

Supporting volunteers to take an inclusive wellness approach

A Resource Kit for Community Care services



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Section 1

Overview



Introduction

Services that support older Australians to remain living at home are delivered using an inclusive wellness approach.

An inclusive, wellness approach considers and addresses the diversity of all clients, taking into account their experiences, needs and preferences. It focuses on delivering services that put the client at the centre of their own care. An inclusive, wellness approach seeks to assist people to live in the community as:

- independently, and
- autonomously as possible.

Considerable work has occurred in Victoria to implement an inclusive, wellness approach, previously known as the Active Service Model, which was introduced in 2009. This Resource Kit is an updated version of *Supporting Volunteers to take an Active Service Approach*, published in 2013.

Why is this Resource Kit needed?

Thousands of volunteers work in hundreds of organisations across Victoria and make a vital contribution to the delivery of services to older people living at home.

Through their extensive contact with clients, volunteers are a critical component of implementing an inclusive, wellness approach to support older people living at home. This covers a variety of services which includes delivering meals, driving people to appointments, looking after pets or talking to clients on the phone.

This Resource Kit was originally developed in 2012 to support service providers implement an Active Service Approach with their volunteer workforces, informed by consultations with:

- service providers that engage volunteers
- volunteer resource centres and peak bodies
- volunteers
- the Victorian Department of Health & Human Services.

Since that time, the community care sector and service delivery has undergone considerable change. Reforms will continue to be introduced to the sector following the report of the Australian Government's Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, delivered in 2021.

This Resource Kit takes into account reforms and changes introduced over the past ten years and also responds to the ongoing demand from service providers for volunteer-focussed resources.

Purpose of this Resource Kit

The purpose of this Resource Kit is, as the title suggests, to assist service providers in supporting their volunteer workforce to take an inclusive, wellness approach when working with older people.

The Resource Kit aims to build the capacity of service providers to engage with volunteers about how wellness, diversity and inclusion principles contribute to service quality and positive outcomes for clients. The resources in the kit are designed to assist service providers integrate an inclusive, wellness approach in their processes for volunteer recruitment, induction and orientation, training and on-going engagement with volunteers.

Who is this Resource Kit for?

This Resource Kit is designed for service providers in Victoria that have a volunteer workforce and support at home programs. This ranges from small, volunteer-based organisations through to councils and large non-government organisations with a paid and unpaid workforce.

It is envisaged that the key user of the Resource Kit will be the manager or coordinator of volunteers and thus the staff member with responsibility for implementing an inclusive, wellness approach with volunteers.

Volunteer Handouts

The set of 12 Volunteer Handouts in this Resource Kit contain:

- general information about healthy and active ageing
- practical ideas for volunteers
- stories of active volunteering in various volunteer settings
- practical information for volunteers about applying a wellness approach in their volunteering role
- an overview of the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) including selected terms and acronyms
- frequently asked questions.

Feedback from the sector overwhelmingly called for practical, simple, concrete and easy-to-use resources. The Volunteer Handouts have been designed to meet these requirements.

The Volunteer Handouts can be used in various ways:

- placed with the organisation's promotional and recruitment material

- inserted in volunteer handbooks
- displayed on noticeboards
- as discussion starters in induction training
- as discussion starters in volunteer training, supervision or get-togethers
- as discussion starters in volunteer meetings
- as inserts for volunteer newsletters.



There are no limits to the ways which organisations can use the Volunteer Handouts:

- they can be uploaded to your organisation's website
- they can be used to promote your organisation's volunteer services, or
- they can be used in discussions with organisational partners.

An overview of the Volunteer Handouts is provided on the following pages.

Volunteer Handout	Key concepts	Use for:	
<p>No. 1</p> <p>Volunteer Handout 1</p> <p>Taking a wellness approach</p> <p>What is a 'wellness approach'?</p> <p>Over recent years, health knowledge has developed with an understanding that it is better for everyone's overall health and wellbeing to not only maintain good physical health but also to look after our mental, spiritual and emotional health. A 'wellness approach' takes all these aspects of health into account and considers people's needs and goals in each area.</p> <p>We know it makes sense – you need to... Use it, or lose it, but, as people age, they often become less physically active. There are many reasons for this: we might begin to think 'We're too old', or our health changes so we are not as busy as we once were. We might also think – after working hard for years – it's time for a rest! Without realising it, everyday activity has decreased.</p> <p>Keeping active is also a great way to improve mood. It doesn't need to be a session at the gym – walking or gardening are great ways to maintain your fitness. Physical activity can have many benefits for everyone, particularly older people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical activity increases strength and can help prevent falls. Maintaining strength can help prevent or delay osteoporosis in older people. A medically-approved physical activity program can help people manage chronic conditions, such as diabetes. Good levels of physical fitness can help people recover more quickly after surgery or illness.  <p>Keeping our minds active</p> <p>Just as keeping physically active can help our mood and overall health, mental activity can also have long-term health benefits.</p> <p>Mental activity can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reading having a discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An inclusive, wellness approach Importance of maintaining good physical, mental, spiritual and emotional health as people age 	Recruitment	✓
<p>No. 2</p> <p>Volunteer Handout 2</p> <p>Supporting wellness</p> <p>How do service providers support wellness?</p> <p>Support at Home programs support older people and younger people with disabilities to live as independently as possible at home and in the community. Services work with individuals and carers to find out what is important to them and then develop an individualised plan to work together to support clients' choices and goals.</p>  <p>Supporting good health and independence</p> <p>Wellbeing at any age is best supported by a combination of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> good physical health good mental health healthy, supportive social networks. <p>Our organisation promotes good health to the people we work with by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting them to be as physically active as they can. Supporting them to be as mentally active and involved as they can. Supporting them to be as socially involved and active as they can. Supporting their choices to maintain their spiritual wellbeing. <p>In practical terms, this means for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We won't step in to do something for someone if they can do it themselves. We allow people to complete tasks in their own time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How organisations promote good physical and mental health and social engagement Introduces the client care plan Reinforces staff and services working in partnership for the client 	Recruitment	✓
<p>No. 3</p> <p>Volunteer Handout 3</p> <p>It's about the individual person – your client</p> <p>Understanding and responding to the diversity of clients</p> <p>Victoria benefits from being a diverse state made up of people from different communities, with different identities, experiences and skills. The diversity that exists across the state is also represented in our staff, volunteers and those who use Support at Home services.</p> <p>The diversity jigsaw</p> <p>Our clients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> come from a range of cultures cover a wide age range speak different languages are married, widowed, divorced and single are heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and have intersex variations have experienced and survived war, trauma, violence and elder abuse have various family dynamics and situations live with or care for people with dementia come from varied social and economic backgrounds have a range of interests, strengths, abilities and life experiences. <p>The diversity jigsaw shows that we all have a wide range of diversity characteristics. These shape our identity and what's important to us. Services are focused on the individual person and supporting them to maintain health, independence and be in control of their life. Support that is focused on understanding who each person is, their strengths and what is important to them is welcoming, inclusive and respectful. To see the whole person, we need to look at all the jigsaw pieces.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clients come from diverse backgrounds Understanding and responding to the diversity of clients 	Recruitment	✓
Induction	✓	Training	✓
Engagement/ Motivation			

Volunteer Handout	Key concepts	Use for:	
<p>No. 4</p> <p>Volunteer Handout 4</p> <p>Practical ideas for volunteers</p> <p>How can volunteers best assist clients to stay active and independent?</p> <p>Volunteers play a very important role by providing assistance to programs which actively support the wellbeing of clients and promotes independence. With a focus on active ageing, the role of volunteers in Support at Home programs has shifted from a focus of 'doing for' to 'working together'. This promotes a wellness approach and encourages people to do as much as possible for themselves with individualised support as needed.</p> <p>What roles can volunteers take on?</p> <p>Encouraging and empowering While there is now less need to 'do for' clients, volunteers will always be an essential part of the service. With direction from your supervisor and in keeping with the client's goals, there are many important roles for volunteers.</p>  <p>Facilitating Volunteers have an important role to play in facilitating or supporting clients and working with their identified strengths. They can be there as additional support and be guided by the individual as to how much support they provide. Be open to observing and listening to the person and their needs and working with them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduces a range of roles and actions for volunteers in place of 'doing things for' clients Reinforces how important listening and responding is to someone's sense of self-esteem and autonomy 	Recruitment	
<p>No. 5-10</p> <p>Volunteer Handout 5</p> <p>Stories of Active Volunteering</p> <p>Community transport</p> <p>Volunteers are a key resource for community transport services. Transport services can make an enormous difference to people who may feel isolated at home or unable to get out on their own by helping them connect to their community and be socially engaged.</p>  <p>However, it is important to remember there are many ways for volunteers to assist people accessing community transport to remain active and independent.</p> <p>With community transport, some simple ideas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow people to access their seats and do up their own seat belts rather than doing it for them. Facilitate interesting conversations with everyone on board as part of the trip. Have it quick quiz during the trip. Prompt people to observe their surroundings as they travel along. Have an understanding of what clients can and can't do for themselves. Ask them if they can do something themselves – such as engaging their hand in the vehicle. If they can do it, allow them time to do so. If not, ask how you can best assist them. <p>How can volunteers assist community transport clients to stay active and independent?</p> <p>This might sound like a strange question. Often people using community transport have mobility restrictions and use walking aids. They may have limited vision or hearing or other conditions such as arthritis. After all – these are some of the reasons people use community transport.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How volunteers can assist clients to be active and independent in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community transport Social Support Groups Food services One-to-one support Working with younger people with a disability 	Recruitment	
<p>No. 11-12</p> <p>Volunteer Handout 12</p> <p>Frequently Asked Questions Volunteering to support wellness</p> <p>What does 'active' ageing mean?</p> <p>Across the globe, keeping people well as they age is becoming more of a priority. We know that we have a growing ageing population and people are choosing to stay in their own homes for as long as possible as they age.</p>  <p>What does wellness mean for the people we work with?</p> <p>The focus on wellness means that we want to support older people to continue to live an independent and active life in their own home for as long as possible. Not so long ago, we thought 'doing things for' people was best. The current approach is to work with clients and support them. For example, imagine you're supporting a client who loves gardening but has recently had a fall and has lost some confidence. If they wanted to pick some flowers from the garden, you could walk with the client and just be there to make sure they don't fall. In this case, the client is able to safely do something they love and gain a little confidence. Simple as it sounds, this means the client is taking an active role in their own life. They feel empowered and they are keeping active.</p> <p>One of the best ways to look after the wishes of individuals and meet the needs of the community is for older people to maintain good health.</p> <p>Increasingly, research tells us that good health comes from keeping active, maintaining good nutrition and keeping up good lifestyle habits like keeping well-hydrated, being sunsmart and quitting smoking.</p> <p>We also think about being 'active' in terms of being active in your local community and with your network of friends, actively making decisions about your own life and keeping active mentally.</p> <p>Not all of our clients can do as much as they would like, but it is still important that they are making their own choices as far as possible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plain English overview of the CHSP program FAQs about active ageing, wellness and volunteering for new and experienced volunteers 	Recruitment	
		Induction	✓
		Training	✓
		Engagement/ Motivation	✓

Key messages

An inclusive, wellness approach

- > **Taking an inclusive, wellness approach needs to be a core value of the organisation.** Service providers need to embrace an inclusive, wellness philosophy in order to successfully implement this approach. Managers cannot ask staff or volunteers to implement this approach unless it is evident that this is one of the organisation's values.
- > **Service providers are likely to be doing many of the things required of an inclusive, wellness approach,** particularly in the way the organisation works with clients. However, introducing an inclusive, wellness approach encourages service providers to think more carefully and systematically about everything they do.
- > **Often staff gain as much benefit as clients from an inclusive, wellness approach.** Staff - from direct care workers through to managers - report that taking a more empowering approach with clients makes their own working roles more satisfying and fulfilling.
- > **Taking an inclusive, wellness approach is a way of thinking and describing how services are delivered.** Talking about 'an inclusive, wellness approach' may not make sense to clients or be meaningful to many volunteers. The important aspects to emphasise with clients, families and volunteers is what this philosophy is all about and what it means in practical terms when supporting clients. For example, working with people to enable them to have more good days and do the things that are important to them.
- > **There is considerable research behind an inclusive, wellness approach.** Those interested can read further about this. For most people, the messages are simple and common sense: as people age, they want to stay active, well and independent and living in their own homes for as long as possible. Working with people to keep them active and independent – physically, socially and mentally - is one of the best ways to achieve this. At the same time, the risks of social isolation, withdrawal and depression increase as people age. Welcoming and inclusive services play a vital role in keeping older people socially engaged and connected.

A wellness model is based on the premise that 'all clients have the potential to make gains in their wellbeing...'

Department of Health

Key messages for volunteer management

- > **It's all about the client!** Volunteers are out there in the community because they want to help others. However, working with an inclusive, wellness approach may require a shift in thinking for some volunteers. While volunteers may sometimes want to 'do for' the client, it is important to communicate to volunteers the purpose and value of supporting clients to do things for themselves.
- > **The volunteer role remains very important - but it will change for some volunteers.** Implementing an inclusive, wellness approach requires service providers to encourage volunteers to 'stop and think' about different ways to approach a task. There are many different ways for volunteers to support clients, other than 'doing for'.
- > **The volunteer role is as vital as ever.** With an inclusive, wellness approach, rather than have volunteers 'wait on' clients or 'do for' clients, agencies need to guide volunteers to new tasks. One of the most valuable contributions volunteers can make is their ability to spend more one-on-one time with clients. Encouraging clients to do things for themselves may sometimes take longer - having a volunteer nearby can make a great difference.
- > **An inclusive wellness approach may not work for some volunteers – but it may provide opportunities for new volunteers.** While some volunteers may not be interested in a 'doing with' approach, it may open up interest from other groups in the community who do want to take an active role with clients. With a wellness approach, service providers may generate interest from younger people wanting to share their skills with computing and digital technology - for example, teaching clients how to use electronic devices.

Some things might take a little longer and may take some time to get there... but it is worth it in the end. It makes a great difference for clients and this is rewarding for carers' and volunteers. It is much more satisfying to be a volunteer when you can see that you are making a difference.

Volunteer Coordinator, Local government

Section 2

Implementing a wellness approach with
volunteers



Introduction

Implementing an inclusive, wellness approach with the volunteers in your organisation firstly requires a review across the range of human resource management activities.

This is essentially an activity to 'take stock'. The amount of work that service providers need to do will vary depending on factors such as the size of the organisation and where it is starting from.

This section of the Resource Kit:

- outlines a systematic approach for reviewing key volunteer human resource management systems (recruitment, induction, training, supervision) to ensure that they integrate wellness messages for volunteers
- identifies actions that might be required
- provides resources to assist with implementation.

The actions suggested are not prescriptive - they are there to guide you. Service providers can adopt these suggestions; adjust them or create a new approach. Some service providers will decide that they don't need to make any changes, as they feel confident their approach is already at a good practice standard.

Volunteer recruitment and selection

Attracting and recruiting volunteers who represent your community provides a great opportunity to diversify your volunteer and client base, and demonstrates your organisation's values.

Volunteers are not looking for lots of documentation or jargon - and may even find too much information off-putting.

Volunteer recruitment material needs to give potential recruits an accurate picture of the volunteer role and an understanding of the organisation. Demonstrating the organisation's approach to wellness and your commitment to creating welcoming, inclusive environments in recruitment material may require the insertion of targeted messages into existing material, or alternatively a complete re-write. Recruitment material needs to encapsulate and convey the spirit of the wellness approach within the organisation.

Steps to take:

1. Review the volunteer roles within your organisation. As they currently stand, do they reflect the wellness aspects of the volunteer role/s? Do the position descriptions need updating? It is important to have an accurate position description to distribute to potential recruits.

2. Review your organisation's recruitment and selection material to ensure a wellness approach and diversity considerations are embedded throughout the entire process:
 - recruitment advertisement(s)
 - interview questions
 - volunteer letter of engagement.
3. Does recruitment and selection material appropriately communicate to people interested in volunteering that the organisation celebrates and welcomes diversity and that volunteers are expected to take a wellness approach to working with clients?
4. Does your organisation's recruitment strategy enable you to effectively reach, attract and encourage interest from a diverse mix of potential volunteers?
5. If you decide your material or your recruitment strategy needs to be updated, take a Plan-Do-Study-Act approach.
 - **Plan** - Decide on timelines for updating your recruitment and selection material or adjusting your recruitment strategy. Allocate responsibilities for the tasks.
 - **Do** - Make changes to your material, selecting from the suggestions provided in Tool 1: Updating volunteer recruitment and selection material or working from other ideas.
 - **Study** - Test the draft ideas with your current volunteers - ask if they feel the updated material communicates the organisation's wellness approach to service delivery. Seek suggestions from volunteers.
 - **Act** - Produce your new recruitment and selection material and continue to review how well it is communicating your organisation's wellness messages to new recruits.

Tool 1: Updating volunteer recruitment and selection material

This tool provides suggestions for updating the organisation's volunteer recruitment and selection materials and processes.

Review and update the volunteer role

Review and assess the volunteer role within your organisation and how the volunteer role supports clients to be as active and independent as possible. This assessment depends on the context of the volunteer role in the organisation. This will vary depending on factors such as organisational characteristics (for example, type of organisation, size, services provided, paid and unpaid workforce, the range of volunteer roles) and community context (for example, demographics, geographic location).

Clearly define the volunteer role and how this role will support clients in a way that meets their diverse needs and preferences, and to enable them to be as independent as possible.

Update the volunteer position description(s) to reflect the role and the wellness values of the organisation. For example:

Under 'purpose' add a statement such as:
volunteers support and work with our clients to meet their individual needs and stay as independent as they wish.

Under 'role' add a statement such as:
to assist people living in the community to remain as active, connected and independent as possible.

Service providers with multiple volunteer roles may want to include something further about each specific role (for example, volunteer drivers / delivered meals volunteer) and how that role supports clients to stay as active, connected and independent as possible.

Changing a position description is obviously a task that can only be undertaken by the person with the appropriate level of authority in the organisation. The position description should indicate the manager responsible for the role.

Volunteer advertising

Use active volunteering photos in advertisements. Remember a picture is worth a thousand words. A photo of your organisation's volunteers and clients in action can convey the message that volunteers are expected to work with clients in the community - it's not about sitting in the background!

Obtain written permission from clients or volunteers before you use photos of them in public material, such as a recruitment advertisement.

Get an active volunteering story in the local paper as part of your recruitment drive. If you have a good story and photo idea to promote the volunteering opportunities in your organisation, newspapers will generally be interested and willing to run the story. Make sure that you have a clear message about the role of volunteers in your service - and how they 'make a difference' to clients. Think about good stories to promote the organisation's wellness approaches. Newspapers are interested in the human-interest side. Think about stories from the point of view of the volunteer, the client or both parties. Be sure to include your organisation's contact details for any readers who may be interested in volunteering as a result of the story.

Review where you advertise. Are you reaching out to the people in the community who are interested in being active volunteers? It may be worth considering advertising in new places – local tertiary institutions, local schools, local neighbourhood houses, local groups with newly retired people, diverse faith-based groups and temples, mosques, churches and synagogues, local volunteer resource centres and local shopping centres.

Target recruitment based on the diversity of your local area. Are there communities who aren't represented amongst your volunteers? Diversifying your volunteer workforce is a great way to also engage a more diverse client base. Reach out to diverse local groups and organisations who may have people interested in volunteering. Sell the benefits of volunteering to individuals and make it clear that you welcome and will support their participation.

Update your recruitment advertisement. Insert a couple of lines of text in volunteer advertisements to convey your message such as:

'(our organisation) is recruiting volunteers who want to help people stay active, involved and doing as much for themselves as possible. Does this sound like you?'

'(our organisation's) services – working with volunteers to help our clients stay active, connected and as independent as possible. If you are interested in joining us, then...'

Hold a volunteer open day. If possible, engage volunteers to participate. Promoting the volunteer role with real people and new stories is a great way to engage with new people. Display and distribute the Volunteer Handouts.

Send out information packs. When people enquire about volunteering roles, send out relevant Volunteer Handouts and other organisational information, such as the revised volunteer position description.

Update your website. Include some 'active volunteering' stories and photos on your website. Upload Volunteer Handouts on your website.

Increase your recruitment power by joining with other organisations. Service providers can link with other organisations to increase recruitment power. Join with other local service providers, or other 'like' organisations across the state, or with volunteer organisations. Remember these links can be virtual as well as actual - having links on the websites of other organisations is a great opportunity to direct more traffic to your own website.

Resources:

Volunteer Handouts 1 and 2

Volunteer interviewing

Hold an information session for short-listed candidates. If recruiting in large numbers, hold an information session for interested applicants. A range of topics can be discussed, including how volunteers play a vital role in supporting clients to be as active and independent as possible.

Through information, questions and answers, applicants can identify whether they are a good match with your organisation. Some potential recruits may drop out at this point if they have markedly different views about how to work with clients.

When **interviewing volunteers**, ask them to tell you about:

Their motivations for volunteering with clients and what they hope to get from the experience

Their previous experience with volunteering

Their experience assisting people with disabilities or older relatives to stay active and independent

Their hopes for their own older relatives as they age - or their hopes for themselves as they age. Where do they envisage living? What do they think might be some of the challenges of daily life?

Their previous experience working with or knowledge of:

- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people*
- *people who speak a language other than English*
- *same sex attracted / lesbian, gay or bisexual people*
- *people who are transgender*
- *people living with dementia*
- *people who have lived in government run institutions.*

Clarify your organisation's approach to volunteering. This is particularly important if the potential recruit wants to 'do things for' clients, rather than to 'do things with' clients. Clarify the organisation's approach during this interview discussion. It may be that the potential recruit simply hadn't thought about the benefits of taking an inclusive, wellness approach. Or, they may have a different philosophy, and volunteering in community care may not be the best match for them.

Discuss these issues gently but clearly. It is better for all that there is a clear understanding of the role and the organisation's preferred approach to volunteering. Remember, the new recruit may simply require some time and training to take on a new way of providing support.

Resources:

Volunteer Handouts 1 and 2

Selecting and appointing volunteers

Maintain a balanced view when selecting volunteers. It is important to maintain balance when selecting volunteers. Retain your focus on skills, knowledge, commitment and willingness to volunteer. While some people may have a limited experience of working with clients with different experiences to their own and who have diverse needs and preferences, they may also be keen to participate in training and develop their skills.

Update the volunteer letter of appointment. Insert a paragraph in your letter of appointment that clearly states that the organisation values an inclusive, wellness approach.

For example:

Congratulations and welcome to (our organisation). Our services help our clients stay active, connected and as independent as possible. Volunteers are a vital part of our team...

We are committed to ensuring all our clients and volunteers are welcomed and celebrated for who they are. We strive to create an environment that is supportive, safe and responds to individual experiences and preferences.

Volunteer induction and orientation

After selection, volunteers are taken through an induction process. Induction gives the new person a chance to learn about the organisation, their role within the organisation, policies and procedures, and values and standards of the organisation.

The formality of the induction process will vary depending on the size of the organisation, the number of new people starting and how frequently new volunteers are recruited. Volunteer organisations often recruit and induct volunteers in a group. Whether the new group to be inducted is small or large, or the induction process is formal or informal, it is important that the organisation conveys to the new volunteers the value it places on a wellness approach.

Steps to take:

1. Review your organisation's induction and orientation material and processes:
 - induction resources (for example, volunteer handbook)
 - induction training sessions.
2. Does the induction and orientation training and material make it clear to new people that the organisation works actively with clients and that volunteers are expected to take an inclusive, wellness approach to working with clients?
3. If you decide your material or training needs to be updated, take a Plan-Do-Study-Act approach.
 - **Plan** - Decide on timelines for updating your induction material or training. Allocate responsibilities for the tasks.
 - **Do** - Make changes to your material, selecting from the suggestions provided in Tool 2: Ideas for updating volunteer induction and orientation or working from other ideas generated from your staff team.
 - **Study** - Test the draft ideas with your current volunteers - ask if they feel the updated material makes the organisation's wellness approach to service delivery clear. Seek suggestions from volunteers
 - **Act** - Produce your new induction material and be ready to keep reviewing how well it is communicating your organisation's wellness messages to new recruits.

Connecting the Pieces (ESDT, 2018) is a useful resource to support volunteer induction and orientation.

<https://www.esdt.com.au/connecting-the-pieces.html>

Tool 2: Ideas for updating volunteer induction and orientation

This tool provides suggestions for updating the organisation's volunteer induction and orientation training and materials.

Update volunteer handbook

Insert selected Volunteer Handouts in your organisation's volunteer handbook. Handouts 1 and 2 provide general information about healthy and active ageing and are suitable for inclusion in volunteer handbooks.

Update volunteer induction training

Introduce the concepts of inclusive practice and inclusive services, diversity and wellness in induction training. Volunteer induction sessions may be quite short and will already be designed to cover a number of critical topics, such as occupational health and safety, and privacy and confidentiality.

The following suggestions could be included in the initial or on-going training.

Generate discussions using the Volunteer Handouts. Handouts 1 - 3 can be used as generic discussion starters around healthy and active ageing, exploring questions such as:

What do volunteers think of as healthy and active ageing?

How do volunteers think society's views on ageing have changed?

Have their own views changed as they get older or as their relatives age?

How important is it for volunteers to stay in their own home as they age? Or, how important is it for their parents or older relatives to stay in their own home as they age?

What are the positive aspects of older people living in their own homes? And what do they think the challenges might be?

What do volunteers think are the differences between physical and mental health for older people?

Does being 'active' always mean being physically active? How can you be mentally active or socially engaged as you age?

Other handouts are tailored to particular services and may be appropriate for specific inductions, such as volunteers for a community transport service.

Handout 11 contains a glossary and an overview of the CHSP for people new to community care services. This is also useful for induction training.

Handout 12 contains Frequently Asked Questions about wellness and the role of the volunteer. It includes questions that experienced volunteers may have about changes to their role over the years.

Use photographs. Photographs from your own service could be used to show volunteers what you mean when talking about diversity, inclusion and healthy and active ageing, and some of the ways your service facilitates inclusive, healthy and active ageing.

Invite an experienced volunteer or a client to talk to the group. Ask the volunteer to talk about their role, the activities they participate in and how they interact with clients. Ask them to tell the group the impacts they have observed that volunteer support can have on clients and their quality of life. They may also want to share the impact volunteering has had on their own life, such as learning new skills or insights they have gained from clients.

If a client is willing to join in with the discussion, ask them to talk about their personal experience of volunteer support, and how it may have enhanced their quality of life.

Resources:

Volunteer Handouts 1-3 and 11-12

On-going training for volunteers

Given the specific nature of volunteering, it can be difficult to schedule in on-going training when people are usually part-time and often working just a few hours a week or a month.

It is important that volunteers understand that they will continue to learn about their role throughout their volunteering career. The challenge for service providers is to provide on-the-job training that is appropriate to the volunteer job role and requirements. Many volunteer-based service providers recommend that training is provided in a relatively informal environment, integrated with team meetings and, where possible, includes lunch and a social atmosphere.

Volunteers should be notified of the organisation's requirements to attend additional sessions before they commit to taking on that role. This on-going supervision or training will vary across organisations, service types and volunteer roles. In some cases, volunteers may be attending weekly volunteer and staff get-togethers whilst others may only be able to attend on a six-monthly basis.

Irrespective of the wide range of variables, all volunteers in services should be accessing some combination of:

- formal training - that is relaxed and appropriately targeted to the volunteer group
- informal group get togethers - with a focus on providing an opportunity for volunteers to socialise, ask questions and gain support from the group
- on-the-job learning
- mentoring
- supervision.

Within each of these methods, service providers should ensure that messages about wellness, diversity and inclusion principles are delivered and reinforced and that volunteers have adequate opportunities to explore and develop their ideas on these topics.

Steps to take:

1. Review your volunteer training content and approach.
2. Does the organisation's training approach and program provide appropriate opportunities for volunteers to develop their skills and understanding of how to take a wellness approach to service delivery? Does the training provide a mix of formal and informal approaches, on and off-the- job training as well as regular supervision?
3. If you decide your material or training needs to be updated, take a Plan-Do- Study-Act approach.
 - **Plan** - Decide on timelines for updating the training schedule or material. Allocate responsibilities for the tasks.
 - **Do** - Make changes to training material, selecting from the suggestions provided in Tool 3: Ideas for updating on-going training for volunteers or working from other ideas generated from your staff team.
 - **Study** - Test the draft ideas with your current volunteers - ask if they feel the updated material communicates the organisation's wellness approach to service delivery. Seek suggestions from volunteers.
 - **Act** - Review revised training material and approaches. It is very easy to do a quick survey, or just a chat, with volunteers to find out if training is meeting their needs and to seek their suggestions for other training.

Tool 3: Ideas for updating on-going training for volunteers

This tool provides suggestions for updating the organisation's on-going training for volunteers.

Service providers need to be strategic and make the best use of training opportunities for volunteers, as volunteers cannot be expected to attend too many training sessions in addition to their normal volunteer duties. Sessions should be well-planned, stimulating, inviting and run for an appropriate length of time. As with all training for volunteers, there will be multiple messages.

- The volunteer contribution is highly valued by the organisation.
- Volunteers can make a meaningful contribution to clients and their quality of life.
- Volunteers need to work within reasonable parameters set by the organisation. This protects everyone by making sure the volunteer is following reasonable OHS procedures and working safely with the client. Discussions should include what volunteers can and can't do to stay within safe boundaries for the client and themselves.

In parallel with training or group sessions, there is enormous scope for on-the-job training. Role-modelling and active support from volunteer coordinators and staff working alongside volunteers is an important training method for volunteers.

Training may be quite informal and be delivered through monthly volunteer get-togethers.

Formal training sessions

Consult volunteers about their ideas for training.

Use a theme-based approach to training so that you can explore issues in more depth.

Partner with local organisations to provide joint training for volunteers. Volunteers will generally value the opportunity to network with other volunteers. By combining resources, service providers may be able to bring an experienced trainer to provide a session for all staff.

Explain to volunteers how services operate.

Volunteers may only see a small slice of the service. Use training to explain the process for someone becoming a client (assessment) and how the organisation works out the services required by the client (care planning). Avoid jargon where possible. Explain how volunteers play a critical role, with particular emphasis on their contribution to service monitoring. To make the session more meaningful, consider:

- bringing in an Assessment Officer to talk to the group to discuss how they collect information from the client and how they make decisions about services
- showing the group some of the client management tools and templates, for example assessment tools and care plans.

Volunteer Handout 11 provides a glossary of terms and a plain English overview of services.

Have sessions on the various volunteer roles in your organisation. Use the Volunteer Handouts to promote discussions. If you only have one key role (for example, volunteer transport), you could focus discussions on why this role is important.

Use a case study approach. Prepare hypothetical case studies or anonymous case studies. Compare 'doing for' approaches to 'doing with' and discuss the impacts each can have on the client's capacity and functioning. Ensure that this discussion is broader than physical capacity – talk about the impacts on self-esteem and confidence if someone is not empowered to make decisions in their own life.

Invite a physiotherapist or occupational therapist to talk about their work. Ask them to talk about how volunteers can best support clients. Make the session interactive so that therapists can demonstrate their techniques.

Provide computer access to online training. Set up a computer so that volunteers can access online training to support their understanding of issues impacting people they support. There are lots of no cost, low cost online resources

Take volunteers to **visit a local community health centre** or agencies such as Vision Australia or an Independent Living Centre to see independent living aids.

Informal training

Combine social occasions and training or information sessions. Distribute Volunteer Handouts and facilitate discussions around relevant topics.

Update volunteers on policies and priorities of the funding body and relevant government departments.

Invite staff to meet and socialise with the volunteers.

Generate an on-going list of Frequently Asked Questions. Volunteers can easily raise their questions at social functions and the coordinator can provide written responses that could go into a volunteer newsletter.

On-the-job learning

Buddy a volunteer with the coordinator or a paid staff member during their probation period.

Encourage the new volunteer to observe another staff member or volunteer.

Train staff in role modelling approaches.

Observe the volunteer in their role. Provide them with constructive feedback about how to adjust their approach, if required.

Supervision

Provide supervision feedback to volunteers on a regular basis. The degree of supervision formality needs to match the volunteer's role and their level of independence. However, all volunteers are entitled to some level of one-to-one time with a supervisor, particularly so that they can raise any questions or seek feedback in a comfortable setting.

People respond better to 'information sessions and workshops' rather than sessions which are called 'training'. Free lunch is a great incentive to get people to attend.

Volunteer Coordinator, Rural Council

Engaging and motivating volunteers

Sometimes the challenge for organisations can be maintaining volunteers' engagement and motivation, particularly during a period of change.

Addressing engagement and motivation of volunteers will not require as formal an approach as the revision of recruitment processes. Maintaining engagement and motivation is partly a reflection of the organisation's culture and working environment. It is important that organisations welcome and engage volunteers, encouraging a sense of belonging and that volunteers' contributions are acknowledged and valued.

To maintain engagement and motivation, it is important to keep channels open for volunteers to provide feedback, particularly so they can indicate any concerns about their role. Review the feedback you are receiving from volunteers and observe whether there are obvious signs of loss of motivation, such as not turning up for regular shifts or failing to notify an absence.

As volunteers often work independently without direct staff supervision, it is important to structure in regular opportunities for volunteers and supervisors to meet and discuss any issues or concerns.

Tool 4: *Engaging and motivating volunteers to use a wellness approach* provides suggestions for maintaining volunteer engagement and motivation.

When volunteers understand the aspects of wellness, they have enthusiastically embraced the concepts.

Volunteer Coordinator, Metro Council

Tool 4: Engaging and motivating volunteers in a wellness approach

Ensure that volunteers understand that changes to the way they do things may happen from time to time, but volunteer roles and assistance remain as vital as ever.

- Engage volunteers in thinking and talking about ways to help clients stay more active and independent. Find an accessible, jargon-free way to talk about a wellness approach with volunteers. Explore phrases such as 'healthy and active ageing' or 'putting our clients at the centre of what we do' or 'taking a wellness approach to working with clients'. Find a phrase that volunteers can relate to as your organisation's way of talking about wellness, diversity and inclusive practice.
- Engage volunteers in thinking about the ways they wish to age. Would they be keen to live in their current home? Do they see themselves moving into a retirement village? Engage volunteers in thinking about the benefits for clients of staying more active and independent. Engage volunteers in thinking about the sort of lifestyle they would want if they found themselves with a disability or a family member had a disability. Would they see themselves as wanting to be an active, engaged member of the community? What are some sorts of assistance that could make the difference for someone living with a disability?
- Emphasise to volunteers the benefits that their work provides to the organisation, clients and the community.
- Introducing changes to the way volunteers operate needs to be handled carefully and thoughtfully. As with any change process, people can misunderstand the organisational messages.
- If you find one or more volunteers embrace the wellness approach earlier than others, it can be useful to engage them as a change champion. Often it is more convincing to hear from a peer than from a supervisor.
- If volunteers work with staff, make sure that staff have been trained to model the behaviour you are looking for. It is important that staff can demonstrate their techniques to volunteers. They also need to consistently use these approaches, as this will help volunteers develop the confidence to try something new.
- Provide plenty of opportunities for volunteers to have a chat about some of the new approaches the organisation is taking. Set a time for volunteers to observe any changes in clients; for example, given that volunteers may only work once or twice a fortnight, three to six months may be reasonable. Give volunteers guidelines for what you are interested in observing - it may be positive comments from the client or their carer, or seeing the client become more involved in an activity.

Maintaining momentum

In his change management model, John Kotter recommends ‘anchoring’ changes in the culture. For any change to be sustained Kotter maintains, *‘It needs to become embedded in the new way we do things around here.’*

‘A major part of this is for you, as change leader, to articulate the connections between new behaviours and organisational success. This is where you - and your coalition team - talk about progress every chance you get. Tell success stories about change, and repeat other success stories that you hear.’

John Kotter *The Heart of Change*

This approach of sharing success has been evident with the introduction of the Active Service Model approach in 2009, and then continued by the current wellness approach. While there were some initial concerns amongst community care services, the success stories have largely overtaken these concerns.

There have been clear and consistent messages about:

- the way clients have positively embraced wellness changes and the positive impacts it has had for them
- the flow-through of benefits - if clients are doing well, then so are their carers
- the way staff have positively embraced wellness changes. The message from staff is that the changes have made their role more fulfilling. With a focus on wellness, diversity and inclusion, people have had opportunities to have their ideas considered in ways that weren’t always available previously. Staff are also more satisfied if they see their clients doing well
- the fact that implementing a wellness approach is not really that difficult - in fact, it’s mostly quite simple. Much of the focus is about changing attitudes and ways of thinking, with an emphasis on what people can do, rather than what they cannot.

Tips for maintaining momentum

Volunteer-based organisations are often very skilled in identifying and promoting positive stories. Some ideas for maintaining momentum around the wellness approach are discussed below.

Gathering and sharing good news stories. These can be shared with the staff group - just at morning tea or during staff meetings. Some of these positive stories could be from the perspective of the client. They could also be positive stories about volunteers, carers or the organisation. It is great to collect unexpected stories. For example, when council staff changed their approach to planning how they provide social support activities, a number of things happened. Initially, clients came to the group and participated in activities organised by the staff. When clients were invited to take a greater role in planning activities, staff found that clients embraced the opportunity. Clients were involved in co-designing program activities including purchasing goods, managing budgets, staffing, feasibility planning, considering potential risks and identifying how to minimise risks.

Good news stories can be written up in newsletters or placed on noticeboards - they don't need to be long and using photos can convey a lot of information. This is a great way to keep sharing information with clients, carers, volunteers and staff. It can also elicit other stories that you may not be aware of.

Identify and focus on the benefits of engaging volunteers in implementing a wellness approach. Whatever the size and structure of the organisation, there are benefits from volunteers taking up a wellness approach. When paid and volunteer staff adopt the same approach to service delivery, clients benefit from the consistency. Volunteers stand to benefit by developing a greater understanding of their role in supporting health and wellbeing and deriving greater satisfaction from their role. They can also benefit through developing their own health literacy and understanding how they can apply principles of healthy and active ageing to their own lives.

Celebrate. While it is important not to impose too much on volunteer time, it is important to schedule opportunities for celebrations. These could just be morning or afternoon teas, or volunteer lunches on special occasions, such as National Volunteer Week in May each year (refer to Volunteering Australia's website for the date as it changes each year: www.volunteeringaustralia.org) or International Volunteer Day on December 5th. Celebrations could also be in the form of certificates or some sort of acknowledgement pinned up on a notice board.

Training. Maintaining formal and informal training is a great way to keep people involved and learning. It is also a good forum for sharing information across the organisation. On-going training also communicates the message that this is 'part of the way we do things now - it is a continuous improvement strategy'.

Volunteers may notice changes in clients or hear from them about changes that affect them. They are an important resource for clients and a link between the staff and people in the community. They play an active role in supporting the model.

Manager, Metro Council

Other resources

This section provides links to relevant resources related to the CHSP and HACCC PYP program, Wellness, Reablement, Diversity and volunteering. All links are functional at the time of publication

Commonwealth Department of Health resources and links

CHSP Digital Landing Page

www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/wellness-and-reablement-initiative

The CHSP Digital Landing Page is the gateway to a range of helpful resources to support a consistent understanding and approach to wellness and reablement across Australia. In addition to the practical Guide for staff and the Change Toolkit for managers it includes access to the CHSP Reablement Community of Practice and a Podcast series – Joining the Dots.

CHSP Reablement Community of Practice

www.more-good-days.com.au

More Good Days Community of Practice is an online interactive network that enables CHSP providers to work together, share information and resources and discuss best practice strategies to support Australians as they age.

Aged Care Diversity Framework initiative

www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/aged-care-diversity-framework-initiative

CHSP Programme Manual

www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/commonwealth-home-support-programme-chsp-manual

Living Well at Home – CHS Good Practice Guide

www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/living-well-at-home-chsp-good-practice-guide

Aged Care Quality Standards

www.agedcarequality.gov.au/providers/standards

Victorian Department of Health resources and links

Department of Health Home and Community Care webpage

www2.health.vic.gov.au/ageing-and-aged-care/home-and-community-care

Victorian HACCC PYP Program Manual

www2.health.vic.gov.au/ageing-and-aged-care/home-and-community-care/hacc-program-for-younger-people/hacc-program-guidelines

Local Eastern Region

Eastern Sector Development Team (ESDT)

The ESDT supports CHSP providers across the Melbourne's Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) to implement wellness, reablement and diversity practice.

A range of resources, videos and tools are available from the ESDT webpage at **www.esdt.com.au**

Video resources

ABC iview: Old People's Home For 4 Year Olds
(Series 1 and 2)

www.iview.abc.net.au/show/old-people-s-home-for-4-year-olds

A group of older adults living alone, join a group of lively 4-year-olds in an intergenerational play school for learning, connection and friendship.

BBC One: The Young Ones
(Three one-hour episodes)

www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00tq4d3

Six celebrities take part in an experiment that explores the prevention of ageing.

What if it were possible to turn back time? Could it be that we all have the power to think ourselves young again? Six well-loved celebrities in their 70s and 80s - spend one week living as though it were their heyday - 1975 - to see if reliving your youth can make you young again.

The episodes of The Young Ones are not available for viewing from the BBC website however, there are clips available from the series and information about the participants, the experiment and suggestions for ageing well.

World Health Organization: Healthy ageing - adding life to years (1 min 20 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LL-TJjCJPal>

For the first time in human history, the world will soon have more older people than children. The human race is ageing and we are unprepared. Unless we change the way we think and act about ageing, we will miss the opportunity to age in good health and to build a society where older people are respected and valued members of society.

Volunteering resources

Volunteering Australia
www.volunteeringaustralia.org

Volunteering Victoria
www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au

Victorian Government's volunteering portal
www.volunteer.vic.gov.au

