

## **Living Well, Ageing Well Expo in Shepparton 2007:**

The Expo was an initiative born from the Healthy Ageing Working Group. The Group meets monthly and is a network of service providers who work with people over 65 in the Goulburn Valley. The purpose of the Expo was to increase community members' knowledge about services, how to access them and to give people an opportunity to meet staff from the various services. The Expo was organised by a committee with representatives from City of Greater Shepparton, Villa Maria's, Goulburn Valley Division of General Practice, St Augustine's Anglican Church, U3A, Department of Veterans Affairs and Vision Australia. The Expo was sponsored by Jean Hailes Foundation for Women with DVA funding.

### **Expo planning:**

Extensive time was spent planning the Expo and this involved committee members attending similar Expos to learn from them what worked and what didn't work.

Things learnt from other Expos':

- Take RSVPs to gauge the number of people expected for catering purposes,
- Use local community catering such as church.
- Location of venue,
- Venue set up, don't have speakers, display holders and activities in the same room.
- Have door prizes.
- Make people feel welcome, provide a welcoming environment with indoor plants.
- The most important aspect is to get the marketing and promotion right

### **Expo Promotion:**

The most important element in planning the Expo was the promotion of the Expo. The committee invited representative from various senior clubs to be part of the committee. Representatives from U3A and St Augustine's Church joined the committee. Flyers and posters were developed in printed in colour on A3 size paper to promote the event. These flyers were placed in Shop windows, butchers, milk bars, doctors clinics, and notice boards. Letters were sent to community groups such as Senior Citizens and Probes inviting the members to attend the Expo. Representatives of the committee attended various community meetings to promote the Expo. Newspaper advertisements and editorial stories promoted the Expo widely. On the day of the Expo a big banner was placed on the front gate to promote the event and enabled the venue to be easily identified. Committee members were also interviewed on local radio station and community bulletins provide frequent free promote of the Expo. Word of mouth is a powerful way of getting information out there. Invite everyone to have a display as agencies don't like to be excluded.

### **Displays:**

A variety of agencies were invited to do a display, including financial agencies, Centrelink, local health services, optometrists, community exercise classes, gyms who provide older adult classes, HACC programs, natural therapies and pharmacists providing advice, the pharmacists were not there to represent and promote one pharmacy but were

there collaboratively to provide individuals with advice. Display holders were asked to promote the Expo to these consumers. Display holders were not charged a display fee, instead were asked to donate a lucky door prize.

**Expo structure:**

The Expo began at 4pm with displays and demonstrations, light refreshments were served at 5:30 and from 6:00pm to 8:00pm there were speakers from the Jean Hailes Foundation for Women and local health service. Volunteers from community groups met and greeted people at the door, individuals were given show bags and a lucky door prize raffle ticket. Tea and coffee was provided all afternoon and supper was served at 5:30pm. People were able to come and go as they pleased and door prizes were drawn every half hour.

**Lesson learnt:**

Separate rooms are required for display holders and speakers as people are still wondering around talking to display holders while the presentations creating noise. The challenge is finding a venue that is comfortable with two separate rooms and a self catering kitchen that has good heating is difficult. Seek local sponsorship and ownership of the Expo rather than an outside agency sponsoring the event. Ensure sound system works effectively. Have the event in warmer months. The Expo was targeted and tailored for people who are ageing, who have a family member who is ageing and/or people who care for someone who is ageing. So the time needed to suit all targeted audience the time 4 to 8:30 was selected to cater for people retired and people working. Next year it has been discussed that the Expo will run from 2 to 6:30 to better meet the needs of the target population.

**Expo Budget:**

printing	\$326.00
radio 1 fm	\$350.00
ABC	FREE
postage	\$200.00
table and displays board hire	\$360.00
Catering	\$1,190.00
venue	\$200.00
Speaker gifts	\$90.00
Volunteer Gifts	\$50.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$2,766.00</b>

Over 6 months planning went into this four and half hour Expo but the outcome was worth it. As a result of the Expo strong partnerships have formed between health agencies and local community groups. The committee members continue to keep in contact and are all on board to make the Expo an annual event. Other agencies are keen to be involved in the planning and display holders have already booked a place for next year.

## Living Well, Ageing Well Expo:

