



Southern Mallee

Maternal & Child Health

Service Innovation Project

Communiqué 3 – January 2017

Commencing in May 2016 with funding from the Department of Education and Training under the Maternal and Child Health Service Innovation Fund (MCHSIF) **the Southern Mallee Early Years Together Project** - includes the Gannawarra Shire, the Swan Hill LGA (excluding Robinvale) and the northern portion of the Buloke Shire.

The **Project builds on the recognised need** for simple communication protocols and tools to better enable all services to support families with complex needs through pregnancy and with children up to 8 years in a more continuous, coordinated manner.

The **Project** is **informed and driven by a Project Steering Group (PSG) of key local stakeholders** from across the region, including:

- Swan Hill, Gannawarra and Buloke Local Governments
- Department of Health & Human Services
- Department of Education & Training
- Mallee District Aboriginal Service
- Mallee Accommodation and Support Program
- Mallee Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Unit
- Swan Hill District Health, Kerang Hospital, Cohuna Hospital
- Bendigo Health
- Murray Primary Health Network
- Noah's Ark
- Mallee Family Care; and
- Anglicare.

Together the Steering Group has built **a local model for keeping all 'eyes on the child'**. The model is not asking you to DO MORE but to DO DIFFERENTLY. The model:

- does not change your current client data and referral software or case management tools
- applies the **Team Around the Child framework** to bring all the services supporting a family and / or child together, with that child and family, to identify needs, plan for these needs and implement the agreed plan of supports
- uses the **Patchwork tool**, an online 'address book', which helps you find and connect with other services who are also working with your client
- uses the **Continuum of Needs** framework as a 'common language' around risk and needs assessment
- supports agencies not already using email encryption to implement **secure electronic information transfer** within and between the 'Team' agencies

To support you as agencies and practitioners in implementing this model the **Project** has:

- developed a MoU, policies and protocols to support partnerships
- developed a Practitioner's Manual containing all the information resources, forms and tools needed to deliver the model - the Manual includes tools for rapid family engagement, Team Care Plans, TAC meeting agenda templates and more
- planned two days of **training - 8-9th February 2017** - to support participating agency's implementation of the model
- developed resources for use in the orientation / induction of new agency personnel to ensure **Project** knowledge is easily passed on and working relationships are not dependent on individuals
- is commencing a **trial phase** in mid February with 6 key agencies to 'road test' the model and resources ready for full implementation from June 2017
- is building a governance structure to ensure the **Project** moves through the trial phase into long term implementation and sustainability

For further information on the **Project** or to register for the February 8-9th training contact:

Project officers: Lisa McCoy lisa@locallogicplace.com.au or Rachael Williams rachael@locallogicplace.com.au
Or Local leads in Swan Hill: Jan McEwan jmcewan@swanhill.vic.gov.au Gannawarra: Mandy Hutchinson mandy.hutchinson@gannawarra.vic.gov.au Buloke: Jess Holmes JHolmes@buloke.vic.gov.au

Maternal and Child Health Service Innovation Fund

In May 2015, the Minister for Families and Children, Jenny Mikakos MP, announced \$950,000 for a MCH Service Innovation Fund (MCHSIF) to support Victoria's MCH Services to continue to meet the evolving needs of children and families.

Swan Hill Rural City Council in partnership with Gannawarra Shire and Buloke Shire Councils were one of only five applications successfully funded under the *Collaborative Practice Stream* of the MCHSIF.

The state-level objectives of the MCHSIF are to:

- ✓ foster the development and adoption of practices to enhance outcomes for vulnerable children and families
- ✓ foster the development and adoption of practices to enhance efficient and effective MCH service delivery
- ✓ enable sustainable change in response to local needs
- ✓ provide information to foster system wide change and learning regarding practices to enhance MCH service delivery.

Specifically the Collaborative Practice grants support partnerships that scope, develop, trial, pilot and/or implement collaborative practices to improve service delivery to children and their families.