The Australian Prevention
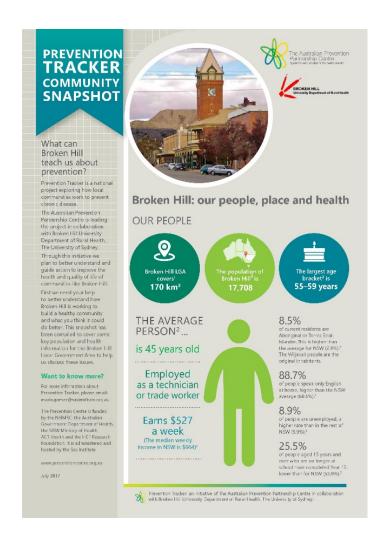Partnership Centre
Systems and solutions for better health

A community snapshot

This is what it is

A community snapshot is a representation of routinely collected data related to the people, place and health of a community.

How we applied it

The research team created a table that listed a range of possible data sets relating to the demographic status, health risk and health status for each community. The table also included statistics for comparison, in most cases the state average. The Local Advisory Group was instrumental in identifying which data sets would be most useful and meaningful to both workers in the prevention system and community members. The selected data were then included in a two-page snapshot with data represented in infographics.

What we learnt about how to use this method

The local agencies in each community were well informed about the range of existing data and the diversity of data sets which related to their communities. However, they were sometimes surprised by what the data showed, which sometimes contradicted local narratives about the community.

It was important to take into account the diversity of existing data sets and to work with agencies to ensure that data chosen in this project was consistent with other data in local use. For example, if smoking rates were falling locally, it was important to make sure that the data we chose was for the same time period as the data used by agencies in the community, to ensure that the trajectory of the information was not obscured by conflicting data collection periods.

What we learnt about the system from using this method

The community snapshot is a useful tool for establishing a shared and consistent baseline understanding of the issues confronting each community in the chronic disease prevention space.

The most compelling information in the snapshot in each community was the glaring discrepancy between an individual's self-reported health (predominantly good, very good or excellent) and the more objective health risk status (often below average). This discrepancy generated a great deal of conversation about the underlying **mental models** of health held by community members and the possibilities and requirements for agencies in the prevention space to address these issues.

Where to go if you need more information

- Profile ID. Available from: https://profile.id.com.au/

- Australian Bureau of Statistics Census Data. Available from: www.abs.gov.au/census

- Heart Foundation. Available from: www.heartfoundation.org.au/for-professionals/heart-maps/australian-heart-maps

- Diabetes Australia. Diabetes map. Available from: www.diabetesmap.com.au

This is part of a series of fact sheets on the Prevention Tracker project. The series covers topics such as group model building, key informant interviews, social network analysis, system action learning, identifying and monitoring system impacts. The series is available under the Resource tab at: https://preventioncentre.org.au/our-work/research-projects/learning-from-local-communities-prevention-tracker-expands/

The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre
Systems and solutions for better health

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