Health in Saleyards

Bringing the health professional to the farmer

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Introduction and Rationale

Some possible barriers to farmers attending for health check ups:

- Distance to a clinic
- Time: travel, off farm
- Cultural: “she’ll be right”
- Cost: esp. if not bulk-billed
- Health literacy / awareness
- Fear of unknown
Some supporting NCFH data

**AgriSafe™ clients, last routine check up (%)**, \(n = 56\)
- Never: 37.7%
- > 3 y.: 14.3%
- 1-3 y.: 11.5%
- < 1 y.: 29.5%

**Arthritis study freq. of GP visits (%)**, \(n = 74\)
- Annually or less: 26.7%
- 2-4 times/y.: 52.1%
- Every 1-2 mths: 19.2%

**Median distance to GP**: 26 km (1-212 km)

*Personal communication: Mark Atcheson, Agrisafe Clinician*

*Unpublished NCFH arthritis study data*
Other NCFH health assessments

Sustainable Farm Families™
3 year comprehensive health program including health checks conducted in rural communities

AgriSafe™ Clinics
Comprehensive agricultural health checks conducted at NCFH
Saleyard health assessments by NCFH

- Warrnambool Dairy Conference 2009 *(basis for this project)*
- WA Dairy Conference
- Camden Dairy Conference
- Sheepvention 2011 *(respiratory screening only)*
- Hamilton Weaner Sales 2012

Planned: Warrnambool Show, October 2012
NCFH @ Weaner Sales 2012, Hamilton Livestock Exchange

- Major livestock sales event, January 4-12
- Advance publicity: media, stock agents etc.
- Strategic location between saleyard and canteen
- 3 clinical areas with health professionals
- Ethics approval*
- Admin support

* Multidisciplinary Ethics Committee, South West Health Care
National Centre for Farmer Health is offering **Free Health Assessments** at the **2012 Weaner Sales**

**Assessment include:** Cholesterol, glucose and blood pressure tests, performed by qualified health professionals.

2nd - 14th February – In front of the canteen

**It’s not often you’re given a free investment**

Invest in the most important aspect of your agricultural business (YOU) with a free health assessment at the: **2012 Hamilton Weaner Sales**

**Tuesday 3rd – Thursday 12th January**

Health Assessments by Registered Nurses include:
- Blood glucose and cholesterol levels measured;
- Eyesight check;
- Height, weight and body mass measurements;
- Blood pressure;
- Respiratory check; and
- Well-being assessment

No time at the weaner sales? Contact our AgrSafe clinicians for a free comprehensive agricultural occupational health and safety assessment on 55518533 prior to or post the sales.

Your health doesn’t just affect you - it impacts your family.
Site layout

Famous Hamilton Saleyards Canteen

Clinical area 1 *
Clinical area 2 *
Clinical area 3 *

* BP, glucose, cholesterol, BMI
K10 discussion in each area

To saleyards 100 m

Registration, admin, q’aires
Height
Weight
Eye chart
What’s assessed?

- Demographics: occupation, date of birth.
- Height, weight, BMI, distance vision, BP
- Mental health psychological distress (Kessler K10)
- Q’aire: overall health, body pain, smoking, alcohol*, farm safety/personal protection
- Random blood glucose and cholesterol
- Referral (to GP) guidelines:
  \[ \text{BP} \geq 140/90, \text{glucose} \geq 5.5 \text{ (F)}, \geq 6.5 \text{ (NF)}, \text{chol} \geq 5.5, \text{K10} \geq 20 \]

* The AUDIT alcohol consumption questions (AUDIT-C): an effective brief screening test for problem drinking. Arch Intern Med. 1998 Sep 14;158(16):1789-95
“Health Passport” given to participants
### Results 1

*n = 152, M 86.8%, F 13.2%*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (years)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>14.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weight (kg)</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>150.0</td>
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<td>15.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMI (kg/m³)</td>
<td>16.14</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blood glucose level</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>1.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cholesterol level</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Prevalence (%) of health risks

- High BMI: 73%
- Hypertension Risk: 53.3%
- Diabetes Risk: 17.8%
- High Cholesterol Risk: 42.8%
- High Psychological Distress: 48%

One participant referred to A/E at Hamilton Base Hospital due to high BP
Results 3

Current smoker 9.9%
Previous smoker 30.3%
Current alcohol drinker 90.6%

Helmet usage: motorbike or ATV

- All the time
- Usually
- Occasionally
- Never
Alcohol consumption (n = 136 *)

Any alcohol

- 46.3% Monthly
- 19.9% Weekly
- 14% 2-4 times/wk
- 19.9% 5+ times/wk

High risk drinking

- 29.4% Never
- 33.8% Monthly
- 20.6% Weekly
- 10.3% 2-4 times/wk
- 5.9% 5 times/wk

* 16 declined to answer
## More safety questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you use?</th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No or rarely (%)</th>
<th>Occas. (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protective gear: farm chemicals</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protective gear: farm machinery</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>36.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seatbelts: road</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>5.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seatbelts: farm</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun protection</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Study Limitations

• Most bloods *non-fasting* (difficult as canteen next door!)

• Difficulties with *self-reporting* – tendency for response rate reduced if “socially unacceptable” eg. high risk drinking, safety questions

• Small numbers, so more health checks planned!
Conclusions

• Health assessments achievable “in the field”
• Significant lifestyle risks identified
• Safety issues of concern
• Lower smoking rates encouraging
• Support by saleyard community and farmers

Overall the health assessments were well received, plans underway to do more at future similar events
Farmer health checks well received

By IAN WHITING

OVER 150 people took the opportunity to have a free health check at the Hamilton wool sale and the National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH) says the program was well received but some of the results are concerning.

In a novel approach the NCFH set up a health check centre at the sale yards and 152 farmers, agents and truck drivers attending the weaver sales took the opportunity to have a free health check. Director of the NCFH, Sue Brumby, said the program was very positively received.

"People were really appreciative that we were actually at the weaver sales. Whilst they were a little bit hesitant at first there were quite a few friendly faces that they already knew inside the tent and I think that that actually really helped."

"132 people came in for a health check, 132 men and 20 women, an average age of 55, with ages ranging from 18 to over 90," she said.

However according to Ms Brumby some of the results were concerning.

"73 per cent were in the overweight category which is high. In terms of alcohol, 90 per cent consumed alcohol, so 136 of the 152 consumed alcohol and of those 70.6 per cent self reported that they drank at high risk levels at least monthly. So that’s more than six standard drinks without your blood alcohol level going back to zero in one occasion. If you are a man that is seven drinks or more and if you are a woman more than four drinks. So that is actually quite high and is one of the highest groups we have ever had."

"Again it is an area that you can help to modify, if you know about it. Perhaps a few less drinks and a few more alcohol free nights," she said.

Other information collected asked about Protective Equipment (PPE) and how stressed people were feeling.

Ms Brumby said 118 people said they rode a motorcycle or quad bike and of those only 18.5 per cent were a helmet all the time and 55 per cent never wear a helmet.

"So for us there are some messages there, you know we have seen a change in time of people wearing seatbelts on the road and helmet wearing is one area"
Questions?