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Submission - New Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) category for Men's Sheds and Women's Sheds

In general, the EHMS supports legislation to introduce a new general category of DGR for community sheds and that the eligible category also include Physical Health and Well-being.

This submission suggests that:

- as Men's sheds advance a holistic approach to health, this approach, and the priority health issues of the National Health Strategies 2020-2030 could be embraced by the proposed legislation;
- National Health Strategies will be better served by reflecting their priorities in the proposed legislation;
- a wider-range of health benefits can be obtained by adding 'Physical Health and Well-being' as an advancing health requirement for DGR status under the proposed legislation; and
- Legislation which focuses on Mental Health and Social Isolation may be counter-productive resulting in less emphasis being given to Physical Health and Well-being.

Endeavour Hills Men's Shed (EHMS)

Endeavour Hills developed in the mid-1970's as 'dormitory' suburb. According the 2011 census more than 6,800 people were aged 55 years or older. About 3,400 of these being males.

The EHMS was established almost 3 years ago. Membership currently stands at 41 members. Most of our members are aged 55 or more.

We currently occupy a shared facility and we are awaiting the imminent commencement of a purpose-built facility to serve the Endeavour Hills area. It is expected that when it is erected that membership will grow, as a result, our Health and well-being programmes and their positive outcomes will increase.

The Endeavour Hills Men's shed is a Registered Charity in the category of Advancing Health (which is not presently eligible for DGR status).

The members of the EHMS have formally adopted a holistic Health Policy to advance the good health, well-being, and quality of life for men.

The EHMS Health Policy (attached):

- establishes a framework for advancing the good health, well-being and the quality of life for men through educational, recreational and social activities, the sharing of skills and ideas which are of interest to men, undertaking projects and partner with other organisations which contribute positively to the wider community; and
- establishes a framework for identifying, addressing and achieving positive outcomes for **Priority Health Issues** [*of the National Men's Health strategy 2020-2030*] when planning and implementing the program of EHMS activities.

The EHMS Health Policy recognises the 'Key Issues Of the Life Stages' and the 'Priority Health Issues' which are the identified in the **National Men's Health Strategy 2020-2030**. The EHMS Health Policy recognises that 'Life Stage Issues' such as injury, illness, ageing, genetics, STI's, diet, exercise, allergies, family relationships and changing social circumstances, can be pre-cursors to Mental Health conditions and Social Isolation. The EHMS Policy establishes a framework to address these issues in addition to Mental Health and Social Isolation.

The EHMS Health Policy also supports:

- **the mission of the Sun Smart Program.** This Program is Jointly funded by [Cancer Council Victoria](#) and the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation ([VicHealth](#)); and
- **the National Policy for Action To Promote Eye Health and Prevent Avoidable Vision Loss.**

Two men have credited our approach to Health as the reason why they sought medical advice which identified a need for the following:

- **treatment of heart fibrillation requiring electrical cardioversion and ongoing medication; and**
- **prostate cancer requiring urgent prostatectomy.**

The National Men's Health Strategy 2020-2030

The holistic approach of this Strategy identifies the following 'Priority Health Issues'.

- Mental Health;
- Chronic conditions (including coronary heart disease (CHD), cerebrovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, bowel cancer and lung cancer. Together, with dementia and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), these seven conditions contribute to almost half of all adult male deaths p21);
- Sexual and reproductive health conditions;
- Injuries and risk taking; and
- Healthy ageing.

This holistic approach and these issues, are in part, reflected in the **National Women's Health Strategy 2020-2030**.

Men's Shed - Peak Bodies and Their Aims For Men's Health

The Australian Men's Shed Association represents approximately 1000 sheds through Australia. The AMSA Web site contains the following statement:

AMSA, funded by the Federal Department of Health, provides practical support to Men's Sheds and deliver a wide range of services, aims to improve the health and wellbeing of members and reduce the number of men who are at risk from preventable health issues that may emanate from isolation.

The Victorian Men's Shed Association represents more than 300 men's sheds across Victoria. The following statement is an aim of the Association.

We support Victorian men to be happy and healthy contributors within their local community.

Through its publications and activities, the Victorian Association emphasises the contribution that men's sheds make to the health and well-being of men.

The AMSA (initiate), the VMSA and Healthy Male (Andrology Australia), supports 'Spanner In The Works'. This is a program which looks to advance the overall health and well-being of men.

"Spanner in the Works?" provides you with a maintenance schedule for your body, and some key health messages in a way that's understandable and achievable. It's not about telling you what to do but sets out some things that you can do (or not do) to improve your health and your chances of a longer, and happier life. Often, minor adjustments can have a major impact on your health, your relationships with loved ones, your friends and your work."

Today, the health promotional activities of the Australian Men's Shed Association and the Victorian Men's Shed Association embrace but extend beyond Mental Health and Social Isolation.

Beyond Blue

Beyond Blue, in its conclusion to the 2013 report Men's Sheds In Australia Effects on Physical and Mental Well-Being states:

Mental and physical health benefits [of Men's Sheds] are numerous and are articulated and experienced in a variety of ways. The key to all of these benefits is social connectedness.

Beyond Blue (as a Mental Health organisation) places importance on mental health, however, a number of other Health conditions are addressed through the National Health Strategies. Poor health conditions are not always a result of mental health or social isolation. Poor health conditions can lead to poor mental health and social isolation. Men's Shed programmes encourage a range of activities to advance physical health and well-being which include physical exercises, community projects, walks, bike riding, etc.

The EHMS is finding that Physical activity and opportunities to create 'shared' experiences provide opportunities for social connections to develop while the physical activity advances the physical health of its members. Health presentations, disseminating information about health conditions, healthy eating, and the benefits of physical exercise are embraced by Men's Sheds. These can help to avoid debilitating conditions which may lead to social isolation. Advancing health and well-being occurs on many fronts and through a variety of Men's Shed programmes.

Federal Government Funding

The Australian Government Department of Health National 'Shed Development Programme Guidelines, Round 20, February 2020'; stipulate that Individual Men's Sheds in Australia can apply for financial support across the following three funding categories, including:

Category 1 Health, Wellbeing, and Events. The requirements to be met include. among other things:

- Delivery of a 'Spanner in the Works?' men's health check programme or a similar presentation with a health focus; and
- Health related guest speakers, health information sessions/stands, community services participation

The issues to be addressed under the funding programme and the National Health Strategies go beyond Mental Health and Social Isolation. The addition of advancing 'Physical Health and Well-Being' to the proposed legislation will help to ensure that there is a consistent delivery of National Health Policy, funding outcomes, and men's shed holistic policies.

Conclusion

- Life Stage issues, poor physical health and well-being can lead to poor mental Health conditions and social isolation.
- Men's sheds and their peak bodies, actively promote a holistic approach to health by and advancing the good physical health and well-being of their members in addition to advancing mental health, and preventing or relieving social isolation.
- The **National Men's Health Strategy 2020-2030** identifies five Priority Health Issues, some of which are not embraced by the proposed legislation (this Strategy works in tandem with the **Women's Health Strategy 2020-2030**).
- The proposed legislation is an opportunity to gain greater community benefit by embracing the holistic Health Priorities and outcomes of the National Strategies and men's shed activities, by including a reference to Health and Well-being.
- It is suggested that, in the proposed legislation, the definition of a community shed also include advancing '**Physical Health and Well-being**' (in addition to advancing mental health and preventing or relieving social isolation).

Endeavour Hills Men's Shed Health Policy



1 Preliminary

- 1.1 The EHMS applies this policy having regard to the following;
- to 'promote good health, well-being and the quality of life for men', as stated in the Model Rules;
 - its 'registration as a Charity with the subtype of Advancing Health'; and
 - its membership.
- 1.2 The EHMS recognises the Key Issues of Life Stage which are identified in the **National Men's Health Strategy 2020-2030** (p15) and in particular the following **Priority Health Issues** of that Strategy:
- Mental Health;
 - Chronic conditions (including coronary heart disease (CHD), cerebrovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, bowel cancer and lung cancer. Together, with dementia¹⁴ and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), these seven conditions contribute to almost half of all adult male deaths p21);
 - Sexual and reproductive health conditions;
 - Injuries and risk taking; and
 - Healthy ageing.
- 1.3 The EHMS supports the mission of the Sun Smart Program. This Program is Jointly funded by [Cancer Council Victoria](#) and the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation ([VicHealth](#)). **SunSmart's mission is to reduce skin cancer incidence, morbidity and mortality through a targeted prevention and early detection program.**
- 1.4 The EHMS supports the **National Policy for Action To Promote Eye Health and Prevent Avoidable Vision Loss**, in particular the following Action Areas:
- Reducing the risk;
 - Increasing early detection;
- 1.5 **The Hearing Health Roadmap**, in particular Identifying hearing Loss and Prevent Hearing Loss p.5 (Supporting all Australians who are deaf or hard of hearing to live well in the community).

2 PURPOSE

- 2.1 This policy:
- establishes the framework for advancing the good health, well-being and the quality of life for men through educational, recreational and social activities, the sharing of skills and ideas which are of interest to men, undertaking projects and partner with other organisations which contribute positively to the wider community; and
 - establishes a framework for identifying, addressing and achieving positive outcomes for **Priority Health Issues** when planning and implementing the program of EHMS activities.

3 SCOPE

- 3.1 This policy applies to the management committee and to the members of the EHMS.

4 POLICY STATEMENT

- 4.1 Opportunities to address the following health related actions will be addressed when planning, implementing and carrying out the activities of the EHMS, these include:
- disseminating topical health related information;
 - promoting and advancing the values of healthy eating and nutrition;
 - embracing physical exercise to enhance physical well-being;
 - encouraging social engagement through participation, inclusiveness and building relationships, to reduce the risks associated with social isolation, build self-esteem, respect and personal identity;
 - providing activities which maintain or introduce physical skills and abilities and provide mental stimulation;
 - encouraging new experiences, new interests to build self-confidence and shared experiences;
 - building community partnerships (including other Men's Sheds) which help to extend personal networks, community identity and connectedness.
 - Addressing Priority Health Topics through presentations, information and our activities on a rotating (or as needs basis) on a three-yearly cycle.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of the management committee to:
- Advance and promote health and well-being by ensuring that activities of the EHMS are planned and implemented to reflect the **Priority Health Issues** of this policy; and
 - on an annual basis assess the health-related outcomes;
- 5.2 It is the responsibility of the EHMS members to:
- Positively embrace the **Priority Health Issues** identified in this policy;
 - Actively participate in implementing the **Priority Health Issues** of this policy.

Reporting

- 6 On an annual basis assess health-related outcomes in relation to the **Priority Health Issues**; and report the findings of that assessment to members.

7 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

8 Reference documents

National Men's Health Strategy 2020-2030

Sunsmart Community organisation Policy

National Framework for Action to Promote Eye Health and Prevent Avoidable Blindness and Vision Loss.

Adopted By A Meeting Of Members 14.1.2020