



# Healthy News

Making it better – Together

Newsletter Christmas Edition 2016

## A Message from HCI General Manager

Justin Placek General Manager

It's been another year of change and adventure for Healthy Cities Illawarra. We've handed over a number of successful projects to community organisations, continue to deliver our longer term programmes, and also developed new initiatives promoting health equality across the region. Our impacts are currently extending over a broad range of needs, including:

- Food security and sustainability
- Physical activity and nutrition
- Environmental Health
- Sexual Health
- Building resilience and strengthening communities

For more detail on the work we've recently been involved in, please follow the link to our [2015/16 Annual Report](#) or visit our website at [www.healthyillawarra.org.au](http://www.healthyillawarra.org.au)

On a global level, the 7th Global Conference of the Alliance for Healthy Cities was held in Wonju,

Republic of Korea. The theme of the conference was "Our Health, Our Cities, Our Future" with a focus on the advantages, limitations and applications of planning for the long term and to strengthen Healthy and Resilient Cities. The Conference attracted over 600 delegates from over 15 countries, and launched the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) and the Regional Framework for Urban Health in the Western Pacific 2016 - 2020.

Personally, 2016 also marked a step change in my own career by taking on the role of General Manager at HCI, which is a brand new environment for me. And I'm glad to report it's so far, so good. This role and organisation is an exciting challenge where I hope to bring my own range of skills and match them with the talented team at HCI. It's also been humbling to meet so many people in our community who contribute to the wonderful area that we live, and I'm looking forward to continuing our work with these community partners

into the new year.

Finally, and most importantly, I'd like to recognise the loyal, talented and dedicated staff at Healthy Cities who continue to promote health and well-being within our communities. It's inspiring and energising to work with such a passionate team, and I'm proud of their achievements throughout the year. Our team have each left a short message inside this newsletter describing what 2016 has meant to them, and I encourage you to take a peek inside.

I'm now looking forward to recharging the batteries, spending time with family and friends, and sneaking in a couple of rounds of golf! Wishing you all a happy and safe holiday season.....



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We'd like to thank Maree Kerr for her drive and determination during her time as the previous General Manager, and also a huge show of gratitude to our outgoing Presidents David Fildes and Lindsey Harrison, who have both remained committed to our mission over the last six years. We are now fortunate to welcome Sandra McCarthy and Marianne Saliba as new Presidents, who both bring a wealth of experience, passion, and social connection to our organisation.

## Introducing our new HCI & HPI Presidents

**Sandra McCarthy, President Healthy Cities Illawarra**

**S**andra was a councillor for Kiama Municipal Council for 17 years, with 12 years as Mayor. With skills in Policy, Community Engagement, Governance and Community Development, Sandra brings a holistic approach to the values and philosophy of Healthy Cities Illawarra.

She is the current Chair for the Australian Chapter of the International Alliance for Healthy Cities and in 2012 received the award "Recognised Leading Pioneer Expert" by the Alliance. Sandra is also a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

At the recent global conference held in Wonju, Sandra's significant contribution to the Healthy Cities movement was recognised by being awarded the first individual membership of the Alliance. This is a tremendous honour and highlights Sandra's status with the international community.

At the same conference, our region was also fortunate for Sandra to deliver a lecture on the Age-Friendly Illawarra Alliance, which is focussing on a regional approach to healthy ageing.



**Marianne Saliba, President Healthy People Illawarra**

Marianne was raised in the Illawarra and has raised her four children in the Illawarra. She is the current Mayor of Shellharbour City and has held that role since 2012. Prior to that she was the Deputy Mayor for a year. Marianne also chairs a number of council and community committees. She represented the Illawarra in the NSW Parliament from 1999 to 2007 and has a strong focus on governance and policy. Marianne has always had a keen interest in her local community and is driven by equality and fair treatment for all people.

Marianne has taken on the role as President of Healthy People Illawarra as she believes that is the most important role of councils - to have healthy communities. Healthy people in communities interact and support each other and ensure accessibility for all. Through Healthy People Illawarra local councils can ensure they are meeting the needs of their communities. Healthy People Illawarra should be the guiding light for local council to enable them to meet world's best practice when it comes to healthy communities.



*Healthy Cities Illawarra wishes you a Merry Christmas and a safe and healthy New Year*

*Our office will be closed from COB 23rd December 2016 and will re-open 9am Tuesday 3rd January 2017*

*The Coniston Men's Shed will be closed from 16 December 2016 and will re-open Tuesday 17th February 2017*

## Environmental Health

The main lesson I have learnt in regards to the programs that I run is that one size definitely does not fit all! In my experience, getting people to Quit smoking is a little like making a good golf shot – I'll make 50 average to bad shots but when that good one finally does happen it feels oh-so-good!! When we speak to young people about quitting smoking, we do our very best to encourage them to quit, or at the very least cut down, but often we walk away having made only a small impact. Last term, however, I worked with a group of young people from Bellambi and they completely changed the way I look at what I do.

Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre is carrying out a number of initiatives which are helping young people from the local community to become engaged and involved. I was lucky enough to spend time with one particular group over a number of weeks and during this time I really got to know the individuals in this group and saw what a great group of young people they are. By taking the time to build trust and form relationships with the members of this group, I found that they became open and receptive to what I had to say, both about smoking and about their health and wellbeing in general. As a result, very successful outcomes were achieved and the results were very rewarding. I was always excited to go back and visit the group because many of them couldn't wait to tell me of their progress and all of them were willing and happy to spark up a conversation. I think that this group of kids taught me way more than I taught them and as a result, I will certainly be adjusting the way I interact with groups in the future.

I wish everyone a Happy Christmas – enjoy this wonderful place that we live in and all the lovely people who live around us.

Tina Hunt, Health Promotion Officer



## Healthy Men Program - Coniston Men's shed

The most significant change for the Building Healthy Men Project – The Coniston Men's Shed was there was no significant change! With our DSS funding coming to an end in 2015 it looked like we were going to face the worst and least welcome significant change – closing the program. Through the grit and determination of the Healthy Cities board and management we have not only remained open but we are looking towards a bigger, broader and better future. Keeping the program going has brought with it a renewed valuing of the program and consistency of men coming to the shed. Referrals continue and newcomers are very happy. The shed seems to be working well and morale is good, particularly a renewed new sense of mission in keeping the shed open.

As we approach Christmas I have but two words - Bah, humbug!! Christmas, so much effort for so little outcome. And it's all over in a couple of days. None the less, I wouldn't be without it. If only for a few weeks we enter a 'silly season' of friendliness, generosity, kindness to strangers, and an abundant love of family then it is all worth it. Merry Christmas!

Brian Pember, Health Promotion Officer

2016 has been a busy one with a change in General Manager and several new members of staff. In my role as Admin Manager It makes it easier when working with this friendly bunch of people. With the camaraderie and easy going nature, together with the teamwork things get done in a timely manner. I am sure that we may face some difficult challenges in the future but look forward to Healthy Cities prospering and achieving great things.

Merry Christmas to everyone – hopefully you will get to spend some special time with your families over the festive season, and all the best for 2017!

Peter Ball, Admin Manager



## Food Fairness & Cook Chill Chat

Looking back at my first year with HCI, the opportunity and progress in building more sustainable communities is what stands out for me most, both in my role with the Cook Chill Chat program and as Secretariat of community based network Food Fairness Illawarra. The overall aim of each program is to bring people together to build stronger and more resilient communities. These programs utilise connection tools such as sharing a meal, monthly newsletters and annual celebrations to achieve these outcomes and it has been an absolute privilege to witness both communities grow and flourish in their own way.

I look forward to continue this journey after the holiday season, but for now – Have a great Christmas time!

**Berbel Franse - Health Promotion Officer**

This year in our Cook Chill Chat program, the most significant changes we experienced were the increased sense of community and belonging amongst all our participants within their groups. This was achieved through the high levels of social interaction and enjoyment as groups came together to cook and share a meal, which is what our program revolves around. As it's that time of year again where Christmas is fast approaching we'd love to reflect on these learnings and encourage everyone to gather as a community - whether that be with friends, family, or total strangers - around a meal and experience the true spirit of Christmas through the enjoyment of each other's company. Merry Christmas everyone.

**Sophie Wright Pedersen - Health Promotion Officer**



## Community Building

A Change of Heart and Practice

This year has been significantly different from my previous 6 years at Healthy Cities Illawarra. My role has evolved from working in communities to achieve urban environments conducive to good health, to the 2528 Project that, whilst maintaining the themes of Child Friendly, concentrated on building capacity and opportunities for vulnerable families to engage in positive activity. Leaving a project, with so many people that had become very dear to my heart was massive, but I was very lucky to have the support of the wonderful Communities for Children team who agreed funding to support my new project idea that would continue to work with families that I had built relationships with to support children's engagement in school and positive learning.

The pilot of TALK was initiated at the beginning of the year and aimed to build trust through activity, learning and connection (all the ingredients we knew worked from my 5 years in the Crew Park). The pilot consulted with schools to agree to a way to positively engage the communities most vulnerable and traumatised children in a program that would start them back on a road to success. Ingraining new research and trauma-informed practice into the delivery of the program worked. The pilot was a success and an additional years funding was granted. We are half way through the year and the future for this program looks exciting!

In January 2017, we will start the action research element of the program in partnership with our funders - Communities for Children and The Australian Childhood Foundation.

The aim is to use the current TALK program activities and cement in theory and practice to underpin an evidence based program that will bring Hope to even the most disadvantaged children in our communities.

This Christmas I'd like to wish the children, families and community members in the 2528 area of Shellharbour a very Happy Christmas and a New Year that brings Hope to us all.

**Nikke Gladwin - Health Promotion Officer**



# 3 ways you can make a difference?



**1 Become a member of Healthy Cities Illawarra.** We have 2 types of membership one for the individual and the other for an organisation.

Membership fees vary from \$11 (gst incl) for a pensioner/ senior and \$22 (gst incl) for an individual. Organisations have a separate pricing scale depending on the type of organisation and staff numbers. Membership costs start from \$44 (gst incl). For more information see enclosed member form.

**2 Make a financial donation.** Healthy Cities Illawarra (HCI) is a charitable organisation that promotes community health and wellbeing. Current activities include: Environmental Health, Community Building, Healthy Urban Design, Healthy Ageing, Child Safety. HCI currently does NOT have DGR (Donor Gift Recipient) Status, but is pursuing it.

Healthy People Illawarra (HPI) is a charitable organisation that deals with the prevention of specific diseases. Current priorities include: Community Nutrition, Physical Activity, Sexual Health and HIV/ AIDS Prevention, Tobacco

Control and Mental Health and Wellbeing. HPI does have DGR Status.

To make a donation goto <http://www.givenow.com.au/healthypeopleillawarra>

**3 Provide in-kind support/ donation.** Individuals and organisations can provide in-kind support in many forms, for example: building materials for a men's shed project, waivering of venue hire fees for workshops, provide food for our Stir it up! volunteers to run a healthy eating activity in the community.

For more information please call us on 02 4283 8111 or email [admin@healthyillawarra.org.au](mailto:admin@healthyillawarra.org.au)

HCI is a community-based, non-profit organisation that is a part of a worldwide movement initiated by the World Health Organisation. We are committed to continued improvement of the health, environment and quality of life of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven community.

Your support helps us create a network of people and organisations who share these common goals.

## For weekly updates **JOIN US** on **SOCIAL E-MEDIA**



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<https://www.instagram.com/angelahall4858/>



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