

MEDIA RELEASE

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Nudging community pantry clients towards nutritious foods

For many, food banks and pantries are the first lineS of defence against food insecurity, and with the cost of living on the increase, it has led to unprecedented demand in the number of households visiting these facilities for support.

Many of those attending food pantries also suffer elevated rates of obesity, diabetes, cardio-vascular disease and other diet-related conditions. According to the latest census data, Portland has significantly more health issues than general Victorians.

Two local organisations are working together to improve health outcomes by developing healthy recipes using donated pantry staples as the main ingredients.

United Way Glenelg has collaborated with SEACChange to create 4 easy recipes, accompanied by a 1-minute tutorial video on preparing the meals, accessible through a QR code.

With eight in ten Australians now owning a smartphone, it made sense to put healthy recipes in the palm of clients' hands through their devices said Nicole Carr, Executive Officer United Way Glenelg.

"The videos go for about 1 minute in length and the ingredients and cooking methods are simple so anyone can follow along," said Ms Carr.

"Recipe cards have also been printed for those who haven't got access to a device."

Foods often found in the pantries were high in salt and sugar, enabling them to be shelf-stable.

"We wanted to "nudge" clients to make healthier choices," explained Ms Carr.

"While we are always grateful for donations, we are looking at ways we can improve the nutritional value of these goods.

"Our goal was to create recipes based on the assumption that the client has minimal cooking experience, utensils and cooking facilities."

"SEACChange developed the recipes and completed the filming. They have done a phenomenal job!"

Most of the donated food is provided by Warrnambool and District FoodShare who are also keen to utilize the recipes with their clients.

Recipe cards are available at every Little FREE Pantry, along with a QR code attached to the pantry, taking people to the videos.

For those looking to donate to the Little FREE Pantries consider looking for low sodium (less than 400mg/100g) and low sugar (less than 15g per 100g) and place the items directly into the pantry.

- Long life milk & fruit-juice (200mL & 1L)
- Rice, pasta, pasta sauce

- Non-perishable meat (Eg Jerky, Tinned Chicken/ Tuna/ Sardines/ Spam/ Ham)
- Tinned Fruit and Vegetables
- Breakfast items (Eg Instant Oats Sachets, Kellogs variety packs, breakfast biscuits etc)
- Peanut butter and vegemite (small plastic jars preferred)
- Sachets of Sugar, Tea & Coffee
- Snacks (Eg non perishable dip and biscuits, salsa, muesli bars, multi-packs of chips / savoury biscuits,)
- Biscuits (Eg Saladas, VitaWeet, breakfast biscuits)
- Feminine hygiene products
- Toiletries (Eg toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, sunscreen, combs, soap, cottonbuds, bodywipes, 2-in-1 shampoo/conditioner)
- First-Aid supplies (eg travel first-aid-kits, bandaids, insect repellent, sanitiser)
- Baby supplies (eg formula, nappies, wipes)

The Little FREE Pantry is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Another 3 pantries will be installed in the Glenelg Shire in the coming months.

Photo: Maddi Cram Health Promotion/Administration Portland District Health in the test kitchen.

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