

WELLBEING WEDNESDAY FORUM SERIES

Building knowledge, reducing stigma and strengthening mental wellbeing across the Loddon Mallee.

Rationale

People living in rural and regional communities can face additional barriers to accessing mental health information, services and support. Community consultation identified strong demand for accessible learning opportunities that addressed local mental wellbeing issues and strengthened community knowledge.

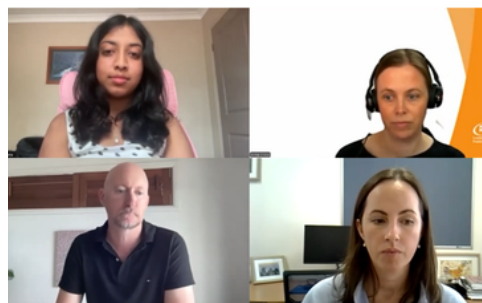
The Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit (LMPHU) developed the Wellbeing Wednesday Forum Series to provide evidence-based education, encourage open conversations and build capacity across the region.

Objectives

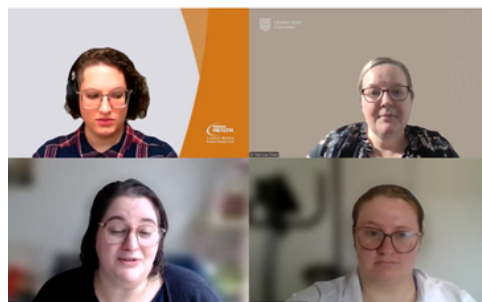
The project aimed to increase knowledge of mental health and wellbeing through accessible online forums, strengthen community and workforce capability, and create opportunities for participants to learn from experts and people with lived and living experience.



Climate and Weather Impacts on Mental Wellbeing participants



AI and Digital Mental Health Impacts on Wellbeing participants



Body Stigma Impacts on Wellbeing participants

At A Glance

- **387 registrations** across three regional forums
- **94%** reported increased knowledge
- **+72 Net Promoter Score** Indicating a strong measure of how likely people are to recommend
- Lived experience **strengthened** learning

What We Did

The LMPHU developed and delivered a series of free online forums covering topics relevant to the Loddon Mallee, including Climate and Weather Impacts on Mental Wellbeing, AI and Digital Health Impacts on Wellbeing, and Body Stigma Impacts on Wellbeing.

Subject matter experts and organisations with recognised expertise were engaged to present, including Black Dog Institute, Size Inclusive Health Australia, Psychology for a Safe Climate, Orygen, Prevention United, and leading researchers. Lived and living experience perspectives were incorporated throughout to promote inclusivity and ensure discussions reflected diverse community experiences.

Sessions included opportunities for discussion and questions, with recordings and supporting resources made available on the LMPHU website to extend learning beyond the live events.

Outcomes

The Wellbeing Wednesday Forum Series successfully increased knowledge and engagement around mental health and wellbeing across the Loddon Mallee.

Across three forums, 387 people registered and 157 attended live, demonstrating strong interest in accessible online learning. Evaluation showed 94% of participants reported improved knowledge, while the series achieved an overall Net Promoter Score of +72, indicating participants were highly likely to recommend the forums to others.

Participants particularly valued hearing from people with lived and living experience alongside subject matter experts. Making recordings and resources available online extended the reach of the project and created an ongoing resource for community members and professionals.

Lessons learned

- Lived experience drives engagement
- Online delivery increases accessibility
- Local storytelling enhances learning
- Flexible formats are needed, including live participation and recorded options
- Participant feedback also identified opportunities to strengthen future forums through longer question-and-answer sessions, fewer presenters and improved accessibility features.



Wellbeing Wednesday promotional flyer

Next Steps

The LMPHU will continue working with partners to identify emerging mental wellbeing priorities and deliver evidence-based learning opportunities that are accessible, inclusive and relevant to communities across the Loddon Mallee. Future forums will continue to build on participant feedback to maximise reach and impact.

For more information about this project, visit: [Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit / Wellbeing](https://www.bendigohealth.org.au/lmp-hu)