

Final Evaluation for



(2014-2018)

Delivered by
Wheatbelt Men's Health (Inc.)
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A report by



Executive Summary

This document is the Final Evaluation of the Regional Men's Health Initiative (RMHI) project for 2014-18. The project is delivered by Wheatbelt Men's Health Inc. and is funded by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD)¹.

The purpose of the Final Evaluation is to:

- Summarise progress towards project objectives
- Describe the project's regional penetration
- Document outcomes achieved during the period
- Update the cost benefit analysis of the project
- Review the status and relevance of recommendations made in the mid term review
- Identify possible improvements.

The evaluation aimed to understand the contribution of RMHIs activities towards improved health and wellbeing of regional men. The report found compelling evidence that regional stakeholders and individuals place a high value on RMHI which is seen as a credible organisation to fill an important gap in men's health and wellbeing education, advocacy and service delivery. RMHIs staff reflect an appropriate mix of skills and backgrounds enabling them to connect and develop trust and effective connections with regional communities.

RMHI has surpassed expectations in terms of directly connecting with over 57,212 individuals over the project period. This is an annual average of 15,256 participants per annum, either through direct participation at RMHI events or direct discussions and well above the 9,000 annual target of participants.

This evaluation estimates that the annual economic benefit to cost ratio from RMHI activities is between 2.74-10.17, depending on the different assumptions made about the extent, and value of, benefits to men's health and wellbeing. Comparisons with costs of service delivery with related health services suggest RMHI represents significant value for money.

Its reach into the regions over the past few years has been consolidated and resulted in a more balanced regional presence with exposure to large regional centres and smaller isolated communities. While the Wheatbelt accounts for 22% of all events, all the other regions account for between 8-11% indicating a more balanced share of events across regional WA.

RMHI is successful because of their quality products and presentations, targeted and effective communications and the fact that their service delivery model is male friendly and appropriate for regional men. Stakeholders reiterated the value they place on its responsiveness to meeting their needs, its availability and flexibility in delivery, be it presenting to small or large audiences or serving an individual or community in situational distress.

¹ In 2017 the Department of Regional Development and Primary Industries was created from the merger of the Dept. of Regional Development, which originally funded the project, the Department of Agriculture and Food WA, the fund holder for the RMHI project and the Department of Fisheries.

RMHI's products, approach and services are highly regarded for their quality and relevance by regional stakeholders including other health service organisations and peer organisations. It has an extensive and diverse range of strategic partnerships allowing it to effectively reach a diversity of regional men and boys. The breadth of its activities – from presentations to schools, Men's Sheds and a wide cross section of industry and community organisations means they effectively target boys and men across all age cohorts. Its partnership with the WA Country Football League is particularly effective in reaching younger men.

There is compelling evidence that RMHI has influenced attitudes and behaviours among individuals, community and industry organisations and fostered cultural change within regional communities. Individual stories and interviews captured in this report and the Mid Term Review have served to show some of the changes in awareness, attitude, capacity and behaviour with respect to men's health and wellbeing. This final evaluation provides clear evidence that RMHI's message of 'Talk to a Mate' and taking care of a mate has occurred. The latter is recorded as Primary Care by RMHI. RMHI's records indicate 659 instances of Primary Care over the project period, demonstrating the extent regional people are supporting others experiencing health or wellbeing challenges.

RMHI has high credibility within the regions and among the service delivery organisations it partners with. RMHI have contributed to the language and understanding of men's health and wellbeing among other health service providers and influenced State level policy frameworks. Australia's peak men's health organisation, The Australasian Men's Health Forum recognises RMHI as an example of best practice in men's health and wellbeing. Its value is also recognised via its official involvement in contributing towards state-based policies for men's health and wellbeing and suicide prevention.

RMHI are recognised as a 'best practice' leader in the field of men's health and wellbeing throughout the state and nationally and this review recommends that they continue with their approach and use their skills and knowledge in this area to proactively model the way for other organisations and health service providers in male friendly approaches for health and wellbeing.

The evaluation identified a few minor areas for potential improvement in terms of refining its understanding and connections with particular male subgroups, promotion and marketing. Though it has improved its social media presence, suggestions are made to review its use of social media and promotional activities over time to ensure its continuing relevance.

RMHI is now entering the ongoing and long-term phase where it seeks to develop and support the sustainable empowerment of men and communities to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. It recognises this cultural change requires a long-term commitment and promotion of a consistent message (i.e. Talk to a Mate). To reach this 'adoption by community' stage RMHI should continue its current approach and place greater emphasis on sharing its approach and products in supporting community groups, businesses, local government and health service providers to implement male friendly health and wellbeing language and services.