

The *Heatwave HELP* (Health Emergency Local People) project aims to reduce heat-related harm to health and well-being through locally-led resilience-building in three local government areas (LGAs) in western Victoria

Guided by local project control groups in Horsham Rural City, Northern Grampians Shire, and Hepburn Shire, Grampians Public Health Unit *Heatwave HELP* team members are training community leaders across faith, care, cultural, business, services, sport, volunteer, social, health and other networks to identify people they know who might be at high risk of heat harm, and support those people to stay safe from heat on hot days and at times of severe heat.

Project activities across the LGAs include:

- *Developing heat health strategies* suited to local context, capacity, and needs, and which build on the expertise of key local partners including councils, Aboriginal Cooperatives (Budja Budja and Goolum Goolum), and health organisations
- *Spreading clear, simple messages* (HEAT SAFE) about heat risks and low-tech ways to stay safe through community workshops, information sessions, partnering with local media (including ABC), and across the networks of those community leaders trained in understanding who is at risk from heat and ways to stay safe

Outcomes to date include high levels of confidence to act among the hundreds of community leaders so far trained in understanding heat risks and supporting others to stay safe, strong multi-agency and cross-sectoral collaboration, and increasing heat risk awareness across our communities in general.

The Heatwave HELP project funded by the Australian Government and Victorian Government under the National Partnership Agreement on Disaster Risk Reduction until mid-2026. Our project seeks to find a reduction in adverse health impacts due to heat, using data collected via local emergency department visits, hospital admissions, Ambulance Victoria callout data, and from other sources.

More information about the *Heatwave HELP* project, including links to on-line training about how to support others, can be found at [Tackling Climate Change and Health](#)

Heatwave HELP organisational partners 2024-2026

Hepburn Shire Council
Northern Grampians Shire Council
Horsham Shire Council
Grampians Public Health Unit
Budja Budja Aboriginal Co-operative
Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative
Central Highlands Rural Health
East Wimmera Health Services
Grampians Health
Western Victoria Primary Health Network
Ambulance Victoria
Department of Health, Victoria
Department of Families Fairness and Housing, Victoria
ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) Victoria
Griffith University
Additionally, the Project Steering Committee has consumer representation

Heat can be fatal		There are ways to stay safe	
H	Home and living conditions	S	Stay cool and drink water
E	Environment and social exclusion	A	Avoid being outside in the heat of the day
A	Age and underlying conditions	F	Phone family and friends
T	Taking certain medications	E	Emergency alerts and weather warnings

HEATWAVE H.E.L.P.
A Grampians region collaboration
Grampians Public Health Unit

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