# Active & Healthy Ageing Adviser initiative – Evaluation Summary

# Context – evolving Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) approach to healthy ageing

2012

Existing discrete grant programs (Well for Life, Count us In, Make a Move) combined into healthy
ageing grants. Organisations receiving grants required to take a broader healthy ageing approach,
moving away from one-off projects to more strategic actions focusing on workforce development,
organisational change and partnerships.

2015

Grant funding redirected into development of new Active & Healthy Ageing Adviser (AHAA) positions to
embed and promote healthy ageing approaches in a more sustainable manner. The AHAA approach is
based on evidence for key issues affecting healthy ageing and strategies to promote healthy ageing and
embedded within prevention and population health frameworks.

2016

• Commissioning of Healthy Ageing Literature Review which identifies evidence for healthy ageing strategies and determines that multifactorial programs that used a combination of strategies to target healthy ageing more effective than singular approaches

2016

AHAAs commence across DHHS Operational Divisions

2017

 HealthConsult engaged by DHHS to evaluate the collective AHAA initiative, in its developmental stage, to support learning and enable continuous improvement and adaptation in a dynamic environment.

# Evaluation – completed November 2017

### **Purpose**

#### To examine:

- how the initiative is developing
- what is working well
- what changes are starting to be seen in priority areas
- factors limiting progress
- how the initiative has/should be adapted in changing contexts

#### To develop:

- program logic for the overall initiative and for each DHHS Division
- an evaluation framework for a future summative evaluation
- process and impact measures for the initiative

#### **Method**

- documentation review
- semi-structured interviews 10 AHAAs, 19 stakeholders
- online stakeholder survey 84 responses



#### **Findings**

**Early progress:** (This progress is commended in the context of significant government reform and restructure and within the first year of a developing initiative)

- AHAAs have extensively scoped local context and needs, gathered evidence and connected with relevant stakeholders;
- Just under a quarter (24%) of stakeholders surveyed reported that AHAA engagement had led to inclusion of active and healthy ageing in their Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan;
- Nearly 50% of stakeholders reported a medium impact level of the initiative on the promotion of active and healthy ageing strategies within their organisation;
- Of the stakeholders who were aware of prior approaches to implementing local active and healthy
  ageing strategies, over a fifth (21%) believe the AHAA initiative is more effective than prior DHHS
  funded programs, grants or projects.

#### Key factors that have assisted progress:

- support infrastructure of the initiative (e.g. monthly AHAA meetings and State-wide coordinator);
- AHAAs that have local knowledge, skills/experience working with stakeholders at a local level;
- having a new dedicated resource creating linkages between key stakeholder organisations that are, or could be focused on active and healthy ageing;
- flexibility of the role to respond to local need;
- the strategic approach of the AHAA initiative.

#### Key factors that have limited progress:

- large number and broad scope of focus areas in initial AHAA work plan;
- lack of clarity about the role from both an AHAA and AHAA stakeholder perspective;
- insufficient AHAA EFT (including staff turnover) to support the AHAA work;
- DHHS and/or local government restructures, aged care and disability reforms impact on AHAA priorities and focus of stakeholders to engage with the initiative;
- lack of funding to assist in implementing active and healthy ageing programs and/or activities;
- lack of tangible outcomes to date (to be expected at this early stage of the initiative).

#### **Opportunities identified:**

- refine focus by reducing number of priority areas in work plans;
- improve clarity about intent and scope of the AHAA role:
- develop individual AHAA work plans that clearly articulate objectives and corresponding actions, process and impact measures and link to an annual state-wide work plan;
- develop stakeholder engagement strategies to support implementation of work plans;
- standardise data collection by the initiative:
- develop an AHAA Communications Strategy and promotional material to support implementation of the collective AHAA initiative through building stakeholder awareness and understanding.

## Improvement to AHAA initiative underway

- Increased clarity of role development of a new AHAA role description; selection of two core priorities for AHAA work plans based on data, evidence, stakeholder priority and opportunity.
- Improved communication to stakeholders development of a new AHAA presentation, development of State-wide and Divisional program logic.
- Enhanced reporting mechanisms development of new data collection tools to identify AHAA activity, achievements and impact linked to work plans.
- Continued evaluation ongoing monitoring and review is planned to identify the impact of the AHAA initiative.