

2005 Award for Innovation and Excellence in Primary Health Care

Program Title: Senior Citizens' Multicultural Program and Let Everyone Actively Participate (LEAP) Program

Name of the organisation Whittlesea City Council

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Abstract

The Senior Citizens' Multicultural Program and the LEAP Program offer a range of events and activities that provide City of Whittlesea residents aged 55 and older with relevant information on opportunities for social interactions.

The Senior Citizens' Multicultural Program provides high level support to each of the 50 local Senior Citizens' Clubs in the City of Whittlesea.

The LEAP Program provides a range of social, educational and recreational activities, designed to encourage participation, with an increasing focus on physical activity and socialisation, both very important to older persons.

Approximately 5,000 local older people benefit as a result of being members of Senior Citizens Clubs and another 3,000 local older people benefit from participating in the LEAP Program.

The Senior Citizens Liaison Network meets bi-monthly and is facilitated by Council Liaison Officers. It acts as a forum for information dissemination and consultation. Significantly the network provides members with the opportunity to foster and nurture tolerance and co-operation among the member groups.

The establishment of the network is an acknowledgment of the crucial roles that cultural diversity and older residents play in the City of Whittlesea.

The Senior Citizens' Multicultural Program and the LEAP Program have proven to be successful attempts to address access and equity issues particularly for older people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities and for older people facing geographical and other physical barriers.

At all times the Senior Citizens Multicultural Program and LEAP Program aim to provide information and support to older people to enable them to develop self help skills in a sustainable manner. Regular consultation and reviewing with the local community ensures that appropriate strategies are implemented to respond to identified needs and wants.