

Health & Wellbeing Update

(June / July 2024)

International Men's Health Week

International Men's Health Week celebrates its 30th anniversary this year and takes place from Monday, June 10, to Sunday, June 16, 2024.

This year, the focus is on Men's Health Checks.

Men's Health Week is a great opportunity for organisations, workplaces, and communities to focus on some of the different ways we can keep men and boys healthier.

The purpose of the week is to highlight the importance of having good holistic health. It encourages people to engage in conversations around ways to improve health habits and the prevention, early detection and treatment of health conditions.

The week also provides an opportunity to discuss what could be done to support better health outcomes for men and gives us a reason to come together to celebrate the men in our communities.

Here are some options to help you recognise Men's health Week:

- Organise for [a Men's Health Peer Education \(MHPE\)](#) Volunteer from DVA MHPE Program to come and talk to a group about the importance of preventative health.
- Provide flyers to veterans and let them know they may be able to receive a one off or annual comprehensive health assessment with a GP, through the [Veterans' Health Check](#) program funded by DVA.
- Host a physical activity (e.g. community walk, yoga session, strength training)
- Facilitate a healthy eating session or cooking class
- Host a social activity
- Organise a talk on healthy sleep habits
- Organise a book club

To discuss your ideas or to find a volunteer in your area contact your local [Community Support Adviser](#).

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Family & domestic violence help

Family and domestic violence is never acceptable.

The Department of Veterans Affairs can help you when you experience family and domestic violence. This includes counselling, short-term accommodation, payments and other supports.

What is family and domestic violence?

Family and domestic violence is any action that is violent, threatening, manipulating or controlling, or that causes a family or household member to feel scared. It can be physical, verbal, emotional, sexual or psychological abuse.

The behaviour can be one-off or ongoing. It may be intentional or unintentional. Below are some examples of what family and domestic violence can look like.

- You fear for your own safety, your children or others in your family.
- Someone is preventing your basic needs or those of a child being met.
- You have limited or no control of money, including your own.
- You are not allowed to make decisions that impact you or those around you.
- You fear for the safety of your pet or things you care about.
- You are not allowed to visit friends and family, or they can't visit you.
- Another person is restricting your access to the community for work, medical attention, recreation, or socialising.
- You are not allowed to make your own decisions about your faith or beliefs.

The following organisations can help you if you're concerned about the way someone is treating you or a loved one. They can also help if you're concerned about your own behaviour.

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling provides 24-hour free counselling and support to you and your family. If you need immediate counselling or someone to talk to, you can call Open Arms 24/7 on 1800 011 046

Mensline Australia is a free telephone and online counselling service offering support for Australian men anywhere, anytime. Call 1800 78 99 78

1800RESPECT is the national domestic, family and sexual violence counselling, information and support service. Call 1800 737 732

For more information go to [Family & domestic violence help | Department of Veterans' Affairs \(dva.gov.au\)](https://www.dva.gov.au/family-domestic-violence-help)

DVA NEWS

Smoke alarms for veterans with hearing impairment

To support veterans living with hearing conditions, we provide assistive listening and hearing devices through the Rehabilitation Appliances Program (RAP).

The devices offered through the RAP program are designed to improve a veteran's ability to hear in specific listening situations.

While standard smoke alarms are suitable for most people with a mild to moderate hearing impairment, people with severe hearing loss are unlikely to hear a standard smoke alarm.

For these veterans, DVA provides specialised smoke alarm packages that include a high quality smoke alarm, vibration pad, and flashing light. The addition of the vibration pad and flashing light improves the ability to respond quickly and independently during a potential emergency.

Veterans may be eligible to receive a specialised smoke alarm package through the RAP if they:

- have been diagnosed with profound hearing loss in the better functioning ear, and
- hold a Veteran Gold Card, or a Veteran White Card for a related accepted condition.

To get a specialised package, organise an appointment with your GP, audiologist, audiometrist, occupational therapist or hearing specialist.

Also, check out what other assistive listening and hearing devices are available through the RAP to help veterans live safely and independently.

Men's Health Peer Education Program Update



Men's Health Peer Education (MHPE) is a national volunteer health literacy program aimed at raising the veteran community's awareness of men's health issues, the specific health and wellbeing impacts of military service and the benefits of early intervention. The program encourages veterans to adopt healthy behaviours, seek support early and share responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

During National Volunteers Week our wonderful MHPE Program Volunteers came together in their states to be recognised for the contributions they make in supporting men's health in the veteran community. The day was an opportunity to thank and acknowledge their dedication and continued support for the program. During the day the volunteers also undertook training on various topics and discussed opportunities for continued collaboration and how they can support one another and connect with the broader veteran community.

For more information about the Men's Health Peer Education Program go to [Men's Health Peer Education \(MHPE\)](#) or contact your local community support adviser.



MHPE Volunteers Queensland



MHPE Volunteers Victoria

Latest News

Scamwatch - [Huge prize pool give-away! Too good to be true?](#)

[Knock-knock, are third-party organisations trying to get your attention?](#)

[Biceps and brews](#)

For more latest news go to [Latest news | Department of Veterans' Affairs \(dva.gov.au\)](#) you can subscribe to DVA e-news and Vetaffairs.

DVA TV

DVA TV is dedicated to providing information about the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the services and support we provide to Australia's veteran and defence community. Recent videos - now available for viewing.

[Get treatment while you wait on a claim \(PAMT\)](#)

[Here for you when you are at your lowest](#)

[How The Psychiatric Assistance Dogs Program is helping veterans with PTSD](#)



GRANTS AND FUNDING

Saluting Their Service Commemorative Grants Program

The Australian Government is inviting eligible organisations to apply for grant funding under the Saluting Their Service Commemorative Grants Program.



The program is designed to provide funding for projects that promote appreciation and understanding of the experiences of service and the roles that those who served have played, and to preserve, add to the sum knowledge on, or provide access to information about Australia's wartime heritage.

There are 2 categories of grants available under the program:

1. Community Grants (STS-CG)

Grants to a maximum of \$10,000 are available for local, community-based projects and activities.

2. Major Grants (STS-MG)

Grants between \$10,001 and \$150,000 are available for major commemorative projects and activities that are significant from a national, state, territory and/or regional perspective.

For more information go to [Current Grant Opportunity View - STS: GrantConnect \(grants.gov.au\)](#)

Applications Close: 9:00 pm AEST on 20 June 2024

Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust

AVCAT supports the children & grandchildren of Australian Veterans with the cost of tertiary education. We provide scholarships that help pay for textbooks and expenses and help ease the cost of living. For more information about eligibility and application process go to [Scholarships | Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust \(avcat.org.au\)](#)



**2025
Scholarships
APPLICATIONS
OPEN
18 AUGUST**

Tertiary scholarships for the children & grandchildren of ex-serving veterans

**Applications Close
31 October**

avcat.org.au

HEALTH & WELLBEING

Open Arms Veterans & Families Counselling

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling (formerly VVCS) is Australia's leading provider of high quality mental health assessment and clinical counselling services for Australian veterans and their families. Open Arms offers a range of free group programs to assist the serving and ex-serving community, as well as their families live their best life.

Group programs calendar for July to December 2024 available soon. Go to [Programs | Open Arms](#) to register for any of the program.

Programs include beating the blues, building better relationships, doing anger differently, understanding anxiety, managing pain, stepping out, recovery from trauma, relaxation and stress management. For information, support and bookings go to [Get support | Open Arms](#) or phone 1800 011 046.



1800 011 046
OpenArms.gov.au



COMMUNITY DATES and DAYS

June

[Pride Month](#)

[Bowel cancer awareness month](#)

[Men's Health Week](#)

10 – 16 June

[National Blood Donor Week](#)

10 – 16 June

[International Day of Yoga](#)

21 June

[PTSD Awareness Day](#)

27 June

July

[Dry July](#)

[NAIDOC Week](#)

7 – 14 July

[National Diabetes Week](#)

14 – 20 July

[National Pain Week](#)

24 – 30 July

[International Day of Friendship](#)

30 July

[National Tree Day](#)

30 July

Bowls GR8 for Brains

Chirnside Park Country Club Bowls Club are running Bowls Days for Veterans and First Responders who may suffer from PTSD.

For anyone who has never bowled before we are able to assist and provide bowls too. **There is NO charge for this bowls program.**

Program runs on every third Sunday of the Month – which means our next day is this coming 16th June at 10am for 10.30am start.

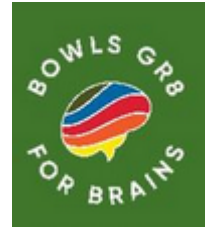
These days are not competitive, rather just roll the bowls and have a general chat followed by a coffee after.

The program is being extended to **Morwell** the next session will be held on Sunday 30th June.

If you require additional information, please email me your phone number and a time that is suitable to chat.

To assist with organising, please email gavin.wall@iinet.net.au

<https://www.facebook.com/BowlsGr8forBrains/>



Goorambat Veterans' Retreat



Goorambat Veterans Retreat Inc (GVR) is a registered not-for-profit organisation supporting Veterans and their families. GVR is located at 21 Trewin Road, Goorambat about 20km north of Benalla in Victoria. The Retreat is established in a serene and natural environment with individual accommodation and campsites available, along with shared meals and community areas. Our uniquely Australian country setting allows Veterans, with or without other family members, to focus on their wellbeing while reconnecting with social and support networks if

necessary. It also provides a great opportunity for Veterans to simply to kick back, relax and enjoy the peaceful surroundings.

For more information about about GVR and services go to [Veteran accommodation, advice & advocacy | Goorambat Veterans Retreat | Victoria](#)

Operation Grain Harvest



A nationwide program to motivate/mobilise/assist former ADF servicemen and women to work in our National Grain Harvest. The objective is to provide former and retired ADF members with an opportunity to earn good wages doing seasonal harvest work in the Grains Industry. For some, this could be the start of annual harvest work, as a superannuation/pre-summer holiday top up or caravan update program. For a few, it could even be the start of a new career as a well-travelled professional Grain Harvester, operating similar machines at good rates in many locations around the world. For more information [Operation](#)

[Grain Harvest Assist - Grain Jobs for Ex Servicemen \(opgha.org.au\)](#)

Is the Mobile Service Centre coming to you?

What is the Mobile Service Centre (MSC)?

The MSC is essentially an 'office on wheels' that travels to rural and regional locations throughout Australia. The Services Australia staff on board the MSCs have been trained by DVA and can provide information about DVA services as well as assisted access to online services. [When and where to find mobile service centres - Mobile service centres - Services Australia](#)

Location	Date & Time
Cohuna, in front of the visitors centre, King George Street	7 June, 9 am to 4 pm
Kerang, behind the memorial hall, Nolan Street	11 June, 9 am to 4 pm
Pyramid Hill, opposite the memorial hall, Kelly Street	12 June, 9:30 am to 4:00 pm
Inglewood, near the community hub, Market Street	13 June, 9 am to 3 pm
Boort, adjacent to the information centre, Godfrey Street	18 June, 10 am to 4 pm
Wycheproof, in front of the Men's Shed, Broadway	19 June, 9:30 am to 4:00 pm
Charlton, in front of the Shire Office, High Street	20 June, 9 am to 4 pm
Donald, near Donald Mall, Woods Street	21 June, 9 am to 4 pm
St Arnaud, near the town hall, Napier Street	24 June, 9:30 am to 4:00 pm
Dunolly, opposite the Senior Citizens Hall, Bull Street	25 June, 9:30 am to 4:00 pm
Avoca, opposite the visitor information centre, High Street	26 June, 9 am to 4 pm
Clunes, adjacent to Collins Place, Fraser Street	27 June, 9:00 am to 2:30 pm

Reclink Community Mondays at Werribee Sports Share

Every Monday from 10:30am we have zumba, tai chi, reflexology, a community lunch for all, access sports equipment, clothing and bikes.

For more information please contact Brendan on 0448 113 131



Community Support News

April and May have been bustling months filled with community engagement. I've had the pleasure of facilitating two successful Veteran Community Networking events, one in Epping and another in Shepparton.

These gatherings attracted state-based and local veteran organisations, as well as community health organisations, fostering valuable connections and knowledge sharing to better support veterans and their families.

In addition to these events, I've been active in various other engagements, such as attending the Simpson Barrack Open Day, the Frankston Veterans & their Families Expo, and the Vietnamese Freedom Day Club 16th Anniversary Celebration. I've also conducted presentations, including one for the Partners of Veterans Association Inc, and another on Living Independently for a group at a retirement village in Mt Martha.

During National Volunteer Week I had the pleasure of meeting with the Victorian Men's Health Peer Education volunteers, where they underwent training and were presented with certificates signed by the Repatriation Commission Kahlil Fegan DSC AM which were presented by Michael Harper the Victorian Deputy Commissioner.

Looking ahead, planning is underway for several Regional Networking events throughout the remainder of the year, including in Sale, Albury/Wodonga, Mornington Peninsula, and Warrnambool.

For further information about any upcoming networking events, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards

Karen Cain

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