

HALT On Tour In Gannawarra

MENTAL HEALTH SESSIONS



BACKGROUND

The October-December 2022 floods impacted communities across the Gannawarra Shire. Many employees and volunteers were involved in providing support during and following the flood emergency. It was identified that providing mental health and wellbeing sessions to male dominated workplaces and community groups would be valuable in reaching those impacted by the floods.

Jeremy Forbes founder of Hope Assistance Local Tradies (HALT) was engaged to deliver a three-day program across Gannawarra, from 21 - 23 March 2024. HALT is a national grassroots campaign that raises awareness of mental health and the importance of supporting each other through tough times. The HALT message is particularly focused on building confidence of men to look out for their own mental health as well as their mates, both at work and socially.

Jeremy was able to deliver eleven mental health and wellness sessions over the three days program, including to the Kerang Men's Shed, Kerang Fire Brigade, Kerang Technical High School staff, Gannawarra Shire Council depot and office employees, four workplaces across Kerang and Cohuna, and the Kerang Football and Netball Club. The program culminated with an outdoor evening event at Tree Tops Scout Camp located between Cohuna and Koondrook on the Gunbower Creek. The evening event included woodfired pizza, free haircuts with a Bush Barber, and some fun prizes.

The three-day program and evening event were made possible through partnerships and support from Council, Northern District Community Health, the Murray Primary Health Network, Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, and the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments under the Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) as part of the Gannawarra Community Flood Recovery Program.

SESSION AIMS

- Deliver mental health and wellness sessions to Gannawarra community groups and male dominated workplaces across the Shire
- Provide "in-house" mental health messaging from a professional with relevant lived experiences
- To provide opportunities of relaxed and engaging social connections
- Support local businesses



WHAT DID THE HALT SESSIONS DELIVER?

- 11 sessions over 3 days reaching over 240 people
- 6 workplace sessions with 126 attending
- 4 community sessions with 81 attending
- 112 paper based post session surveys completed
- Local hospitality businesses in Kerang and Cohuna provided catering for the day sessions
- 1 Yeti given away as a survey incentive
- 1 evening social session at Tree Tops attended by 36
- 7 lucky door prizes were given away
- Catering by Murray Mallee Pizza for the Tree Tops event
- Free haircuts by the Bush Barber a local business operator
- 7 responded to the Tree Tops post event online survey



Australian Government



Supported by Gannawarra Shire Flood Recovery Funding through the Gannawarra Community Resilience Committee

This activity was supported by funding from Murray PHN through the Australian Government's PHN Program



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WHAT DID THE EVENT ACHIEVE?

DAY SESSIONS

- 96% of survey respondents said that Jeremy Forbes was an engaging and informative speaker
- 76% participants said their session definitely gave them the opportunity to connect positively with others
- 74% of respondents said they definitely reflected on their own wellbeing and mental health during the session
- 100% of respondents said that a similar session would be good to have at their workplace again
- 82% of survey respondents would definitely recommend a similar session to family, friends and colleagues

TREE TOPS SESSION

- 85% said that the evening gave them the opportunity to connect positively with others
- 100% said that it would be valuable for others to hear Jeremy's message including family, friends and colleagues
- 100% of respondents said that the event at Tree Tops, food, free haircuts and general vibe was "absolutely worth attending"

FEEDBACK

- I found Jeremy's talk on mental health informative, and he was able to connect on a real bloke's level.
- His experiences dealing with his own mental health battles really hit home about how we need to be asking the tough questions to mates and/or family members and checking in to see if they are doing ok.
- His presentation was interactive and got all the attendees involved in the discussion around the importance of mental health.
- I would recommend Jeremy to any local sporting clubs to help break down the stigma around asking someone for help.
- I just wanted to thank you for recommending Jeremy, the team absolutely loved him and wished he was there for longer, they got a lot out of it. Jeremy is amazing for conducting these talks and we hope to host him again in the future.
- Was a bloody good night, would recommend to others to attend, was really engaging and the food/pizza was amazing.
- Great night. Venue is ideal ... Been awhile since I've been to a men's mental health type workshop. I feel that they are something that we menfolk really need to have a refresher on, every so often. There's not many people that could honestly say they have not been touched by mental health issues either directly or to a family member or mate or friend. Jez was very good and delivered the message in a down to earth fashion which was easy to understand.



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