



# Physical Activity Opportunities for Older Victorians: An Audit and Gap Analysis

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*MOVE muscle, bone & joint health*

Thursday 25 August 2016



## The Purpose of VAAP



To increase opportunities for participation in physical activity options for older Victorians, especially in areas of socio-economic disadvantage and among isolated, lonely, older people not currently involved in physical activity.



## VAAP Coordination Team



## Three Key Priority Areas



- Development of Partnerships
- Development of Workforce and Organisational Capacity
- Development of Pathways for Engagement of Older People



## Purpose and Scope of the Audit and Gap Analysis



- To gain information in relation to the availability, variety and accessibility of physical activity opportunities for older Victorians
- To identify the gaps in the availability, variety and accessibility of physical activity opportunities for older Victorians
- To provide baseline information to guide the future work of the VAAP
- To provide information that may be used to guide work by external organisations.



## What the Literature Says



- Older people should be active for at least 30 minutes daily (National Physical Activity Recommendations for Older Australians, 2006)
- Incidental activity, structured activities and leisure pursuits (Department of Health and Ageing, 2009)
- Variety: incorporate fitness, strength, balance and flexibility (Department of Health and Ageing, 2009)
- Accessibility: transport, venues and affordability (Franco et al, 2015)



## Data Collection



- Desktop audit of current physical activity options for each of the 79 Victorian local government areas.
- Data collected from local councils, community health services, fitness/leisure centres, University of the Third Age (U3A), neighbourhood houses/community centres and community groups e.g. Senior Citizens etc.
- Grouped by: walking, strength training, Tai Chi/ Qi Gong, group exercise (land), hydro/water exercise, Yoga/Pilates and other.
- Leisure activities: tennis, golf, lawn bowls, croquet.
- Additional data was received from the U3A Network Victoria given the under representation of U3As from the desktop review



## Verification of data



- Missing and additional data collected from key providers – Local Councils, Community Health Centres and Fitness/Leisure Centres
- Communications log – 3 attempts at contact
- Data from other providers was not verified due to the strict scope of the audit and potential lack of resources at the community end



## Data Collected



- Service provider details
  - Name of program
    - Cost
    - Location
  - Frequency
  - Duration

- Any waitlists
  - Assisted/referral pathway
    - Transport assistance
    - Language/cultural support
  - Professional and/or volunteer led



## Limitations



- Absence of detailed information on some provider websites
- Some unverified data
- Clearly defined scope of audit – excluded other service providers
- Not possible to gather data on all physical activity opportunities potentially attended by older people



# Data Audit Findings



## Structured physical activity (Total 2741)

Activity Type	Number of programs
Group Exercise (land)	646
Yoga/Pilates	449
Walking	410
Other	370
Tai Chi/Qi Gong	348
Strength Training	276
Hydro/Water Exercise	242
<b>Total</b>	<b>2741</b>

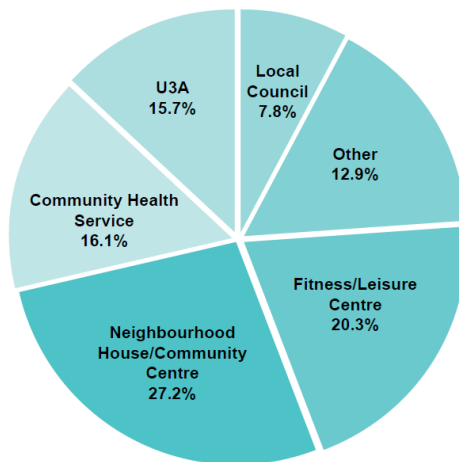
## Leisure pursuits (Total 1728)



Total of 4469 physical activity opportunities available



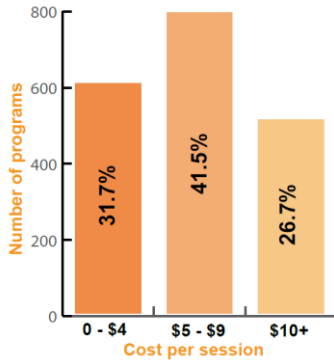
# Providers of structured physical activity programs for older people



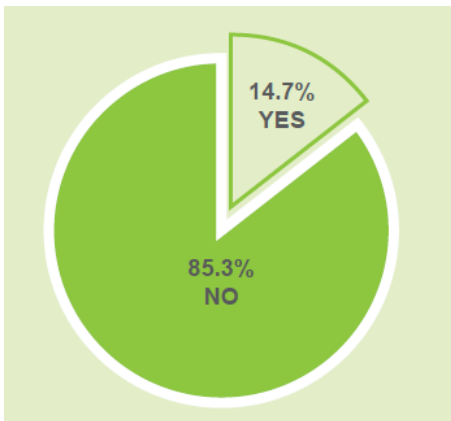
# Cost of Physical Activity Programs



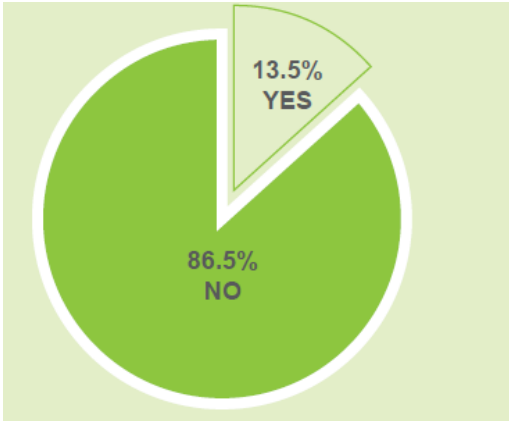
Per session cost of structured physical activity programs



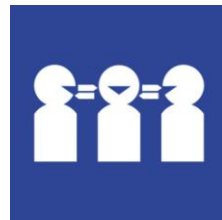
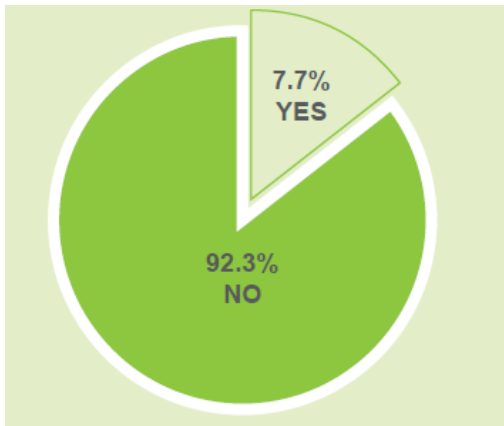
# Assisted or Referral Pathway



## Transport Assistance

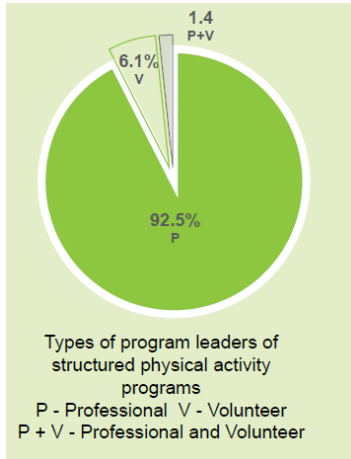


## Language and Cultural Support





## Professional and/or Volunteer Led



## Gap Analysis



- 12 LGAs where four or less of the types of structured physical activities were identified
- The most favourable ratio of persons aged 55+ per identified physical activity opportunity was 43 with the least favourable being 930
- Information provision and access regarding the physical activity opportunities for older people is an issue of concern
- The cost of structured physical activity programs is dependent on the type of programs being offered and the provider



## Gap Analysis



- It would be valuable to determine whether the cultural diversity profile of structured physical activity program participants matches the cultural diversity of an LGA's population
- Assisted and referral pathways may assist in overcoming the 'information and communication gap', as service providers act as the information resource
- The issue of transport may also be overcome by altering the service provision model to incorporate an outreach approach where the class 'travels to the older people'



## Recommendations



### For the Victorian Government via VAAP

- Ensure that the work of the VAAP links with other Government work
- Disseminate the LGA data to local service providers
- Bring the findings of the report to the attention of decision-makers
- Explore various models of assisted/referral pathways to engage older people in physical activity
- Showcase practice examples of effective channels and modes of information provision and communication
- Disseminate guidelines and tools to facilitate best practice



## Recommendations

**For decision-makers and service providers at the local level**



Come together to review and discuss data to promote a more integrated and coordinated approach to services featuring:

- A range of physical activity opportunities at a range of prices
- The establishment working partnerships between service providers
- Assisted/referral pathways
- Strategies to address transport issues
- More extensive utilisation of community channels to enhance information provision
- Review of the cultural diversity of the people participating in physical activity opportunities
- The possible use of volunteers as peer leaders and mentors
- Strategies to better engage socio-economically disadvantaged older people in physical activity



## Conclusion





## Contact Details

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