

Media Release

**Community lead the way forward**

Hands Up Mallee (HUM), an initiative of the Northern Mallee Community Partnership is working with community to tackle the causes of social disadvantage and work towards significant social change

HUM has formed a Community Leaders Table, to expand on the contextual understanding of feedback gathered through community conversations. The table will also help identify community assets that may be able to support social change.

Executive Officer, Ms Cheree Jukes, is excited about the community engagement phase of the initiative. “We are gaining a clearer picture of what is really impacting our community, with hundreds of Community Conversation survey responses flowing in,” Ms Jukes said.

The Community Leaders Table, between now and June will play an important role in steering the work of HUM. On the 20th April, the group will meet to begin understanding how to identify and respond to complex social problems, reach a shared aspiration, and form solutions for real change.

Jacqui Pasquale; a local teacher, narrative therapist, long-time advocate for social reform and Community Leaders Table member explains, “if you are passionate to see real change occur, contact HUM via the website www.handsupmallee.com/community-leaders-table and express an interest to join us at the table.”

The table is seeking diverse representation from the non-profit sector, business and philanthropy, government and most importantly community members with lived experience of the social service system and social disadvantage. So far, the table has over thirty members but HUM is seeking more.

Dean Wickham, Executive Officer of Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Community Council says “in diversity there is strength. We have to work together; bring a diverse bunch of people together to address these wicked problems.”

For more information about our community’s challenges, visit [www.handsupmallee.com](http://www.handsupmallee.com), download the conversation kit, and share the message with your friends, family and other networks and tell us what you think.

ENDS

PICTURE: Jacqui Pasquale, EO Cheree Jukes, EO SMECC Dean Wickham, Community representative Narelle Hahn-Smith are amongst the current thirty plus strong table membership.

