‘healthTrack’—Preventative Health Initiative

**Emily Murphy**

1Mid West Health

‘healthTrack’—Preventative Health Initiative (PHI)—focuses on increasing levels of physical activity and good nutrition to prevent chronic disease and achieve better health outcomes for the Lower Eyre, Mid West, Ceduna and Aboriginal communities across the Eyre Peninsula.

‘healthTrack’ addresses levels of physical activity and good nutrition through working with communities using a capacity-building approach. Health services and the community have worked together to implement strategies to increase these levels through encouraging, resourcing and supporting communities to participate in activities, projects and training opportunities. These opportunities have created local ownership, individual responsibility, increased skills and knowledge and have worked towards communities developing sustainable outcomes to address the local barriers. This capacity-building approach strengthens positive impacts on people’s everyday lives through ensuring the activities within ‘healthTrack’ continually focus on and support enablers identified by the community.

‘healthTrack’’s focus on building local capacity has also assisted in sharing the responsibility of health between the individual and the health service, working towards decreasing the reliance on health services and the health budget, for example:

- community initiatives and projects supported through healthTracks' ‘small grants program’ have been those that focus on promoting health and wellness and have encouraged members of the community to play an active role in their health
- the mobilisation and funding of resources throughout the community has built capacity to locally address the risk factors of low physical activity and not maintaining a healthy weight
- training and development opportunities targeting physical activity and good nutrition have been attended by community members, health professionals, key partners and stakeholders, working towards the ‘health in all policy’ of
ensuring that the health of community is not merely the responsibility of the health care system.

This ‘sharing the responsibility’ aims to improve health outcomes within our communities and by growing community skills and leadership to ensure sustainability well beyond the project.

Feedback and evaluation processes have been implemented to capture quantitative and qualitative benefits both from an overall project perspective and a community ‘on the ground’ level. ‘healthTrack’ engaged the services of Flinders University (SACHRU) to facilitate and mentor the team through these processes over the life of the project.

The evidence from these reports will assist not only in future funding for similar projects, but also assist in local health service planning and develop strategies to incorporate learnings into our current RPHS and MPS service delivery plans.