

## Case Study – COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

# Yackandandah Health

January 2017 – May 2018

### The Client

Yackandandah Health is home to 67 community elders in residential aged care and offers allied health services and a medical centre.

In 2016 the Committee of Management finalised a plan to deliver a new model of aged-care (the Yackandandah model); focusing on intergenerational interaction.

They developed a four-stage master plan to bring their vision to life. The first stage of the master plan will see 16 new residential aged care rooms and 10 apartments, valued at \$6million, completed later this year (2018).

Stage 2 of the masterplan is the establishment of a community hub. This will be key to delivering the intergenerational vision. Yackandandah Health recognised community input would be essential to the development of the concept.

Planning for the community hub is now underway.

**“Yackandandah Health had the idea for the community hub, but the details were to be shaped by the community.**

**Annette Nuck, former CEO**

## The Challenge

Yackandandah Health had developed its vision for an intergenerational model but was unsure how to explain the plans and get the community involved. The CEO and Committee of Management understood that increasing the community's use of the site required the community to be excited about the hub concept and the benefits it could bring for the whole community.

In early 2017 Fishbowl PR was asked to develop a communication and engagement strategy to facilitate this transition.

Former CEO, Annette Nuck said the small administration team needed assistance to tackle such a big project.

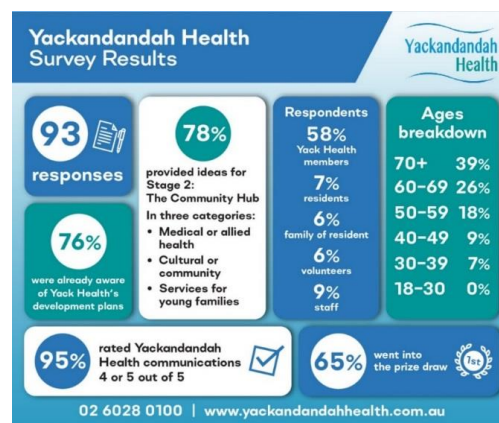
"We hadn't comprehensively planned any of our communications, marketing or community engagement before and we didn't know how to do it," Ms Nuck said.

## Our Approach

Fishbowl PR accepted this challenge and worked with the Yackandandah Health team; leading a comprehensive suite of communications and marketing activities.

The initial aim was to understand how the community viewed the organisation, what it thought Yackandandah Health did and what the community wanted the future to look like.

We started with broad community consultation to answer these questions, ask about communications preferences and gather baseline data. We provided initial information about the community hub and asked the community what services or facilities they or the town needed.



We also convened a focus group to drill further into the responses.

With this input, we guided Yackandandah Health on the preparatory tasks needed; modernising the brand, developing a style guide for consistent branding across all marketing materials and consulting stakeholders to ensure the new website catered for users' needs, as well as for the growth of the organisation.

Next, we established a Community Reference Group (CRG) to provide two-way discussion about future plans. This was an important part of the engagement plan because we understood that the community had valuable information to contribute and diversity of input would enhance the plans for the community hub. The CRG first met in July 2017.

With these foundations in place, measures were set for communications actions including media relations, social media and the development of relationships with key stakeholders.

In November 2017, the second round of consultation about the community hub identified a heated exercise pool as the community's top priority. They also highly rated a dentist, acute hospital, palliative care, gym, local bus, cinema/theatre and adolescent mental health service.

## The Results

The community told Yackandandah Health that services for families with children and teenagers were needed in the town. This was a perfect match for the vision and will be used to shape plans for the community hub.

In addition, delivering the communication and engagement strategy contributed to:

- An opportunity to be part of a World Health Organisation program looking at models of aged care
- New attendees at the annual general meeting
- Finding two new board members who are under 40 years of age
- More interest in working at Yackandandah Health

- 28 people being added to the mailing list to receive advice when the new development is ready for bookings
- An increase in respite care inquiries which indicates people want to test Yackandandah Health before they go on the waiting list
- A CRG member undertaking detailed research into the feasibility of a heated exercise pool in the community hub

It delivered:

- A new website – visitation rates and time spent on the site exceeded targets
- An E-newsletter – open and click-through rates were twice the targets set
- Media coverage – has been highly positive
- Awareness of what Yackandandah Health offers and its future plans – increased by 49% over one year, compared to baseline data
- Inquiries from potential aged care residents have increased by 60%
- A change in the language used to describe aged care at Yackandandah Health

**“The communication strategy has played a significant role in bringing Yackandandah Health back to the community.**

**There was a sense the community didn’t understand what we were trying to do and now they are not only talking about it but getting involved.”**

**Annette Nuck, former CEO**

#### July 2019 Update:

In November 2018 the \$6million building, offering new rooms and apartments, was opened with a community celebration. In the same month, Yackandandah Health learnt a community project to develop a Care Sanctuary on the site had been funded under the Victorian government’s Pick My Project initiative. The next

month, Yackandandah Health opened its childcare centre, Little Yacks, following a request from local families.

In February 2019, a second doctor was added to the Yackandandah Medical Centre and by March, most of the new aged care rooms and apartments were occupied. Work will start soon on construction of the Care Sanctuary.