



NEWSLETTER

Community Health

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Learn about our key healthy lifestyle messages and community services.

May happenings!

This month we have several health weeks and days to acknowledge and support, along with some great initiatives from the Health Promotion team to promote or advise the outcomes of, read more within.

May is the best month to also ensure that you are taking care of your health in preparation for the winter colds and other illnesses that are around. See your GP or local Pharmacist for the latest vaccinations against these illnesses. Ensure you get enough rest, fluids and good food if you are unwell and stay home to recover fully.



Swan Hill District Health
Connected Care. Best Experience.

Meet our team

Kristi is our Dietetics Manager and has worked at SHDH for over seven years and as a dietitian for over 20 years.

As dietetics manager Kristi manages the team of dietitians that work across SHDH and also works in maternity, community clinics and headspace. Kristi loves working in women and adolescent health, wanting to improve health outcomes for all.



Kristi loves spending time with friends and family and walking along the river with her dog

Dietitians Week 2026!

May 11 to 17 is Dietitians Week with the theme of collective impact. At Swan Hill District Health, Community Health we have seven dietitians on our team.

Our dietitians provide a variety of services including hospital inpatients, aged care, food services and community appointments that cover a wide variety of health topics. We see clients across the lifespan for many conditions including general healthy eating, malnutrition, chronic health conditions (diabetes/cardiac disease/kidney disease), cancer, gut health, women's health, pregnancy and gestational diabetes, tube feeding and infant and child nutrition.

Our team has a collective impact in Swan Hill by providing the range of service to cater for the Swan Hill Regional community with flexibility of telehealth options for clients.

If you would like to go see a dietitian you can self-refer or get referred through your doctor and see one of our lovely, friendly dietitians. For more information - <https://www.shdh.org.au/our-services/dietetic-services/>



Q & A with a Dietitian



Kerri, one of our Dietitians, answered a few questions about Heart healthy eating.

Why is fish good for heart health and what types?

People who regularly consume diets high in fish tend to have lower risks of a range of conditions including heart disease, stroke, macular degeneration and dementia in older adults. It is recommended that we include 2-3 fish or seafood meals per week, particularly oily fish such as salmon, sardines, herring, mackerel and anchovies, to ensure optimal intake of omega-3 fats.

Is butter bad for your heart?

Butter is not a heart healthy food and should be limited. Instead include plant-based oils (often referred to as vegetable or seed oils), including olive, canola, soybean, safflower, sunflower, avocado, macadamia and peanut.

What fats are heart healthy, are there specific types of fats I should limit?

Milk, yoghurt, and cheese are healthy snack options in preference to discretionary foods and can contribute to healthy meals when eaten with vegetables, wholegrains or fruit. Milk, yoghurt and cheese can feature in a healthy eating pattern; as long as the primary sources of fat are foods such as fish, olives, seeds, nuts and oils made from them. The Heart Foundation recommends that for people with elevated cholesterol and those with existing coronary heart disease, reduced fat products are recommended, otherwise choose full or reduced fat options according to your own preference. Intake of butter and cream should be limited.

How does my alcohol consumption affect my heart health?

Alcohol can interfere with medications and change the way medication interacts within the body. Alcohol is linked to higher blood pressure, increased risk of conditions such as atrial fibrillation, stroke and heart failure. Research has shown even low levels can raise the risk of heart disease. Alcohol is high in energy and can displace more nutritious food and drinks or contribute to excess energy intake and make weight management more difficult.

For more information go to <https://www.heartfoundation.org.au>



Nourishing Little Minds

Is your child a fussy eater? Would you like tips on introducing new foods? Join Nourishing Little Minds, a free four week program delivered by Kerri, one of our Dietitians, and the Swan Hill Library team. Children explore healthy foods through stories and interactive songs, rhymes and hands-on food tasting and preparation activities. Parents will also receive practical guidance and strategies to make mealtimes more enjoyable and support health eating habits.

For ages 3 - 5 years

Every Tuesday 2 to 23 June 2026 at 10.30am

Swan Hill Library -53 Campbell Street.

Call 5036 2480

library.swanhill.vic.gov.au



Contact Us!  5036 2480

 library.swanhill.vic.gov.au



Infant Program

The Infant Program is designed to help families with healthy eating, active play and reduced screen time from the start of their baby's life. It is delivered at Community Health and is free to mums, dads and carers via

- four group sessions led by one of our trained Dietitians and supported by a range of Allied Health professionals,
- access to a free app, which reinforces key content and provides practical tips between sessions.

To learn more or book into a session call us on 5033 9337.



IDAHOBIT

May 17 is the International Day Against LGBTQIA+ Discrimination! Go rainbow to create safer workplaces, schools, and communities.

May 17 marks the date in 1990 that homosexuality was removed from the WHO Classification of Diseases. Over three decades later, LGBTQIA+ communities still face discrimination – but every one of us can make a difference. Will you stand against discrimination?

Learn more here: <https://www.idahobit.org.au/>



Smiles 4 Miles

This term Smiles 4 Miles Coordinator Bronte is visiting kinders and long day cares for Eat a Rainbow sessions. Eat a Rainbow sessions involves children trying fruit and vegetables in colours of the rainbow in a peer environment.

The aim of the sessions is for children to have a try of touching, smelling, or eating different fruits and vegetables. This is an activity under the Smiles 4 Miles program which promotes dental health in the Early years and a program all long day cares, family day cares and kinders are a part of in the Swan Hill Region.



OHV
Oral Health
Victoria



Heart Week

**HEART
WEEK**
4-10 May 2026

Take steps to improve your heart health.

Never miss a BEAT by booking a Heart Health Check. It's a 20-minute check up with your GP to assess your risk of having a heart attack or stroke in the next five years and discuss steps you can take to lower your risk.

Get more out of walking

When it comes to exercise, it can be hard to know what advice to follow or to find the time, motivation and perfect weather conditions.

That's why the **Heart Foundation** has created FREE easy-to-follow Personal Walking Plans - to make it easier for you to start and stay moving! See here

<https://www.heartfoundationwalking.org.au/plans>

The 6-week plans are more than information on how and when to exercise.

They're designed to help you:

- build your confidence, strength, flexibility and fitness
- connect with nature and people around you
- find the joy in walking



Volunteering at the Food Hub

Did you know that a large component of the Swan Hill Food Hub work is undertaken by local volunteers? We are so grateful to these volunteers and the contributions they make, ensuring we are able to continue to provide these beneficial services to our community.

The 18th - 24th May 2026 is National Volunteer Week. This is a time to recognise, celebrate and thank our incredible volunteers who give their time, compassion and skills to support their local communities. So a big thank you to:

- Nichole - for the power of work you do each week unloading the weekly food delivery, stocking the shelves, purchasing additional foods, collecting donations, and so much more.
- Ann - for making up food relief packs for our clients and manning the Outreach Food Hub service.
- Ben - for restocking the shelves and clearing out recycling materials.
- Lindsay - for collecting fruit during the summer months to provide fresh produce to our recipients.
- Lee and the L2P Program - utilising their learner driver program to collect fresh produce from local farms.
- Anne and John - unloading the weekly food delivery when required.
- Polly at Maternal and Child Health - sorting bulk items in smaller packs suitable for food relief recipients.
- Chasing Hope staff - Collecting Woolworths donations and taking them to the Food Hub.



On behalf of all the member agencies of the Food Hub and in particular Swan Hill Health Promotion and Swan Hill Neighbourhood House, we'd like to thank you all for all that you give to the Swan Hill Food Hub. We honestly couldn't do it without you and are so thankful for all that you provide.

If you are interested in volunteering with the Swan Hill Food Hub please register your interest at <https://www.foodforall.community/volunteer-with-us>



Mothering Week

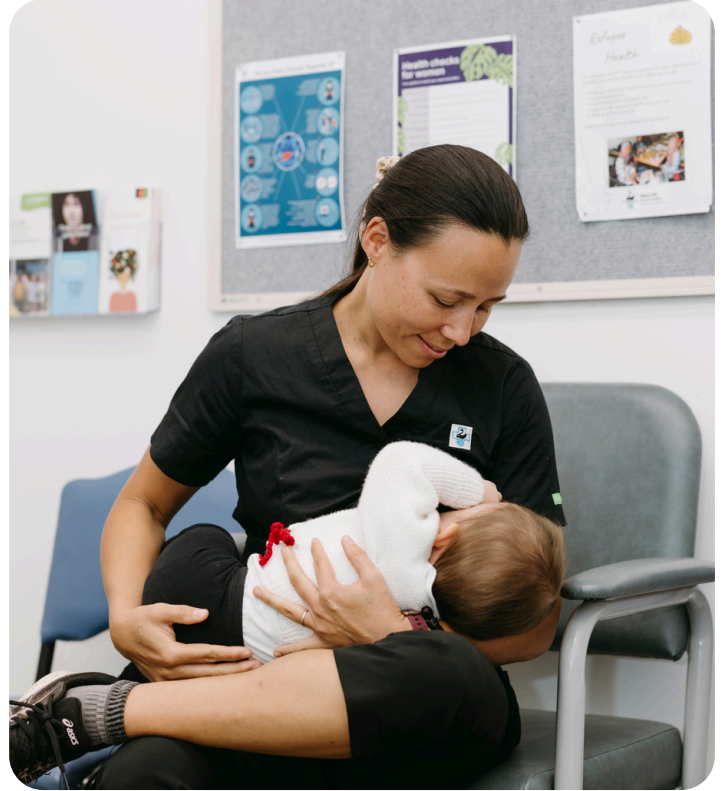


See Mums, Hear Mums, Support Mums

Held each year in the lead-up to Mother's Day, **National Mothering Week** is a time to recognise the incredible role mums play in shaping our families and communities. It's also a chance to listen to hear directly from mums about their experiences, challenges and needs and to think about how we can better support them.

This **National Mothering Week**, we celebrate the important contribution mums make in building strong, connected and healthy communities. We want all mums to feel seen, heard and supported. The Australian Breastfeeding Association continues to advocate for the things that matter to mums, including better support for breastfeeding and expressing at work, so women feel confident and supported wherever they are. (<https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/>)

Here at SHDH Community Health, we're proud to have many mums across our workforce and wider community. This month and every month we celebrate the important role they play. Over the coming year, we'll continue to share stories and highlight SHDH's commitment to being a breastfeeding-friendly workplace helping to support, normalise and celebrate breastfeeding across our organisation and community.



Breastfeeding Matters - And So Do Your Stories

At Community Health, we know breastfeeding makes a real difference for our babies, our families and the health of our whole community.

This May, we're excited to partner with Nicole Featherby Photography on a special project celebrating local breastfeeding journeys. We've invited parents and families to share their stories; the joys, the challenges, and everything in between because every story matters and every experience is valid.

This project is about more than just photos. It's about recognising the strength, care and dedication of families in our community. It's about celebrating our babies, our toddlers, and the people who nurture them every day.

Photos and stories will be captured on May 6, 2026 and we can't wait to share them with you. Together, we can support, empower and inspire.

If you'd like to find out more, please contact Jess Merrett on 5033 9337 or jmerrett@shdh.org.au.

Events

Dragged To Bingo

Come along for a free night of fabulous fun at Drag Bingo!

headspace Swan Hill, in collaboration with Swan Hill Regional Library and Youth Inc, have invited the Dragged To Queens to town to celebrate IDAHOBIT Day! 🏳️‍🌈

Queens, Ellectra Kute and Esther Rix will be hosting our wonderful Drag Bingo evening at the Swan Hill Tennis Club (next to the Ken Harrison soccer oval). There will be free laughter, food and drinks.

Please note, this event is 16+ and tickets are required.

Please register to let us know you're attending . 📄

bit.ly/4ezubLB 🔗

headspace Swan Hill youth inc. swan hill regional library

is proud to present

DRAGGED TO Bingo

Friday 15th May
6:30pm-8:30pm

Swan Hill Tennis Club, 58 Yana St

Tickets required

Head to the link to get your ticket!

Free **16+** event

For more info contact headspace Swan Hill: (03) 4010 7100

IDAHOBIT

Swan Hill urged to 'Quit for Good' this World No Tobacco Day

This **World No Tobacco Day**, 31st May, the World Health Organization is calling on communities around the globe to take action against tobacco use and Swan Hill is no exception.

Swan Hill District Health (SHDH) is using this international day to shine a spotlight on local smoking rates, which remain significantly higher than the Victorian average, with 18.9% of adults who currently smoke tobacco, contributing to preventable illness and chronic disease across the region.

As part of SHDH's Community Health Health Promotion Plan (CHHP), smoking cessation is a key priority under the **Healthy Lifestyle** focus area. Reducing smoking rates is one of the most impactful ways to improve health outcomes in our community.

World No Tobacco Day is an opportunity to support our community to take that first step towards quitting and to remind people they don't have to do it alone. To support local residents, SHDH is promoting the **Give Up For Good** campaign which features supports including the **My QuitBuddy** app, a free, evidence-based app developed by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care. The app provides personalised tools, motivation, and tracking features to help people quit smoking and stay smoke-free.

Quitting smoking can be challenging, but tools like My QuitBuddy offer practical, 24/7 support right in your pocket. Whether it's managing cravings, tracking progress, or celebrating milestones, it's a powerful companion on the quit journey.

Take the first step today:

- Visit [Quit.org.au](https://quit.org.au)
- Download the My QuitBuddy app
- Speak to your GP or local health service

Together, we can create a healthier, smoke-free future for Swan Hill.

GIVE UP FOR GOOD

My QuitBuddy

Quitline 137848

Giggles, Wiggles & Words

The Health Promotion team at Swan Hill District Health is excited to launch Giggles, Wiggles & Words, a new initiative that turns waiting time into learning time by supporting early literacy for children.

Book baskets will be placed in waiting rooms to encourage families to read together during their visit. Each book is linked to one of our healthy-living messages so families can enjoy a story while also picking up simple ideas about eating well, being active, oral health and gender equity.

Families will also find easy-to-understand posters in these areas along with take home booklets which includes key messages from INFANT (**I**nfant **F**eeding, **A**ctive play and **Nu**Trition) program facilitated by one of our Accredited Practising Dietitian designed to provide the opportunity for parents of young children to learn about healthy eating and active play.

This idea grew from community feedback, including concerns raised through the Swan Hill Pregnancy and Early Years Collaborative about what families can do to support children. We wanted to offer families something meaningful to do while they wait, along with practical ideas they can use at home. The first five years are crucial for building strong foundations in communication, learning and wellbeing. By sharing simple, evidence-based strategies, Giggles, Wiggles & Words aims to strengthen family connections and give every child the best start.

We're working to make our waiting areas more welcoming and family-friendly, and it's already been wonderful to see parents singing with their children and little ones enjoying books together in the Community Health waiting room. Keep an eye out for our book baskets and resources next time you visit SHDH!



Eat together, play together

From birth, children watch and copy their parents. They learn about their world with you. Enjoy sharing mealtimes together and find time for active play with your child each day.



Did you know

- your voice is your child's favourite sound
- every word builds your child's brain
- no book is too short, no song is too silly.

By reading aloud, sharing stories and singing with your child you are helping them become familiar with words and sounds. This will help them to go on to read successfully later in life.



Words Grow Minds - talk, read, sing, every word helps

Call Community Health to learn more about the INFANT program
phone: 5033 9557

INFANT

Swan Hill District Health This is part of the Giggles, Wiggles & Words Project



eat fruit & veg move more often smile together



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Swan Hill
District Health
Connected Care. Best Experience.