

Summary of the Enhancing our Physical Health: A World Café Event 22 November 2017, 9.30-11.30

Background

In November 2017, the AOD Provider Collaborative and CHAMP jointly commissioned a World Café event held at the Youthline social enterprise café in Papatoetoe. The focus of this World Café was to identify how people in Counties Manukau would like to reduce the inequities in physical health of people living with mental health and AOD challenges.

The World Café process is designed to enhance conversations through bringing together people with diverse perspectives and inviting them to participate in conversations around specific questions, using a structured process. Sixty invited people attended this World Café, which included people with lived experience, family members, mental health and addiction professionals, and other health professionals. More than 20 different organisations were represented.

Participants, in small groups, were asked to consider three key questions, followed by a whole group discussion. The key questions were:

- 1) What does “physical health” mean to you?
- 2) What is special about Counties Manukau, that will enable us to become a physically thriving community?
- 3) What does this mean for us?

The key themes which arose out of these discussions are summarised below.

Key Themes from the World Café Conversation

Health is Holistic and Living in Balance

Physical health and wellness is closely linked to mental, spiritual and social wellbeing. There is variation in people’s wants and needs, and in response to a changing world. This can be influenced by how we feel about ourselves, our social connections (family and community), and our thoughts, dreams and motivations. Preventing ill-health and maintaining good health requires a balanced lifestyle and positive daily routines (self-care).

Counties Manukau’s Strengths

- Counties Manukau has a strong sense of community, with a focus on families and whanau. The Counties Manukau community is resourceful and wants to engage in new initiatives.
- It includes diverse ethnic communities, a youthful and an aging population. This expands the cultural solutions that are potentially available, which support health and wellness.
- Counties Manukau has a lot of physical resources, both natural and community facilities e.g., free access to pools, parks, maunga, beaches.
- It also has many people who either role model physical health e.g., sporting heroes, and/ or are passionate about contributing to healthy communities, e.g., marae, volunteers, churches, schools.
- There are many health services available for the Counties Manukau community, which are responsive to community needs, e.g., free, mobile, and innovative.
- There is a strong tradition of peer support within mental health and addiction services.

Counties Manukau's Challenges

- While there are many health services and community resources available to support a healthy lifestyle, people don't necessarily use them. This could be due to; lack of awareness, lack of financial resources, and/ or people feeling alienated from these services and the wider community.
- The high concentration of unhealthy food retailers, liquor stores and gambling venues in Counties Manukau can undermine attempts to become healthier. There is a need for advocacy to reduce their availability to ensure the environment is more supportive of healthier options for people.

Strategies to Enhance Health

Promote Wellness

- Increase awareness of community resources, which are available to support healthy lifestyles, particularly the free and more affordable options.
- Encourage people to engage with these resources.
- Provide relevant education about healthy lifestyles.
- Establish/ promote spaces where people with lived experience can access health education, physical activities, and other wellness initiatives e.g. Recovery Sports.

Promote Earlier Intervention for Health Issues

- Provide health screening and education about specific health issues.
- Increase awareness of health services and how to access them.
- Provide support and encouragement for people to engage with these health services.

People Empowerment

- Work with people and communities to develop and implement initiatives (consumer driven change).
- Collaborate with key population groups to identify solutions that will work for them, e.g., youth, Maori, Pasifika.
- Identify and support individual champions/ role models to lead initiatives and encourage healthy life-styles.
- Consider how peer services can support health initiatives.
- Offer people real choices on how to enhance their health.

Understand Peoples' Motivations

- People are likely to be more motivated to engage with healthy lifestyles and/or health services when they are linked with personally motivating factors, e.g., sport, cultural activities, families.
- Feeling valued and included within a group or community are strong motivators.

Support Current Initiatives

- There are many initiatives and services that are already available. To avoid duplication, these should be identified, supported and/or promoted.

Next Steps for CHAMP and the AOD Provider Collaborative

- 1. The World Café summary to be distributed to participants and stakeholders.**
- 2. The key themes to be considered by the Collaborative's current Equally Well-related programmes and projects, such as CHAMP's 'Responding to physical health needs of people we support (Equally Well)' project and the AOD Collaborative's 'Physical Health' and 'Recovery College' projects.**
- 3. The Collaboratives to consider the ideas and suggestions generated by the World Café process to identify new relevant and attainable projects.**

Appendix 1: Graphic Summaries of Participant Responses to the World Café Questions

