

TITLE : Frankston Community Kitchens Project

ORGANISATION: Frankston Community Health Service, Peninsula Health.

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2. ABSTRACT

Frankston Community Health recognised the many determinants affecting the rates of obesity, heart disease, diabetes, depression, social isolation and food insecurity in Australia. This combined with a demand from clients and other workers to address issues with cooking skills, motivation and nutrition knowledge, led to the discovery of the concept of Community Kitchens

Community Kitchens are not cooking classes, but opportunities for people with common backgrounds or interests to get together to socialise and cook nutritious and affordable meals. Often participants cook in bulk and then take food home for themselves and their families for later use. Participants have ownership over their kitchen and direct how they would like their kitchen to run.

The Community Kitchen's philosophy is to further develop a sense of community around healthy food. Evaluation so far reveals Community Kitchens assist participants to develop new friendships and self confidence as well as increased motivation to cook, budget and prepare healthy meals, whilst further developing skills and abilities in preparing and cooking affordable meals. An integral part of the Community Kitchens concept is to utilise existing community resources and to create partnerships to support the sustainability and to limit requirements for ongoing funding support.

There are currently 8 Community Kitchens within the City of Frankston. There are Men's, Women's, Mixed, Koori and Youth Kitchens and a kitchen for people with disabilities. A multi-cultural kitchen is also being developed. Our aim is to expand the project across Victoria and potentially Australia. This process has already started with the running of 'how to workshops' for interested parties.