
Obesity – Start a Movement

Initiative Type

Service Improvement

Status

Close

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Summary

Obesity is a significant health issue in Mackay with Mackay's obesity rate being 28 per cent, which is 16 per cent higher than the state average. In addition, in 2015, the Mackay region ranked 5th in all of Australia under the Heart Foundation's Couch Potato Index, an indicator used to portray prevalence of obesity and lack of physical activity. This is a medium term initiative (approximately 3 years) incorporating an all of community approach and utilising multiple interventions, using resources from

a cadre of partners and stakeholders with an interest in achieving community outcomes in reducing diabetes type 2 and creating healthier lifestyle choices for the community in the Mackay - Whitsunday region. The challenge over the project lifespan will be to reach as many community members as possible with finite resources. “Tribal interventions” is a euphemism for those interventions connecting with powerful community leaders, family group influencers, catalysts, sources of influence on families and individuals. “Tribal leaders” are those organisations and individuals with the capacity to trigger changes in target group behaviours, or where the best opportunities exist for rapid behaviour change. Key contacts therefore within the targeted local government communities of Mackay, Sarina and Isaac include:

- Schools – Heads of education
- Lions clubs – District Governor
- Councils – CEO Forum, Leaders other forums connecting workplaces, sporting clubs and services clubs and organisations
- Leaders – Healthy communities initiatives (including local government planning, food mapping and security, whole of community challenges)
- Leaders - children and families organisations

A key focus will be on targeting children and families. Working preventatively on these issues the aim will be to reduce the number of children who are suffering diabetes type 2, or are overweight. A flow on outcome will be reducing the risk of this group developing chronic disease later in life. Benefits of a family-based approach include motivating parents - as role models for their children and leaders of the family unit and using the “home” as a setting to generate positive behaviour change for the whole family.

Key dates

Jan 2016

Aug 2017

Implementation sites

Mackay Hospital and Health Service

Partnerships

Healthcare Improvement Unit, North Queensland PHN, CSIRO, James Cook University

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Aim

Reduce progression of diabetes type 2 and obesity across the Mackay District using “tribal interventions.”

Benefits

Leverages existing relevant programs and services in the community that contribute to improving obesity rates and exercise levels.

Background

The ICIF provides financial support to innovative projects that deliver better integration of care, address fragmentation in services and provide high-value healthcare. Funded projects also demonstrate a willingness to embrace and encourage the uptake of new technology alongside the benefits of integrating care and improving communication between health care sectors.

