

# Seymour Health Services Newsletter

Seymour District Memorial Hospital

Barrabill House

Ambulatory Care Centre

Community Services



## Meeting community needs

Seymour District Memorial Hospital is offering new programs aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of two separate groups of residents, those suffering from chronic illness and farming families.

### Chronic Disease Management

A new Chronic Disease Management team has been established within the Community Services Division at the hospital, and will work mainly with older residents in the community suffering from respiratory, cardiac and diabetes-related illnesses.

"Chronic diseases are on the increase, particularly heart disease," Community Services Director Louise Sharkey said.

"It is indicative of people living longer."

She said the Department of Human Services for several years has worked to establish chronic disease management programs to improve the care for older people suffering from such diseases, mainly in large metropolitan and regional hospitals.

The Seymour hospital in 2007 received funding to implement its program until 2010, targeting the over-65 population and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients over the age of 45.

The Chronic Disease Management Team consists of Sarah Bayes, a primary care nurse at the hospital since October last year, Melissa Mollenhauer, an occupational therapist at the hospital since December last year, and newcomer Wendy Plant, who in May moved to Australia from the UK to work at the Seymour service.

In recent months team members have looked at policy and procedures, local need identification, and undergone training in chronic disease management techniques and support.

Working with local general practitioners and other



■ Sarah Bayes, Melissa Mollenhauer, Karen Richards and Wendy Plant collectively are members of two teams that will provide services to those suffering from chronic disease or farm families.

healthier lifestyle and gain more independence.

"The aim is to provide constant support — at varying levels of intensity — until a client becomes more independent in their self care, and then taper off with exiting community programs," Ms Sharkey said.

With support from the Division of GPs, the team have supported their program aims and referral

community to assist in the self-management of these conditions.

### Sustainable Farm Families

Farmers from Seymour and the Lower Hume district have an exciting opportunity to attend a Sustainable Farm Families program on July 24 and 25.

Sustainable Farm Families is an award-winning initiative

participated in the program and 100 per cent of participants recommended it to other farmers and helped shape the program.

District Nursing Manager Karen Richards and Primary Care Nurse Sarah Bayes will lead the Sustainable Farm Families program in the Seymour and Lower Hume district.

"The program covers a range of areas, including

"All participants also have a health assessment available to all farming men and women."

Victoria Agriculture Minister Joe Helper said: "The Sustainable Farm Families program focus is to improve the physical and mental health of farmers and their families."

"This program is about recognising that, for many Victorian farming families,

reported that it enhanced their overall health with everything from better eating to improved farm safety.

Some also found that they were able to make better decisions because they had a perspective of how important their health and families were in their lives.

The hospital is looking for at least 20 farm families to take part in the program.