups within our community.	Council	Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council Mallee Sports Assembly Relevant stakeholder groups
Embed 'Healthy by Design' principles into Council planning processes to support active living in existing and future growth areas.	Council	Relevant stakeholder groups
Improve collaboration between Council, services, agencies and culturally diverse communities in the municipality.	Council	Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council Relevant stakeholder groups
Continue to pursue reconciliation alongside the Aboriginal community and advocate for targeted services to meet their health and support needs.	Council	Aboriginal Action Committee Mallee District Aboriginal Services Relevant stakeholder groups

Action	Lead	Partners
Implement outcomes from reviewing Council's role in aged care and disability support services, in the context of the national sector reforms with the aim of facilitating continued access to relevant quality services.	Council	Relevant stakeholder groups
Develop, implement and review the Social Inclusion Strategy 2018-2022.	Council	Relevant stakeholder groups

#### Related Strategies and Plans

Reconciliation Action Plan  
 Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy  
 Community Access and Inclusion Plan  
 Events Strategy  
 Recreation Strategy  
 Healthy Ageing Strategy  
 Emergency Management Plan  
 Housing Strategy  
 Community Plans

## DOMAIN 5: VICTORIA IS LIVEABLE

### Focus – Resilient and Liveable Communities, Adaption to Climate Change, Access to Sustainable Built and Natural Environments, Environmental Sustainability

We rely on our natural environment to provide us with clean and safe air, water, food and soil and to protect us from disease and natural disasters.

Health and climate are naturally linked and a changing climate affects the social and environmental elements of health and wellbeing including clean air, safe drinking water, sufficient food and secure housing.

To prevent and respond to these challenges, it is important that communities, businesses and Council understand and appreciate the region's natural heritage and work to reduce their environmental footprint. We can do this by conserving and promoting our natural resources and spaces, increasing energy efficiency, recycling, preventing pollution and managing waste.

The community has expressed a strong desire to connect more with nature, preserve our natural heritage for coming generations and to live in a more sustainable manner. Local residents have drawn a strong connection between the health of the environment and their own sense of health and wellbeing.

Mildura Rural City Council currently plans for and reduces the impacts of climate change through:

- implementation of the Municipal Emergency Management Strategy
- delivery of environmental education awareness activities
- managing our environment to improve the resilience of key assets including our public open spaces, native vegetation and water and
- implementation of the Energy Management Plan to reduce Council's green-house gas emissions.

Council will continue to protect and enhance the natural environment for the use, wellbeing and enjoyment of current and future generations.

# Our goal is that we belong to resilient communities that understand and value our natural environment.

Strategy
Increase community resilience to the impact of climate change.

Action	Lead	Partners
Develop, implement and review Waste Resource and Recovery Plan 2018-2023.	Council	Relevant stakeholder groups
Develop, implement and review a long term strategy for the management of waste.	Council	Relevant stakeholder groups
Develop, implement and review Municipal Emergency Management Strategy 2017-2020.	Council	Relevant stakeholder groups

**Related Strategies and Plans**

- Vegetation Management Plan
- Litter Strategy
- Environmental Education Plan
- Public Open Space Strategy
- Energy Management Plan
- Invasive Plants and Animals Plan



# MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION

The Community Health and Wellbeing Plan outlines the strategic health and wellbeing goals that Council will work towards over the next four years. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation are required to understand effectiveness, identify areas for improvement and learning and to enhance the evidence for current and future work in this space.

Council's reporting framework will outline the measures that will be used to monitor and evaluate the impact of work across the Victorian Public Health Wellbeing Outcomes Framework five domains of health:

- Victorians are healthy and well
- Victorians are safe and secure
- Victorians have the capabilities to participate
- Victorians are connected to culture and community
- Victoria is liveable

A Community Health and Wellbeing Steering Committee consisting of internal and external representatives will work in partnership strategically in the implementation and evaluation of the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021.

The Steering Committee outcomes will be driven by the shared measurement system which will be built from the State of Mildura Rural City Council Report 2017 and its alignment to the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes framework, five domains of health.

# APPENDIX 1

## The Context

This appendix provides an overview of the legislative and policy context encompassing the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan.

## State Context

Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015-2019 and Outcomes Framework

Under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 the State has a significant role to play in promoting and protecting the public health and wellbeing of all Victorians. The State Plan has an explicit aim to reduce inequalities in health and wellbeing. It identifies challenges to the health status of Victorians including:

- Increases in some risks to health and only limited or no improvement in others, particularly obesity and physical abuse associated with alcohol
- The increasing impact of chronic disease
- Persistent inequalities in health status
- Demographic trends that require new approaches including population ageing, the need for an increased focus on the health and wellbeing of health and families
- Environmental sustainability and health protection including the impact of climate change, the spread of communicable diseases and the emergence of new diseases, and the need for communicable disease planning and preparedness.

The State Plan places a strong emphasis on prevention and early intervention that is supported by a number of current State Government policies and initiatives that include:

- Implementation of the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence recommendations
- Victorian gender equality strategy (under development)
- Roadmap for Reform: strong families, safe children
- Victoria's 10-year mental health plan and the Victorian Suicide Prevention Framework
- Victorian state disability plan 2017-20 and the National Disability Insurance Scheme
- Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing Framework.

The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework provides a new approach to monitoring and reporting on collective efforts to improve health and wellbeing over the long term. It uses a whole of government approach and includes five domains:

- Victorians are healthy and well
- Victorians are safe and secure
- Victorians are connected to culture and community
- Victorians have the capabilities to participate and
- Victoria is liveable.

The Outcomes Framework provides a comprehensive set of public health and wellbeing outcomes, indicators, targets and measures for our major population health and wellbeing priorities and their determinants. Where data is available, the Outcomes Framework also enables assessment of health and wellbeing inequalities.

## Ending Family Violence – Victoria's Plan for Change

Details how the government will deliver the 227 recommendations made by the Royal commission into Family Violence and build a new system that protects families and holds perpetrators to account.

## Free from Violence – Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women

This strategy is an integral element of the government's broader family violence system reform. It fulfils Recommendation 187 of the Royal Commission into Family Violence and is a key part of the 10-year plan ending family violence: Victoria's plan for change.

## VicHealth Fair Foundations Framework for Health Equity Legislation

The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation or VicHealth also has a focus on equity and how our individual choices are shaped by the environment around us.

Fair Foundations: The VicHealth Framework for Health Equity is a planning tool for health promotion policy and practice. It outlines the social determinants of health inequities, suggesting entry points for action.

## VicHealth Action Agenda for Health Promotion

The 2016 Action Agenda update sets out priorities for the 2016-2019 period. Gender, youth and community themes are priorities to frame future work. The five strategic imperatives identified in the plan are:

- Promoting healthy eating
- Encouraging regular physical activity
- Preventing tobacco use
- Preventing harm from alcohol
- Improving mental wellbeing.

## Health Priorities framework

The Victorian Health Priorities Framework 2012-2022 articulates the long-term planning and development priorities for Victoria's health system. This framework identifies that prevention is an important component for 'improving every Victorian's health status and health experiences' and responding to pressures that face the health care system.

Population growth and ageing, along with the increasing prevalence of chronic disease and the escalating costs of health care technology, have led to increasing attention at all levels of government on how to keep the population well.

The Local Government Act 1989 and the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 outline Council's responsibility for improving the quality of life for communities.

The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (the Act) aims to help achieve state-wide benefits through a consistent approach to planning across both state and local governments. The Act is a major legislative driver for improving the health and wellbeing of Victorians.

The Act recognises that the State has a significant role in promoting and protecting the public health and wellbeing of people living in Victoria and clearly defines public health to be:

- What we, as a society, can do collectively to assure the conditions in which people can be healthy
- About prevention, promotion and protection rather than treatment
- About populations rather than individuals
- About the factors and behaviour that cause illness and injury and
- About ways inequalities can be reduced.

At least 29 different Victorian Acts and regulations attribute responsibilities to councils in contributing to protecting the health of their communities, and keeping people well. Some of the most recent Victorian legislation that will influence public health is the Improving Cancer Outcomes Act 2014 and amendments to the Tobacco Act 1987.

Victorian legislation that is particularly important for health planning includes:

- The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006. This places specific legal obligations on public authorities such as local councils with regard to human rights. The Charter can be seen to reinforce the role of the Public Health and Wellbeing Plan because it explicitly requires consideration of equity in Council decision making.
- The Climate Change Act 2010 creates a legal framework for actions and initiatives on this issue. Local government is specifically required to address climate change in the preparation of Health Plans as part of the effort to mitigate the risks.
- The Planning and Environment Act 1987 and the Environment Protection Act 1970 recognise that the built and natural environment - buildings, streetscapes, parks and gardens - influence our quality of life. The Acts impose controls to prevent and minimise damage, and protect human health and ecosystems

Other legislation that protects the health and safety of Victorians include community safety laws that focus on the protection and care of children, road safety, safe drinking water, food and liquor regulation and controlling use and access to drugs and poisons. Health and wellbeing is promoted and supported through legislation such as the Transport Integration Act 2010 and the Sport and Recreation Act 2008.

## Climate Change

Health and climate are intrinsically linked and a changing climate affects the social and environmental determinants of health and wellbeing - clean air, safe drinking water, sufficient food and secure housing.

The direct impact of climate change is likely to result from extreme weather events such as flooding or heatwaves. The indirect health impacts are likely to occur after an event and can exacerbate existing health inequalities.

There are often additional benefits associated with actions designed to reduce the impact of climate change or promote health and wellbeing.

For example, if a small shift to active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport was achieved in Australia, greenhouse gas emissions could be reduced by up to two-thirds for peak travel and by about 95 percent for off-peak travel. The joint potential to improve our environment and reduce chronic diseases is significant.

## Royal Commission into Family Violence

The State Government's Royal Commission into Family Violence provided practical recommendations to prevent and address family violence, based on an examination of the current service system and best practice approaches.

Recommendation 94 is that:

The Victorian Government amend section 26 of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic) which requires that councils prepare a municipal public health and wellbeing plan - to require councils to report on the measures the council proposes to take to reduce family violence and respond to the needs of victims. Alternatively, the Victorian Government could amend section 125 of the Local Government Act 1989 (Vic) - which requires each council to prepare a council plan - to require councils to include these measures in their council plan (rather than their health and wellbeing plans) [within 12 months].

Council will include measures to reduce the incidents of family violence across the municipality in the integrated Council Plan 2017-21. This will demonstrate a commitment to work with the community to act on the Royal Commission's recommendations and work in partnership with the community to reduce the incidence of family violence.

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## National Context

### National Health Priority Areas

The National Health Priority Areas (NHPAs) are diseases and conditions that Australian governments have chosen for focused attention because they contribute significantly to the burden of illness and injury in the Australian community. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) publishes information on the NHPAs and their associated indicators and risk factors across the Australian population with a focus on particular population groups of interest.

The 9 NHPAs are:

- Cancer control (first set of conditions, 1996)
- Cardiovascular health (first set of conditions, 1996)
- Injury prevention and control (first set of conditions, 1996)
- Mental health (first set of conditions, 1996)
- Diabetes mellitus (added 1997)
- Asthma (added 1999)
- Arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions (added 2002)
- Obesity (added 2008)
- Dementia (added 2012).

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#### The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015–2019, Department of Health and Human Services

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Source: Victorian Injury Surveillance Unit (VISU) using data sourced from Victorian Admitted Episodes Dataset (2014-2015) and Victorian Emergency Minimum Dataset (2014)

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**Deakin Avenue Service Centre**  
76 Deakin Avenue, Mildura

**Madden Avenue Service Centre**  
108 Madden Avenue, Mildura

**Ouyen Service Centre**  
79 Oke Street, Ouyen

Phone: (03) 5018 8100  
PO Box 105, Mildura VIC 3502