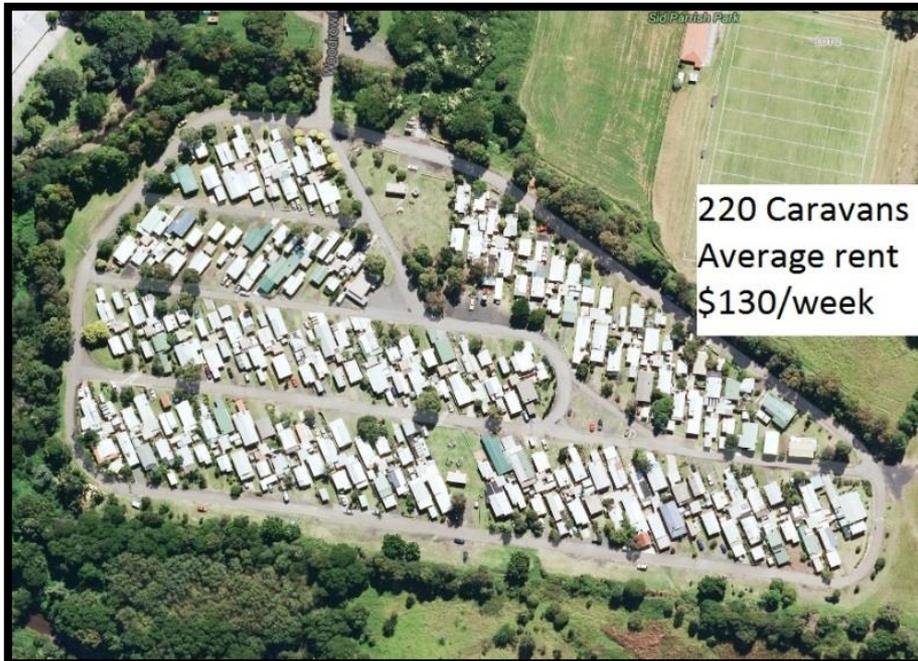




# The Figgie Connection

## Empowering Vulnerable Communities To Good Health



### HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICE

Illawarra Shoalhaven  
Local Health District

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# The Figgie Connection- Empowering Vulnerable Communities To Good Health: Summary Slide



## Aim:

Engage residents in the self-management of their health and improve access to health services

## Current situation:

200 Caravan park residents with poor health and greater risk of chronic disease and limited access to services.

## What we did:

Healthy Living Project: 2 year partnership between the Health Promotion Service, Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) and Unanderra Community Centre to deliver outreach to Figtree Caravan Park to provide support, direction and connection to health services. The project focused on improving physical activity, healthy eating, health literacy and reducing smoking rates of the residents. An Advisory Group of residents and community organisations steered the project.

## Outcomes:

The project was effective in providing skills for healthy living; increased physical activity, healthy eating and improved self-management of chronic health conditions.

Cost effective : \$125 per resident per year vs NSW average acute bed days cost for 2013/14 was \$1,535 or \$4,025 annual cost of person with Type 2 Diabetes

# HEALTH INEQUALITIES ARE UNFAIR AND AVOIDABLE



## Residents of Figtree Caravan park:

- Poorest levels of health and wellbeing
- Greater risk of chronic disease
- Limited access to services
- Social isolation
- Poor mental health

***Need identified by primary health care nurses***

**“The emergency room is the health service that most residents use”**  
***Caravan Park Manager 2013***

## **AIM: ENGAGE RESIDENTS IN THE SELF-MANAGEMENT OF THEIR HEALTH AND IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES.**

- increase engagement with health services
- increase physical activity and improve healthy eating
- improved self-management of chronic health conditions
- reduce smoking
- increase utilisation of community based services

# WHAT WE DID

- Utilised community sector model
- Residents members of advisory group
- Initial health check and needs assessment
- Negotiation with management of park
- Advocacy for funds
- Partnership with Community Centre
- Outreach worker
- Healthy eating and active living initiatives



# WHAT CHANGED

- Residents designed and run
- Reclaimed community space
- Healthy Living Champions
- Park management using referral pathways

**“[The Project] has guided the community well to turn frustrations into tools.”**  
***Advisory Group Member***

# WHAT CHANGED

- Walking group and gentle exercise class
- Figgie's Friendship Garden
- Healthy cooking and eating
- Health information sessions



# BETTER PATIENT OUTCOMES

## Data over 16 months

- 553 OOS for advice, referral, health prevention
- 60 residents underwent health checks

## Cost effective

\$125 per resident per year (vs \$4,025 annual cost of person with Type 2 Diabetes; NSW average acute bed days cost was \$1,535\*)

## Qualitative: focus group, interviews, case studies

- Improved access to services
- Increased physical activity and improved healthy eating
- Secondary impact - 'ripple effect' amongst non attendees
- Improved social and emotional well being
- Improved health literacy

\* ABM Portal, NSW Health, March 2015

# LESSONS LEARNT

- Good governance and ongoing support in planning and delivery was critical.
- An “active” advisory group who contributed and added additional resources.
- Consumer participation and fostering community champions in all aspects of project was central to successful outcomes and sustainability.
- Community strengths model provided a creative and flexible model for engaging consumers.
- Having a common agenda resulted in a successful partnership.
- Use of community existing infrastructure - decreased costs and improved efficiencies.

# Contact



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