



HEYWOOD
Rural Health

HEYWOOD RURAL HEALTH
SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY
STRATEGIC PLAN
2022-2026



Acknowledgement

Heywood Rural Health acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the traditional custodians of the lands and water of Australia. We pay our respects to Gunditjmara Elders, past and present and all Aboriginal people in the Heywood and neighbouring communities.

Message from the Board Chair

It is with great pleasure, on behalf of the Board of Directors, I present the Heywood Rural Health, 'Supporting the Community' Strategic Plan 2022-2026. The Strategy Plan is a demonstration to our valued community and partners, that we are committed to improving the health experience and outcomes of the broad community we serve.

The feedback, opinions and perspective of over 500 community members, staff and partner organisations across the South West of Victoria and the valued funding and regulatory bodies, have informed this Strategy.

Our aim is to ensure that Heywood Rural Health is accessible for everyone, and provides opportunity for connection, inclusion and participation in experiencing enhanced health and wellbeing, whilst partnering strategically and effectively with our community as a key member.

This Strategy Plan, having been developed in recognition of the opportunities and challenges of our community's future health and wellbeing needs, is now ready to be implemented. The goal is to ensure a thoughtful, sincere and committed responsiveness, as a health service in planning, developing and implementing programs and services that address the changing healthcare, older persons residential care and wellbeing and diversity needs within the community.

This Strategy Plan will guide Heywood Rural Health's approach in all of its services and ensures we meet the changing need of our community



throughout their lifetimes. I commend this Strategic Plan to you and most sincerely thank our community, staff, volunteers and partner organisations for their efforts and commitment towards developing this exciting Strategic Plan for our health service.

Through the planned actions, we have the opportunity to deliver better health outcomes to all, at more sustainable and affordable costs – ultimately investing in our community's greatest assets: Its people.

Our strategic plan has been developed in partnership with the community and our partners to better meet our community needs, improve health inequality and outcomes.

**Karyn Cook MBA, GAICD, MACMHN Board Chair
Heywood Rural Health on behalf of the Board of Directors**

Our context

Heywood Rural Health is a great health service, but it still has room for improvement, better universal access; reduced variability in health outcomes given social determinants; a shift of focus from treatment to prevention; care at home wherever possible and continuously enhanced quality of care.

Heywood Rural Health faces similar pressures to other rural health services across Victoria, including rising costs in the delivery of care driven by the increased incidence of chronic disease, an ageing population, inequitable access to services and gaps in workforce and infrastructure. In addition, community expectations demand more personalised, seamless and integrated care experiences. Heywood Rural Health has strong partnerships, which we aim to strengthen and build upon over the coming four years and beyond, and we will actively work to find ways to informally and formally collaborate to better serve all the people in our community.

Like many industries, healthcare is in the midst of significant transformation including rapid technological innovation, increasing and changing demand for services and the impact these changes are having on, the existing healthcare workforce is significant. Our ability to adapt over the coming four year period will be critical in ensuring safe, effective high quality services now and into the future.



Gaps in health outcomes

There are poor health outcomes for some groups within our community including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The data shows that lower socio-economic groups have high instances of obesity and other chronic illnesses. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have an approximate life expectancy of 10 years less than average. Heywood Rural Health has an important role to play in ensuring access to culturally appropriate healthcare.

Focus on the symptom, not the cause

Whilst the community is increasingly focused on wellness and prevention, our services are still geared towards treating illness. Research shows that investment in early intervention yields better health and cost-effective outcomes than focusing solely on treatment¹. The challenge remains on how to increase our focus on early intervention for the future, whilst still meeting current treatment and care needs.

The population is ageing

Transitions in ageing are not consistent and systematic, sometimes they are incremental, sometimes accidental, and sometimes-monumental -they are always personal. The challenges the current healthcare and aged care systems have in meeting the individual needs of an ever-increasing ageing population are vast and varied. There is no easy solution, and there is much to do to continually improve services and experiences for the community members who need access to aged care services.

Supporting positive ageing and easier access to aged care services when they are needed and in the community setting where at all possible, is of critical importance to ensure quality and safe care is provided for all who require it. The range of service to be delivered by Heywood Rural Health may include at home, in the community and for some in a residential setting for high care needs or for end of life or palliative care.

1 Return on investment of public health interventions: a systematic review sourced from: <https://jech.bmj.com/content/71/8/827>





Finding the workforce

Workforce demand in the health and aged care sectors is expected to increase, it is forecasted that healthcare will experience major workforce shortages over the coming years due to an ageing healthcare workforce and current retention challenges, especially in regional and rural areas. Heywood Rural Health will need to manage the transition of the current and future workforce to new and different ways of working.

Embedding technology in healthcare

Innovations in technology and reshaping how healthcare is accessed and provided, is creating a new landscape for Heywood Rural Health to navigate. This evolution will profoundly and permanently reshape how healthcare is accessed and provided, seeing a rapid escalation in the deployment, adoption and investment in technology

The COVID-19 pandemic has also propelled virtual health provision forward as healthcare providers seek to leverage technology to combat demand and provide services closer to home. Heywood Rural Health plans to capitalise on the advancements made in telehealth provision.

Investing in quality through evidence and innovation

There is room for Heywood Rural Health to increase investment in new healthcare innovations to drive consistently improving service delivery and quality outcomes.

For example, Heywood Rural Health will strive to be a leader in Positive Ageing through all life ages and stages, which will not only deliver benefits in improved client and resident experiences, but may attract new and emerging funding streams.

Shifting approaches to improve health outcomes and sustainability

Delivering client, patient and resident centric integrated care models, combined with an increased focus on empowerment, wellness and collaboration, is paramount for our long-term sustainability as a rural health service, ensuring better outcomes for the Heywood community.

We believe that our challenges can be reframed into opportunities for the future. We have identified four focus areas to reform Heywood Rural Health:

The strategic focus areas are:

- Improved health outcomes for the community
- Engaged, skilled and valued workforce
- Integrated services and value
- Effectiveness and efficiency.

Expanding on these, we have identified key practical actions and opportunities we will take over the next four-year period to accelerate our journey towards redefining the future of Heywood Rural Health. We know that we will not be able to achieve this Strategy working alone, Heywood Rural Health is willing and open to participating in Health Service Partnership initiatives and collaboration across the sector in the interests of improving the health and wellbeing of our community and the health system.



Our community

The Heywood population is approximately 4,000 people.

The age group with the largest number of people within the Heywood catchment was 40-64 year olds, with approximately 1,610. The next largest was the over 65 year olds with approximately 990. However, those aged 0-19 made up the third largest cohort with approximately 940 individuals.

2.5 per cent of the population identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander compared to 0.9 per cent across Victoria.

Population health

Most of the total burden of disease in Australia is from chronic disease and injury. Five main disease categories account for 65 per cent of this burden: cancer, cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, mental illness and substance use and injury. A comparison of the Heywood catchment area to the Barwon Southwest and Victorian rates shows:

Disease	Glenelg (S)	Barwon SW	Victoria
Asthma	12.2%	12.4%	10.9%
Type two diabetes	6%	4.3%	5%
Heart disease	7.2%	7.4%	6.9%
Babies born with low birth weight	8.6%	6.3%	6.6%
Children fully immunized	94%	92.4%	90.5%
Children with emotional and behavioral problems	9%	5.7%	4.6%
Children who are developmentally vulnerable	25.1%	18.1%	12.6%
High/ very high psychological distress	10.5%	13.9%	12.6%
Registered mental health client	25/1,000	6/1,000	5/1,000
Clients receiving drug and alcohol treatment	10/1,000	6/1,000	17/1,000
Rates of dementia	20/1,000	20/1,000	17/1,000
Poor dental health	3.3%	6%	5.6%
Cancer incidence	7/1,000	6/1,000	5/1,000
Breast & cervical cancer screening	55.7%	56.5%	52%
Bowel cancer screening	40%	40%	37.6%

*Data sourced from the Department of Health and Human Services (now Department of Health) Barwon Locality Planning

Our role

Ageing Well

HRH will ensure that it understands the full service needs of our community as they age. This means that we will begin to identify gaps in primary and community care and explore options for meeting that need, through direct service delivery or partnerships.

We will actively assist individuals as they age to maximise their independence so that they can continue to participate and remain engaged in their local community as they wish.

We will also make it easier for all individuals to access information on ageing well in the community, have their needs assessed and be supported to locate and access the most appropriate services that best meet their needs.

Keeping People Well

HRH will ensure that it develops preventative models of care between acute and community services for people who are at risk or frequently access the hospital system.

We will focus on:

- Preventing deterioration of health and maintaining good health
- Alternative models to hospital
- Post hospital management, with additional community based services once individuals go home from hospital
- Health service support, appropriately minimise the reliance on future healthcare support

Connecting to Care

As a small rural health service, we have a key role to play in ensuring community members have appropriate access to the health services that can't be directly provided by HRH.

We will lead the way in setting up client pathways and journeys that enable community members to have a good experience when accessing services outside of HRH.

We will also actively partner with larger services who are able to deliver services to the local community utilising e-health, telehealth and digital health models, including other modes of technology to enable care.



Our strategy

Supporting the Community 2022-2026

Our vision

Heywood Rural Health is committed to the health and wellbeing of our community

Our purpose

To achieve better health outcomes, improved client experiences, greater equity and sustainability across the lifespan.

Our principles of care

Our commitment to a healthy Heywood means we will deliver a high quality and safe experience for every person, every time.

Our values

Respect

We make mutual respect the basis of all interactions
We respect diversity and respect the dignity of each person
We embrace the difference in all people and perspectives

Responsiveness

We take actions and opportunities to create results
We provide services that are person-centred and focused on outcomes
We keep our commitments and promises

Care

We care about the people and the community in which we work and live
We care about our colleagues and ourselves
We support people to develop and build their strengths

Integrity

We uphold our professional ethics at all times
We are honest and fulfil our commitments
We are accountable for our actions

Our goals

To enhance the health and wellbeing of the Heywood community through improved standards in primary, community and aged care services

To improve health service delivery and health outcomes by developing, providing and promoting services that best meet community needs

To support the delivery of high quality, safe and effective healthcare by promoting evidence informed practice and identify opportunities for funding models that support primary, community and aged care services

To promote and support accessible healthcare for the benefit of the Heywood and surrounding communities

To focus on innovation that enhances integration of care, including development of new models of care and funding models that support health reform and respond to emerging issues



Our focus

We have identified four strategic priorities that will be imperative as we deliver on our purpose and progress our mission over the coming four-year period. These strategies bring with them a set of commitments, actions and indicators that will guide our focus.

Our strategic priorities



1 Improved health outcomes for the community

Improved health and wellbeing outcomes through prioritised investment, with clients and residents at the centre of decision making



Our strategic actions



1.1 Develop and implement future service delivery options for Urgent Care and Primary & Community Care services, including after hour service provision, general practice and community health services

1.2 Develop and implement future service delivery options across the lifespan (including chronic disease, community health in-reach and outreach, community based aged care and residential aged care and palliative care services)

1.3 Develop and implement future service delivery options to support mental health and wellbeing across the lifespan

In reviewing service delivery options HRH will ensure our clinical governance objectives are aligned to healthcare reforms including but not limited to aged care, mental health and family violence. Service delivery options will consider community needs, client journey and experience, service configuration, models of care, funding streams, resources, workforce, capital/ infrastructure requirements and partnerships

Key indicators of progress and success



Community needs assessment is understood and used to inform service planning and delivery

Investment of resources is aligned to priority community needs

Improved health outcomes are evident in the services we provide

Clients, patients, residents and carers are partners in service planning, implementation and evaluation

Client, patient and resident experiences are collected, measured, assessed and enhanced

Actions are prioritised, responsive and inclusive in meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people/s and population groups experiencing health and access to healthcare inequalities

Our focus

Our strategic priorities



2 Engaged, skilled and valued workforce

Responsive and committed workforce delivering quality care



Our strategic actions



2.1 Develop and implement a workforce strategy incorporating:

- Human resource forecasting
- Recruitment, retention and return practices
- Carer pathways
- Staff and volunteer health and wellbeing practices
- Professional development and training

The strategy will be developed in collaboration with the education sector (High Schools, TAFE and Universities) in order to create career pathways, commence and increase student placements and create new workforce models and streams.

Key indicators of progress and success



Data is used to drive healthcare safety and continuous quality improvement

The workforce is supported to access and use tools, systems, models and training to deliver evidence-informed, safe, high quality effective care

The workforce is demonstrably valued and is satisfied with support provided by Heywood Rural Health

Our focus



Our strategic priorities

3 Integrated services and value

Working in effective and cohesive partnership with other parts of the service system



Our strategic actions

3.1 Develop and implement an engagement framework for community, staff and key stakeholders



Key indicators of progress and success

Heywood Rural Health collaborates within its immediate geographic area and with other parts of the health service system and in particular Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations and services, Ambulance Victoria and larger health services and funding bodies

Improved coordination of care for people with complex and diverse needs

Advocating for the services and responses to meet the healthcare needs of the Health Service Partnerships community.



Our focus

Our strategic priorities



4 Effectiveness and efficiency

Enduring, value for money outcomes



Our strategic actions



4.1 Develop and implement access to telehealth services, including:

- A self service model,
- A serviced model (administrative support), and
- A supported model (clinical support/ shared care)

4.2 Enhance organisational sustainability including:

- Achieving financial sustainability through capitalising on adapting to new funding models
- Ensuring assets and infrastructure are aligned to service provision
- Delivering on environmental sustainability measures through reducing HRH's carbon footprint and reducing single use plastics

4.3 Implement the ICT activity in alignment with SWARH priorities

Through these actions, we have the opportunity to deliver better health outcomes to all, at more sustainable and affordable costs – ultimately investing in our community's greatest assets, its people. Our strategic plan has been developed to better meet our community needs, improve health inequality, access and outcomes.

Key indicators of progress and success



Performance is driven by efficiency and outcome measures

Integrated health pathways are embedded and actively used to improve client experience, service efficiency and effectiveness

Program and service evaluation demonstrates value, evidences outcomes and drives continuous improvement

Effective use of Heywood Rural Health's funding



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Heywood Rural Health comprises of residential aged care, primary and community health,
including a GP clinic, incorporated under the Health Services Act 1988
and operates under the provisions of the Act.

