



Latrobe Health
Advocate

Statement of Intent 2018-19





Jane Anderson
Latrobe Health Advocate
Level 1, 154 Commercial Road Morwell VIC 3840

The Latrobe Health Advocate respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal people as the Original Custodians of the land we walk on today – the land of the Braiakaulung peoples and passes on respect to their elders past and present.



Jane Anderson, Latrobe Health Advocate

In May 2018 I was appointed by the Minister for Health to the role of Latrobe Health Advocate, a role that is a key recommendation from the Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry. The Inquiry highlighted the need to work differently to address the health inequalities and entrenched disadvantage experienced by Latrobe Valley communities. In response to the Inquiry, Latrobe City was designated as a Health Innovation Zone, the first of its kind in Australia, and the Latrobe Health Assembly was established. The Assembly and the Advocate are key structures within the Zone that empower communities to have influence on health promotion, health planning, priority setting and service and program design.

As Latrobe Health Advocate I provide independent advice to the Victorian Government on behalf of Latrobe Valley communities on system and policy issues affecting their health and wellbeing. I maintain a focus on strategic outcomes and systemic change, ensuring advice and activities within the Zone are informed and underpinned by a strong collaborative approach.

I bring a depth of experience to the Latrobe Health Advocate role; experience of nearly 20 years working with Latrobe Valley communities and fighting for better and more services to improve health and wellbeing. I have lived and worked in the Latrobe Valley for 19 years and worked in Morwell throughout the time of the Hazelwood mine fire supporting communities' recovery.

Prior to taking up the Latrobe Health Advocate role, I was the Regional Director of Anglicare Victoria, having responsibility for leadership of the operational, strategic and quality performance of programs within Gippsland. I worked at Anglicare for 17 years with 12 of those years in a Regional Leadership position.

My background includes 11 years as a Victoria Police Officer and 7 years as a practising lawyer. I am passionate about social justice, the health and wellbeing of Gippsland communities and the natural environment.

I am an active member of Regional Partnerships Victoria and a former Board Director of Lifeline Gippsland.

Background

The *Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry 2014* found that the health profile of the Latrobe Valley is poorer compared to other local government areas in Victoria and the average for the state. It established that there was a strong case for the health of the Latrobe Valley to be substantially improved. In light of these findings, the *Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry Report 2014* and the *Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry Report 2015-16* recommended a number of actions to improve service coordination and health outcomes in the Latrobe Valley, including:

- Establishment of a Latrobe Health Assembly.
- Appointment of a Latrobe Health Advocate.
- Designation of Latrobe City as a Health Innovation Zone.

The Latrobe Health Assembly was established in December 2016 and became incorporated in June 2017. The Assembly is changing how we work with Latrobe Valley communities in setting priorities and developing and implementing programs and services. The majority of Assembly members are community representatives who demonstrate the diversity of local communities. Other members include representatives from five 'Foundation Member' agencies; Latrobe City Council, Gippsland Primary Health Network, Latrobe Regional Hospital, Latrobe Community Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services and an independent Chair, Professor John Catford. Assembly members have identified priority areas in which to innovate and not duplicate existing services/initiatives. These areas include healthy living, better care, positive culture and great place.

The Minister for Health appointed the Latrobe Health Advocate in May 2018; the Advocate commenced in the role on 1 June 2018.

The Latrobe Health Advocate and Latrobe Health Assembly are key structures within the Latrobe Health Innovation Zone to empower communities to have influence on health promotion, health planning, priority setting and service and program design.

Overview

The Latrobe Health Advocate will provide independent advice to the Victorian Government on behalf of the Latrobe community on system and policy issues affecting their health and wellbeing. The Advocate will provide community-wide leadership for the Latrobe Health Innovation Zone by enabling, mediating and advocating for health improvements through health and broader system improvements and change.

To deliver on these objectives the Advocate will:

- Research, monitor and report on current and emerging issues affecting the health and well-being of Latrobe Valley residents.
- Provide strategic advice and informed and collaborative leadership on health-related matters in the Latrobe Valley.
- Enable, advocate and mediate system change and improvement to address barriers or improve opportunities for good health and wellbeing in the Latrobe Valley.
- Provide leadership and an independent public voice to engage directly with the community, particularly more marginalised members, about health matters.
- Actively engage and adopt a collaborative approach with stakeholders across the community in executing her terms of reference, namely:
 - Community members.
 - Business.
 - Industry.
 - Agriculture.
 - Health Services.
 - Community organisations.
 - All levels of government.
- Engage and work collaboratively with the Department of Health and Human Services, the Latrobe Health Assembly and the Hazelwood Long-Term Health Study Ministerial Advisory Committee as relevant.

The Department of Health and Human Services has appointed Deloitte Australia to conduct a developmental evaluation of the Latrobe Health Innovation Zone, Latrobe Health Assembly and Latrobe Health Advocate over three years to 2020. An evaluation framework was developed in consultation with Latrobe Valley communities and evaluation has commenced. Communities are clear about wanting the Zone, Assembly and Advocate to:

1. Improve community opportunities and perceptions.
 2. Improve community connectedness and participation.
 3. Improve health service access and design.
 4. Improve health and lifestyle.
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Priorities

The Advocate will avoid duplication with existing service delivery agencies and health advocacy services by maintaining a focus on strategic outcomes and systemic change. The Advocate will work with health services, the Department of Health and Human Services and other key stakeholders to ensure her advice and activities are informed and underpinned by a strong collaborative approach.

A priority for the Latrobe Health Advocate is to build her public profile to ensure accessibility. It is important for Latrobe Valley communities to understand the role of the Advocate, that it is a key action resulting from the Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry and its alignment to the Latrobe Health Assembly and Latrobe Health Innovation Zone. The Advocate needs to maintain a distinct public profile in providing leadership and an independent public voice, while at the same time aligning and engaging with key stakeholders, the Assembly and Latrobe Valley communities to drive system change and improvements for sustainable health and wellbeing.

A communications and branding strategy will support the Advocate's public profile and align with overarching communications and branding strategies for the Zone.

In reducing social disadvantage and supporting equality, a collaborative community driven approach will be taken that aligns with the priorities of the Latrobe City Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-21, Latrobe Health Assembly strategic vision, Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015-19 and the Latrobe Health and Wellbeing Charter.

Since commencing on 1 June 2018, the Latrobe Health Advocate has invested a significant amount of time in meeting with, and listening to, residents and other key stakeholders to identify what should be her initial priorities to ensure sustainable health and wellbeing for Latrobe Valley communities.

Through those meetings, the following priorities have been identified and will be focussed on over the coming 12 months. While these are the known priorities now, it is expected that further priority areas will emerge as the work of all key stakeholders and communities progresses across the Latrobe Health Innovation Zone.

Priority	<p>Inclusive communities</p> <p>Enabling inclusiveness of marginalised communities within Latrobe Valley. There are groups of people in Latrobe Valley who experience exclusion for reasons such as age, health, economics, education or they may live in an area that is not easily accessible.</p>	<p>Health is everyone's business</p> <p>Engaging the breadth of Latrobe Valley communities to prioritise and have a say about the sustainability of their health and wellbeing. The Latrobe Health Innovation Zone is the platform for enabling everyone to have a place in making things happen differently.</p>	<p>Systems change</p> <p>Using a project/campaign approach to change conditions that hold a problem in place, the Latrobe Health Advocate will initially focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health • Alcohol and other drugs • Palliative care
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and develop a community engagement model with people experiencing disadvantage through disability, financial stress, isolation, family violence, chronic disease, mental illness, sexuality, cultural diversity, and age. • Analysis of community voice to determine systemic issues for service innovation and improvements. • Advocacy to government, agencies, service providers, businesses, industry, community members and Latrobe Health Assembly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify common health and wellbeing goals in government, services and community. • Support the identification of success measures for the Latrobe Health Innovation Zone. • Enable a shared understanding of a common vision. • Participate in economic development projects that may impact health and wellbeing. • Encourage decision makers and regulators to prioritise health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed identification of known and emerging issues through research. • Exploration of user experience and engagement with communities to deepen understanding of issues. • Collaborate with communities to identify changes required to policies, practices, resources, connections, assumptions, beliefs and values. • Advocate for system change and gaps.
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality and opportunity – voices heard. • Access to services and resources that build community resilience. • Engagement in decision making processes that affect health and wellbeing. • Health and wellbeing informed decision making. • An established environment for collaboration. • Community driven approaches to health and wellbeing improvements and system change. 		

Resources

The Latrobe Health Advocate is located in the Morwell central business district and is in the process of establishing her office which includes:

- Shop front premises – the Advocate is temporarily located in an upstairs office while a longer term shop front premises in the Morwell central business district is completed. The shop front premises will enable strong visibility, access and connection to local communities.
- Staffing – a small staffing team will support the Advocate. Recruitment is underway for two positions; Office Coordinator/Project Officer and Senior Advisor - both roles will provide support, leadership and guidance to the office of the Latrobe Health Advocate.

The Advocate has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Health and Human Services to support operations of the office of the Latrobe Health Advocate and provide a clear delineation of roles.

In accordance with relevant Acts and guides governing public sector operations, the Memorandum of Understanding enables advice, guidance and support around information technology, human resources, media and communications, infrastructure, legal, finance and procurement, and research and expertise. The Memorandum of Understanding will be reviewed annually.

Accountability

The Advocate will prepare an annual Statement of Intent outlining proposed activities and priority focus areas. The Statement of Intent will be submitted to the Minister for Health and will be publicly available. The Advocate will provide to the Minister for Health:

- An annual report due by 30 September each year on activities and achievements during the preceding financial year.
- Reports on priority policy issues as set out in the annual Statement of Intent.

The Advocate will operate with reference to the key elements of the World Health Organisation's Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion. It will also be informed by Victorian Government strategic directions and policies including but not limited to:

- Health 2040: advancing health access and care
- Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015-2019
- Victoria's 10-year mental health plan.

The Latrobe Health Advocate will adhere to the *Victorian Public Sector Commission's Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities* including bringing any actual or potential conflict of interest or any perceived conflict of interest to the attention of the Minister for Health.

Other relevant health structures in Latrobe Valley

Other relevant health structures are operating in the Latrobe Valley that the Latrobe Health Advocate's work intersects with and complements.

Hazelwood Long Term Health Study Ministerial Advisory Committee:

This Committee provides advice to the Minister and independent oversight, transparency and better engagement with communities in relation to the Study. The Advocate will work closely with the Committee to support transparency and better engagement with communities.

Health Complaints Commissioner:

This is a state-wide statutory position focused on resolving individual complaints about healthcare and the handling of health information in Victoria. This position investigates individual matters and reviews complaints data to help health service providers improve the quality of their service.

The Advocate is expected to establish protocols with the Health Complaints Commissioner to facilitate referral of individual complaints and exchange relevant information, including system issues identified by the Commissioner.

Mental Health Complaints Commissioner:

This is a state-wide statutory position leading a specialist mental health complaints body with a role in resolving individual complaints, making recommendations for system and service improvements and undertaking investigations into any matter relating to Victoria's public mental health services, as requested by the Minister for Mental Health.

The Latrobe Health Advocate is expected to establish protocols with the Mental Health Complaints Commissioner to facilitate referral of individual complaints and exchange relevant information, including system issues identified by the Commissioner.

