

MEDIA RELEASE

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\$2.7 MILLION TO HELP VICTORIANS SHAPE UP FOR GOOD HEALTH

Victorian residents in five local government areas are set to benefit from a VicHealth and Sport and Recreation Victoria program designed to inspire people to get more physical activity into their day.

The Victorian councils have been chosen for the \$2.7 million VicHealth and Sport and Recreation Victoria Be Active program. Each will receive \$488,000 funding over three years to get more people more active, more often. The program is particularly targeted at children, families, older people and volunteers.

Be Active will be delivered by the City of Greater Bendigo, City of Greater Geelong, Knox City Council, Latrobe City Council and Wodonga City Council and runs in tandem with the State Government's *Healthy Together Victoria* program.

VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter said 54 per cent of Victorian adults do not get enough physical activity required to prevent heart disease and type 2 diabetes. Common barriers to physical activity include lack of time, cost, lack of motivation, support or companionship, perceptions of risk and social or cultural influences.

"The reasons half of us don't get the exercise we need are complicated and we can't simply tell people to go for a jog or join a sports team if the opportunities aren't there. Councils have great potential to create spaces that promote good health," Ms Rechter said.

"Be Active is setting out to demonstrate that there are ways to participate in physical activity beyond simply joining a sports team."

Victorian Minister for Sport and Recreation, The Hon. Hugh Delahunty said: "Sport and active recreation not only helps to address lifestyle-related disease and injury, it also helps to build strong and healthy communities, providing a great way to bring people together from all sections of society."

The first step for councils will be to use the VicHealth Physical Activity Framework to strengthen their Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans.

While each council will take a different approach depending on the specific needs of their area, initiatives could include:

- surveys with local residents about safety and accessibility of recreation facilities
- designing more cycle and pedestrian friendly spaces
- planning for open public spaces that encourage play and recreation for children and adults
- camping and adventure-based activities
- recruiting local volunteers to assist in the planning, implementation and evaluation of local active participation initiatives.

Find out more about Be Active at www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/beactive