



Tilligerry Creek

Tilligerry Connect: A Community Wellbeing Collaborative

Social Prescribing in a regional NSW town

August 2022

Tilligerry Peninsula and Community

- ❖ In Port Stephens - Salt Ash, Oyster Cove, Tanilba Bay, Mallabula and Lemon Tree Passage
- ❖ Over 6000 people
- ❖ Isolated peninsula down a 2 lane road and 50 km from centres of community health - Raymond Terrace, Nelson Bay and Newcastle
- ❖ Lower socioeconomic area than places like Nelson Bay
- ❖ Coles and 2 shopping areas
- ❖ Hidden resources - people, groups and services

My experience

- ❖ International Medical Graduate - from the United States and arrived in Australia in 2016 to be nearer to my sons
- ❖ No knowledge about the community or Australia healthcare context
- ❖ Seeing patients of all ages and loving the Medicare system where patients are universally insured
- ❖ After a few years, I noticed some patients came to see me every month due to social isolation and mental health challenges not amenable to medication or referral to psychologists or allied health

Health Connections Mendip

- ❖ Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)
- ❖ UK program spearheaded by a local GP to map the services and groups of the community and help connect people to these groups and services
- ❖ Train the community to be community connectors to signpost others to groups and services
- ❖ Have health connectors in clinics to signpost patients to these groups and services
- ❖ The NHS has put in millions of pounds into social prescribing
- ❖ Reduced healthcare costs and burdens of chronic illness and social isolation and loneliness in the UK - research and my former colleague living in the UK back up this model

Tilligerry Connect Partnerships

- ❖ Port Stephens Council - Community Development Worker
- ❖ Community NGO groups
 - ❖ The Smith Family
 - ❖ Tomaree Neighbourhood Centre
 - ❖ Tilligerry Community Association
 - ❖ Port Stephens Family and Neighbourhood Services
 - ❖ Centre for Hope
- ❖ Caring for our Port Stephens Youth - Jupiter
- ❖ Churches and Pastors
- ❖ Community members and groups
 - ❖ Health economist
 - ❖ Community activists
 - ❖ Tilligerry Lions group / CWA / Tilligerry Habitat
- ❖ Local physiotherapist group
- ❖ The Primary Health Network - Hunter New England Health Social isolation / Loneliness pathway

Tilligerry Connect

- ❖ Mapping our area and services and groups
- ❖ Entering the data - website
- ❖ Getting the word out about the website and project - fliers with QR codes
- ❖ Local newspaper article
- ❖ Meetings and word of mouth
- ❖ Recent PHN grant success! (I applied for and did not get 5 grants before this)
 - ❖ Printed directory
 - ❖ Train health and community connectors

Ann

- ❖ early 70's and carer for her 80 year old partner with dementia who eventually went to an aged care facility
- ❖ carer stress and social isolation
- ❖ drinking 1 bottle of wine daily
- ❖ weight gain, knee pain and shoulder pain
- ❖ depressed mood - rejected psychologist referral
- ❖ no social groups and lack of connection in the community

Ann - social prescriptions

- ❖ Tilligerry Widows Group - meets Friday for lunch
- ❖ Neighbours - engagement
- ❖ VIEW club - Voice, Interest, Education for Women raising money for the Smith Family
- ❖ Garden club
- ❖ Got a dog and walks her dog daily now
- ❖ Stopped alcohol, lost 13 kg, knee and shoulder pain all reduced
- ❖ Mental health is better and no antidepressants needed anymore
- ❖ Was seeing me monthly and now down to every 3-6 months

What can you do?

- ❖ Listen to patients and write down things they are doing and groups they belong to
- ❖ Catalogue these in some format to share with others
- ❖ Recognise the power of community to heal and motivate and encourage connection
- ❖ Think of social prescription as a powerful tool that can change you and your patients' lives