

LATROBE HEALTH ADVOCATE

QUARTERLY

UPDATE

October - December 2022



Latrobe Health
Advocate



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A MESSAGE FROM Latrobe Health Advocate



Jane Anderson



The following is the update from the Office of the Latrobe Health Advocate for the period October- December 2022.

The top aspiration identified by Latrobe communities this quarter was Access to Services, which was the topic of 45% of community conversations with me. Health equity is shown as the second aspiration for communities, and it was always mentioned alongside the aspiration of access to services in conversations with me.

People in the community have reported that they cannot access healthcare due to a lack of specialists in the area or systemic inequities. I am working very closely with major healthcare providers in Latrobe as well as the Department of Health to provide better health services to the community. I will continue this work and emphasise the focus on more equitable access to necessary services in the Access to Services Action Plan.

Social inclusion was the focus of 8% of community conversations this quarter for my office. Feelings of exclusion or inadequacy, low self-esteem, groups or activities for specific groups, pet care costs, isolation for people from diverse cultures, a "one size fits all" approach for multicultural communities, and burnout of support workers are some of the barriers identified by local community members.

As a result of my work with different stakeholders, I have gained a deeper understanding of how to support and engage multicultural communities, and recognize that different groups require different approaches. I will work with local multicultural groups to hear from their perspective and identify opportunities for joint advocacy.

During this quarter I have also seen several systems changes that can provide opportunities for better services, better mental models, integration of community voice and better relationships.

As always, I look forward to hearing from more of you in the coming months and encourage you to contact me at 1800 319 255 or via email at info@lhadvocate.vic.gov.au at any time.

Remember you can follow my work on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

You can find copies of all the reports we publish along with this quarterly update on our website.

www.lhadvocate.vic.gov.au

Jane””

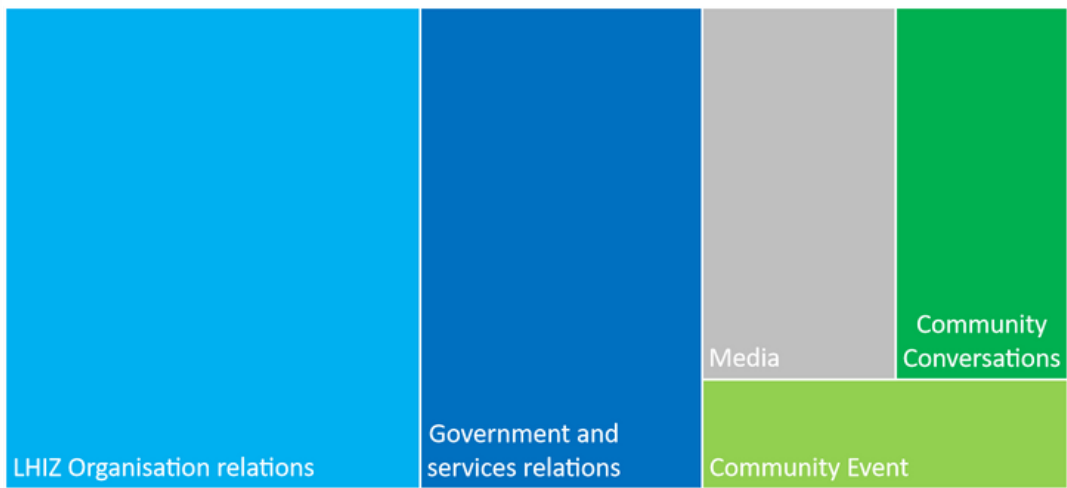
@LHAdvocate



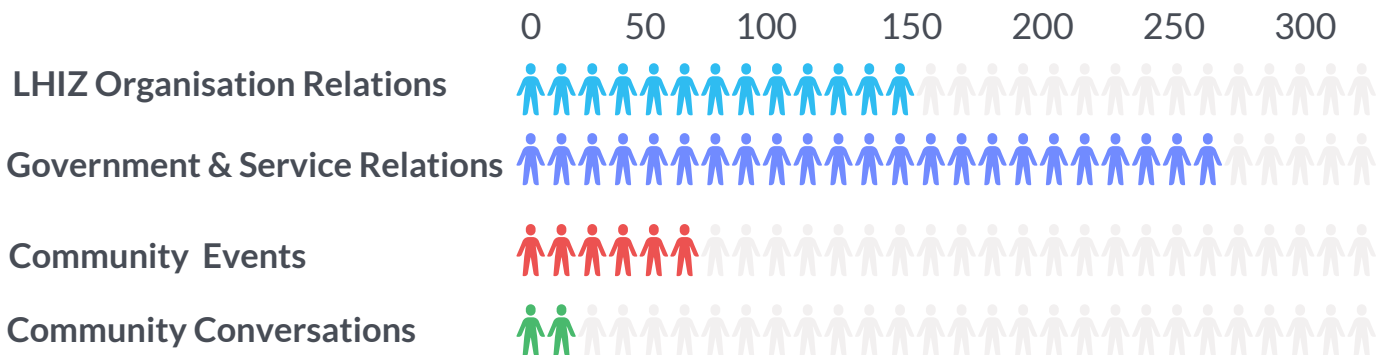
QUARTERLY BREAKDOWN



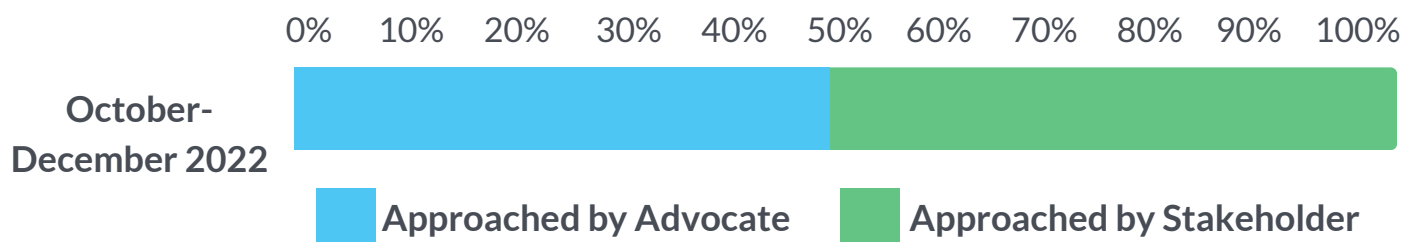
OFFICE ACTIVITIES



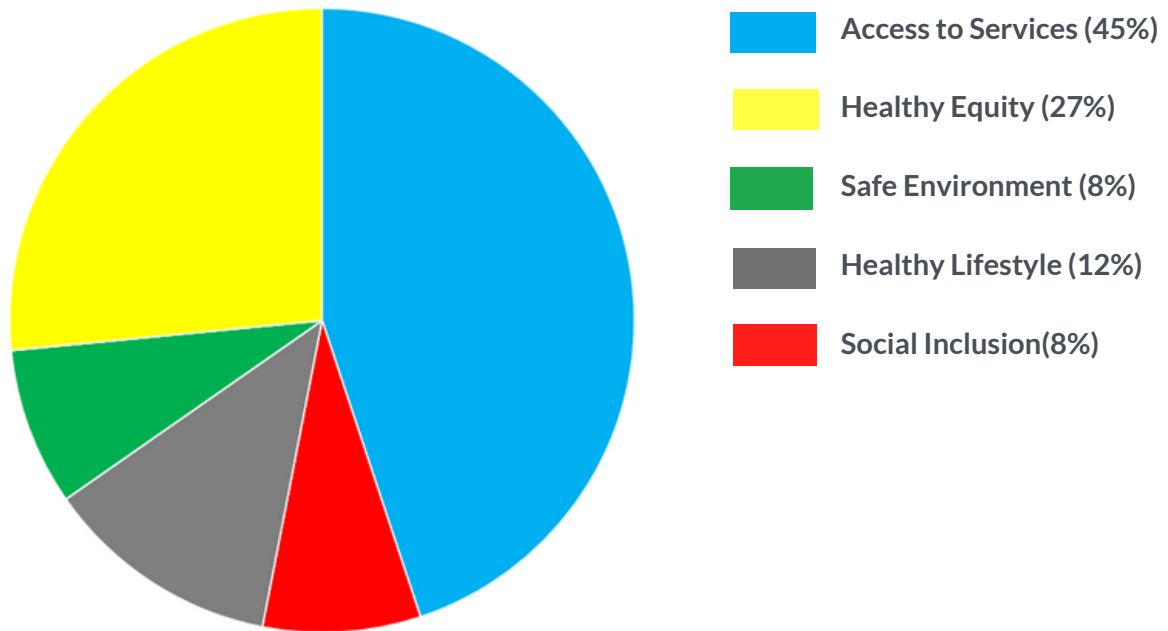
NUMBER OF PEOPLE



ENGAGEMENT REACH



COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS



1 Access to Services



45%

The Advocate has heard several examples where local community members are unable to access the healthcare they need, which may be due to a lack of specialists in the area or to limitations that people experience as a result of systemic inequities.

People have said that they need to be able to access GPs, dermatologists, photochemotherapy equipment, Lymphoedema nurses and physiotherapists, hand surgeons, paediatricians, geriatricians, dentists, psychologists, and neurologists. Some of the barriers communities experience include; health services and specialists not accepting new patients, long wait times, disruptions to care when specialists leave the region and inadequate planning to minimise the impact this might have on patients, high costs of care, high turnover of health professionals, limited communication and coordination between services and locations, long distances between home and healthcare and limited transport options and not being able to access health information in language.

2 Health Equity



27%

Community members are understanding of the current pressures experienced by health professionals and acknowledge that everyone is human.

Some of the potential solutions put forward by community members include; Increased bulk billing options for pensioners accessing specialists, mental health advocacy and advice, increased range of specialists including dentists accessible through the public health system, improved and ongoing communication to keep patients in the loop, increased rates of pay and incentives for health workers in regional Victoria, emotional supports for people with cancer and their families, online and easy to book psychologists, greater promotion of the region's assets and liveability to attract for doctors, planning for a greater depth of specialists working in the region to minimise disruption from turnover.

"You get an appointment and then the Doctor leaves and you have to transfer the information."

"When seeking a Doctor's appointment, you can be at breaking point and have to wait"

"I know we are public health, but we are still human."

"He is not seeing 'any new' patients."



3 Social Inclusion



8%

Members from local community groups have identified the links between community participation, community engagement, healthy lifestyle and mental wellbeing. They have shared their goals for more people in Latrobe to benefit from community groups and activities such as local swimming groups, neighbourhood houses, and friendship groups. People have also talked about the health and wellbeing benefits of pets.

Some of the barriers identified by local community members include feelings of exclusion or inadequacy, low self-image, groups or activities for specific groups, costs of veterinary care for pets, isolation for people with diverse cultural backgrounds, a "one size fits all" approach for multicultural communities, burn out of support workers.

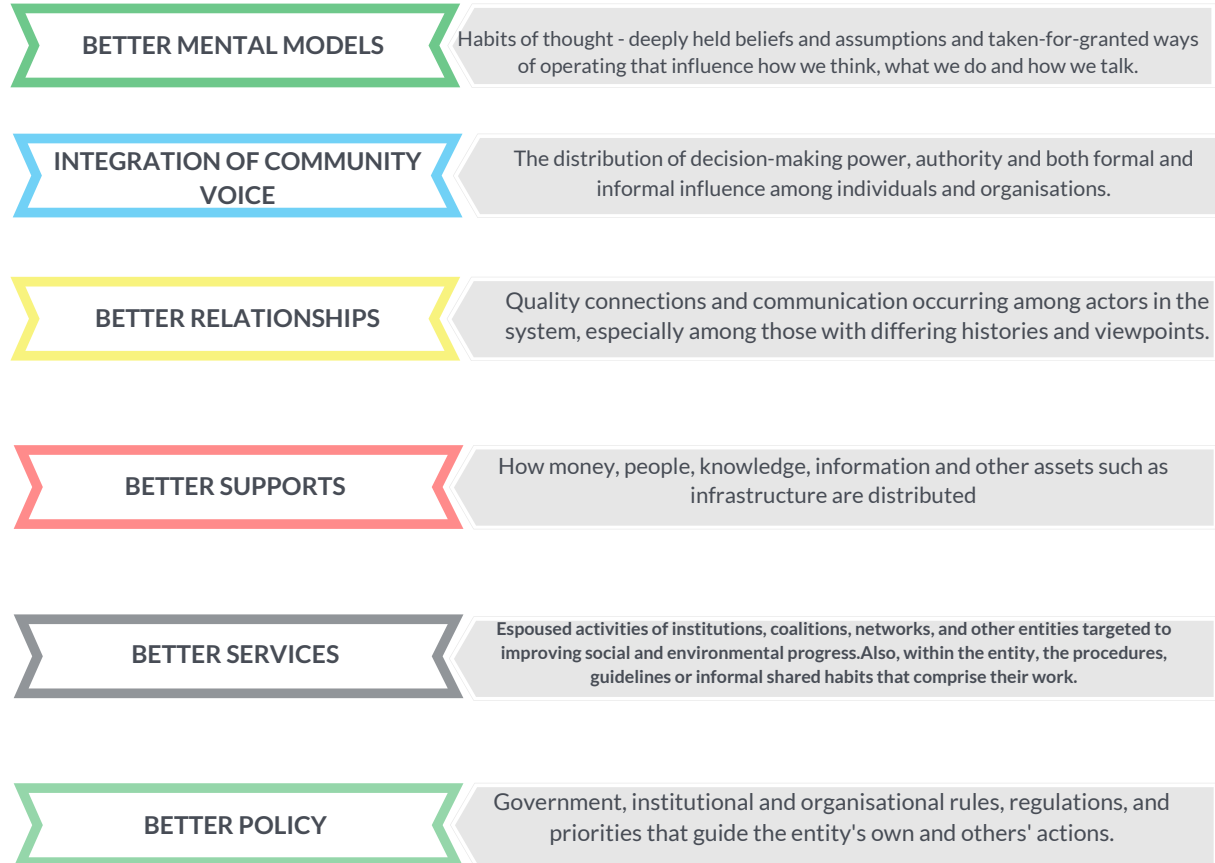
People have suggested promoting inclusive environments, creating a sense of fun and achievement, being involved in a club, having activities coupled with social time and a cuppa, good news stories to promote what's available and to break stereotypes and offering activities that are suitable across generations.

"I have to make a choice between paying for a taxi, paying the bills and feeding the dog."



SYSTEMS CHANGE

The Advocate sees better systems of health and wellbeing driven by six elements:



BETTER MENTAL MODELS

Gippsland Trades and Labour Council is delivering a Melting Pot project which aims to support participants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to gain skills, training and experience in the hospitality industry. The project is creating individual and community stories; uniting through food and culture; celebrating diversity, unity and harmony.

The Latrobe Valley Authority Gippsland Transition Plan Working Group is taking a collaborative approach to engagement for development of a transition plan

INTEGRATION OF COMMUNITY VOICES

Gippsland Primary Health Network, GPs and other services are emphasising the need to hear about community perspectives of and priorities in addition to being informed by trends in data and the views of health professionals.

Federation University is utilising community voice and knowledge to develop a model for virtual care physiotherapy for people living with chronic conditions. It is also customising the delivery of its physiotherapy degree so that local students can learn about rural health policy and action in a way that builds relationships with local stakeholders and achieves an understanding of local community experience.

BETTER RELATIONSHIP

Hazelwood Health Study hosted a wellbeing barometer workshop that enabled collaboration with Latrobe City Council, Latrobe Valley Authority, Latrobe Health assembly, Gippsland Primary Health Network and the Advocate.



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