

District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula

MEDIA RELEASE

FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 2017

Health and Ageing project to help improve local services

A new health and ageing project will aim to improve access to medical, allied health and ageing services across Lower Eyre Peninsula.

The District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula's Health and Ageing in our Community project will research and document current health and ageing needs with an aim to identify gaps and seek improvements within local services and the industry.

Cummins and District Financial Services has matched council funding to carry out the 12-month project, which will also develop a business plan to support the business of health and aged care, while recognising the role of Local Government and the community in supporting residents.

Mayor Julie Low said the project came to fruition following community consultation as part of the Council's Strategic Plan review conducted in 2016.

Mayor Low said council heard there was a strong link between health and aged care with many in the community preferring to stay in their own home or community as they age, with this option being largely dependant on access to allied health and in-home care services.

Council's Chief Executive Officer Mr Pearson said the project would complement research already carried out by the Cummins Health Focus Group, which last year identified aged care as the second highest priority for locals through a community survey.

The project will research current health and ageing needs, document desired outcomes and develop a clear plan to deliver those outcomes.

"We want to develop a better understanding of current health and ageing needs and the provisions already in place, so we can identify what can be improved and how," Mr Pearson said.

Kaye Ferguson has been appointed as the Project Officer and will investigate issues surrounding allied and community health service access, aged care accessibility and recruitment and retention of health professionals to work in our communities.

"We will undertake a community survey to assess health and ageing needs to find out what services people are accessing now, what they can't access and what they are likely to need in the future," Ms Ferguson said.

"Health and ageing affects everyone in the District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula and it is vital that as many people as possible fill out this survey so we get the most accurate picture possible of our community's needs."

“I will also be sitting down and talking with people all over the district, from Country Health SA and health service agencies, to General Practitioners, allied health service providers and community and volunteer groups.”

“It will help us understand what’s working in health and ageing in our community and what’s not, so we can maintain or expand services where necessary and plan ahead for our future needs.”

Ms Ferguson will report to a Steering Committee consisting of three community members from across the council district as well as representatives from Country Health SA, Regional Development Australia Whyalla and Eyre Peninsula and Cummins and District Financial Services. Council's representation consists of Councillors Wendy Holman and Peter Mitchell, Chief Executive Officer Rod Pearson and Manager Development and Environmental Services Leith Blacker.

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