
Coordinating health promotion and community wellbeing activities in the region, in partnership with local government, SALHN, the Department for Health and Wellbeing, Wellbeing SA, Adelaide PHN, general practice, and relevant NGOs.

Supporting local governments' regional public health planning role and health promotion mandate under the SA Public Health Act by supporting intersectoral coordination and collaboration in health promotion policy and action.

Coordinating citizen participation into planning for the region through a representative structure, and on-going community engagement, consultation and participation strategies.

Advocating for health system reorientation to and investment in primary health care and health promotion.

Ensuring training and support for the local health promotion workforce, within and outside the health system.

Key messages from the research

Changing context for health promotion

- South Australia has had a long and innovative history of health promotion policy and action. The south of Adelaide has particularly stood out as a model for health promotion in Australia.
- In 2013 the Department of Health implemented the recommendations of the 'McCann Review of Non-hospital Based Services' and withdrew state government funding for health promotion, including most functions of the department's Health Promotion Branch. This resulted in the withdrawal of the SA health system, centrally and in local health networks, from most health promotion policy, funding and activity.
- At this time there was also a withdrawal of support for the SA Primary Prevention Plan which had provided a strategic framework for disease prevention and health promotion. The extensive network of community health and women's health centres ceased to exist following a shift in policy focus from primary health care and health promotion to chronic disease management and hospital avoidance.
- In 2014, the federal government abolished the National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health and terminated the Australian National Preventive Health Agency as it too withdrew from health promotion and prevention policy.
- This project found that disinvestment from the state government and the withdrawal of the health system from health promotion has had ongoing ripple effects beyond the health system to the whole community in the South, as well as to other health and social service providers who have been unable to replace what was withdrawn.

Current health promotion and community wellbeing activities

- This research found evidence of significant health promotion activity, but this is fragmented and largely undertaken outside the health system.
- SALHN has narrowed its focus to the provision of acute care services and devotes very few resources to disease prevention and health promotion activities in the community.

Lack of leadership and coordination

- Loss of the SA Health Health Promotion Branch and funding cuts to health promotion across SA along with increasing pressures on health services to control costs have led to a loss of leadership for health promotion.
- Pockets of local leadership on health promotion and disease prevention are evident outside health in other government departments and in local government, but there is no system-wide or regional coordination of health promotion activities and a lack of information about services and activities that people can be referred to.

Health promotion

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