**Victorian Councils: Supporting Communities Around End of Life Project**

**Community of Practice 22 March 2018**

**Attendance:**

37 people from 28 councils attended the Community of Practice session. Participants included representatives from rural/regional Councils as well as metropolitan councils. Primarily participants worked in the age friendly/positive ageing areas of council.

**Aims:**

The community of practice aimed to:

* provide an overview of the Demonstration Projects to date
* learn from the experiences of the Demonstration Projects
* present a range of initiatives that councils have been involved in around end of life.
* stimulate practice, ideas and opportunities for councils interested in undertaking an activity around end of life.

**Making it Happen**

The MAV is funded to resource and support the implementation of the End of Life Project in local government. The MAV has developed a number of resources to support councils in this new area of work. Please see www.mav.asn.au/

The MAV is interested in hearing from participants with regard to what support and resources would be helpful for councils to commence and/or further their work/activities around end of life.

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| **Summary of presentations** |
| ***Three approaches, three sets of early learnings*. Presentations from the three Demonstration Projects**  The City of Whittlesea, South Gippsland Shire and the Shire of Mansfield are undertaking demonstration projects to explore the role of local government around end of life. All projects have developed project plans, established project structures/steering committees and commenced conversations around end of life in their local communities.  Whittlesea included an end of life activity in their community festival, South Gippsland has held a community information session and Mansfield had a successful project information community session. All presentations were recorded and accessible through the link provided.  The presentations were followed by a Panel discussion covering; challenges of the journey so far, any surprises, any advice for other councils yet to work in this area and what difference do they anticipate that the project will make for their residents and community. |
| **Summary of presentations** |
| ***What councils have been doing around end of life* – report on Baseline data**  LaTrobe University Palliative Care Unit is undertaking the project evaluation. Baseline data has been collected, a project evaluation design has been developed and work has begun with the Demonstration Projects around data collection. A summary report on baseline data will be provided to councils. |
| ***Community Initiatives for ‘Romancing the Skull Exhibition’* – Gallery of Ballarat**  Peter Freund - Marketing and Public Programs Officer,Art Gallery of Ballarat presented the context and background to the exhibitions, public programs and community events held in Ballarat between October-December 2017.  The partnership between MexVic, the Gallery and the involvement of local residents from Mexico was central to the success of the initiative which involved a range of activities (gallery exhibition of skulls, building an Ofrenda at the cemetery, school holiday activities, Dis de Muertos event, Day of the Dead community festival day, school poster project, Street art by City of Ballarat Youth Services, fashion for funerals event, Let’s Talk about Dying forum, Alternative Funerals Forum. The City of Ballarat was involved in many of the activities. |
| ***The Banyule End of Life Event***  As part of Banyule’s regular Think Tank sessions, residents were invited to a discussion on how can we as a community:  a) raise local awareness and improve knowledge? and b) increase community support for local people at end of life?  These questions stimulated a range of discussion topics with the 30 participants in attendance. |
| ***Planning Ahead, making your wishes known* – COTA Project**  COTA are conducting a series of information sessions on the topics of Advance Care Planning, End of Life Conversations, Managing red tape after death and Wills. COTA has released [Safeguarding the End of the Rainbow: A guide to help LGBTI people in Victoria plan an end-of-life of their choice.](https://cotavic.org.au/info/looking-for-information/lgbtiq-resources/)  <https://cotavic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2018-SIV-Outreach-Topics.pdf> |

For further information on the community of practice presentations please go to:

http://www.mav.asn.au/what-we-do/policy-advocacy/social-community/positive-ageing/end-of-life-project/end-of-life-project-resources