Participant outcomes
June 2024

Retrospective participant survey for individuals who have participated in a Multicultural Village Hub activity in the past 12 months from: May 1, 2023 - Apr 30, 2024

Introduction

The Multicultural Village Hub Project is ending on 30 June 2024, and we are so proud of its many achievements. It has helped culturally and linguistically diverse residents over 55 in Belmont and Bayswater access support services, develop new friendships and participate in many local and regional excursions. The project will be evaluated through a range of methods. This report details the outcomes from an end-of-project participant survey.

Since the Hubs program launch in June 2022, there have been nearly 500 participants involved, just over 300 of them registered Multicultural Village Hub members. Over the past 12 months, 214 registered participants joined at least one Village Hub activity.

End of project participant survey background

An end-of-grant survey was conducted to assess the impact of the Village Hub (VH) and gather participant feedback regarding:

1) how much the program had helped them and;

2) if they had any suggestions or ideas for future programs.

The survey was shared with registered participants.

There were 67 survey responses overall (22% of registered participants and 31% of participants involved over the 12 months). Responses were collected between 23/04/2024 and 10/05/2024 via Microsoft Forms and paper copies. The survey was anonymous, and participants could choose to enter a prize draw separate from the anonymous survey to preserve their privacy.

Participants responded to how often they've participated in the past 12 months, whether they made new friends, noticed improved physical or mental health, felt more connected to their community and had more knowledge of local services.

Survey Statistics

90%
Made new friends

91%
Mental health improved

87%
Physical health improved

500+
participants

214 in the past 12 months

1775
Attendances

May 2023-Apr 2024

104
Sessions

May 2023-Apr 2024

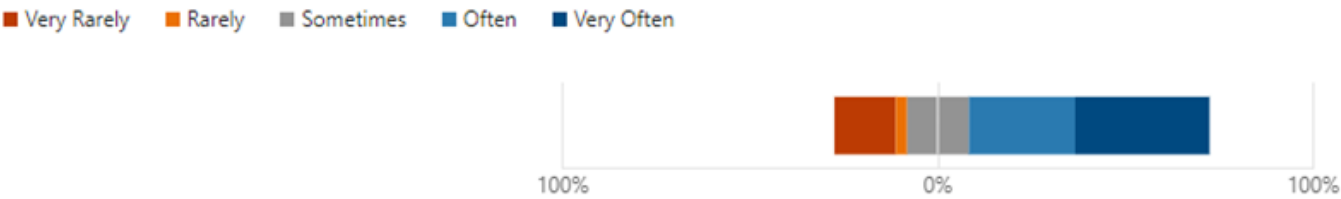## How often have you attended Village Hub activities/events?

For Question 1, "In the past 12 months, how often have you attended Village Hub activities/events?", the response breakdown was:

Very Rarely: 16.4%
Rarely: 3%
Sometimes: 16.4%
Often: 28.4%
Very Often: 35.8%

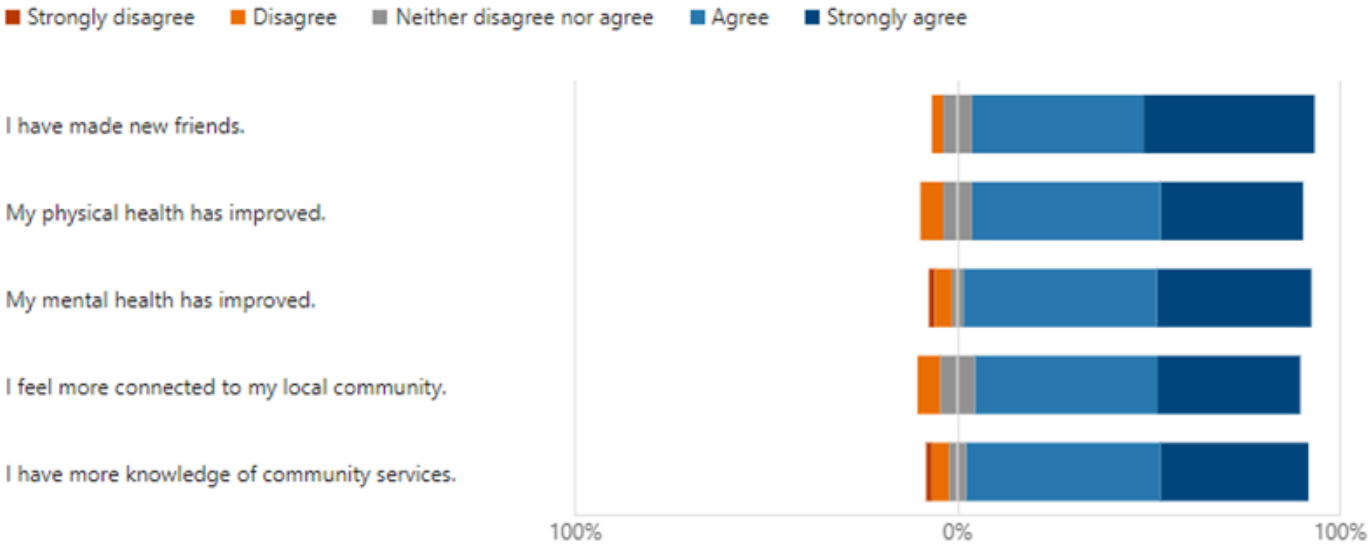This is also represented in the graph below.

Figure 1

Village Hub Attendance Responses

Likert Scale Responses

Figure 2

Likert Scale Responses

For Question 2, the Likert scale statements, response percentages were as follows:

1. I have made new friends.	2. My physical health has improved.
Strongly Disagree: 0%	Strongly Disagree: 0%
Disagree: 3%	Disagree: 6%
Neither disagree nor agree: 7.5%	Neither disagree nor agree: 7.5%
Agree: 44.8%	Agree: 49.3%
Strongly Agree: 44.8%	Strongly Agree: 37.3%
3. My mental health has improved.	**4. I feel more connected to my local community.**
Strongly Disagree: 1.5%	Strongly Disagree: 0%
Disagree: 4.5%	Disagree: 6%
Neither disagree nor agree: 3%	Neither disagree nor agree: 9%
Agree: 50.7%	Agree: 47.8%
Strongly Agree: 40.3%	Strongly Agree: 37.3%
5. I have more knowledge of community services.	
Strongly Disagree: 1.5%	
Disagree: 4.5%	
Neither agree nor disagree: 4.5%	
Agree: 50.7%	
Strongly Agree: 38.8%	

Descriptives for VH Attendance and Likert Responses

Descriptive statistics for VH attendance and Likert responses are shown in Table 1 below. Responses for VH attendance (Question 1) were changed to be "Very Rarely" = 1, "Rarely" = 2, "Sometimes" = 3, "Often" = 4, and "Very Often" = 5. Responses for the Likert scale (Question 2) were changed to be "Strongly Disagree" = 1, "Disagree" = 2, "Neither agree nor disagree" = 3, "Agree" = 4, and "Strongly Agree" = 5. Therefore, higher scores on these questions indicate higher attendance and higher agreement respectively.

Table 1

Descriptives for Attendance and Likert Responses

	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Attendance	3.64	1.42	1	5
New friends	4.31	0.74	2	5
Physical health	4.17	0.81	2	5
Mental health	4.24	0.84	1	5
Local community	4.16	0.83	2	5
Community services	4.21	0.84	1	5

Note. N=67.

Means were high across all Likert scale responses. Only "My mental health has improved" and "I have more knowledge of community services" had any "Strongly Disagree" responses (1.5%). The lowest response for other categories was "Disagree" with a range of 3-6%. The majority of participants responded with either "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" across all categories, with respective percentage ranges of 44.8-50.7% and 37.3%-44.8%.

Frequent attendance indicated greater outcomes

The correlation between attendance and making new friends was medium positive, while all other correlations were strong positive which suggests that there is a positive association between higher attendance and higher agreement with the Likert statements.

Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to assess the relationship between Village Hub attendance and levels of agreement in the Likert scales. Results are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Correlations Between Village Hub Attendance and Likert Responses

	New friends	Physical health	Mental health	Local community	Community services
VH Attendance	0.42**	0.52**	0.50**	0.59**	0.50**

Note. N=67, **p<.001.

Across all five Likert scale responses, results were statistically significant; p-values were all below <.001, therefore the null hypothesis can be rejected. According to Cohen's guidelines, the correlation between attendance and making new friends was medium positive (≥.30), while all other correlations were strong positive (≥.50). This suggests that there is a positive association between higher attendance and higher agreement with the Likert statements.

Considerations

Given the generally high means across Likert responses, it is possible that social desirability guided self-reporting, i.e. answering favourably was seen as the 'correct' response. However, responses were collected anonymously to mitigate this. There were also a couple of respondents who answered "Strongly Disagree" despite their written feedback being very positive, so it is unclear if this was an error.

As Question 1 was worded with anchors ranging from "Very Rarely" to "Very Often", the subjectivity of these anchors could have impacted accuracy of results. Regardless, there was a broader range in responses for this question compared to the Likert scale, suggesting that people were not answering they attended events "Very Often" out of social desirability concerns.

As the survey only had five items, and the Likert scale only five statements, it is unlikely that participants would have fallen into an acquiescent response set (i.e. answering "Strongly Agree" to everything even if that doesn't match their true opinion). Because it was a short survey, it was not considered necessary to include attention checks or negatively keyed items. Likert scales have been demonstrated to be reliable and valid self-reporting measures, though further testing would be required to determine the exact reliability and validity of this survey.

Written Responses

Questions 3-5 included space for written responses. This was seeking feedback on which activities were most important, how the program has helped connect participants with other people, and any suggestions for future programs.

Question 3 — Which Village Hub activities were most important to you?

The most popular response was "yoga" (15%), followed by "outings" (13%), "exercise" (9%) and "bush walking" (7%). There were also many variations in wording for the same answers, such as "strength & balance", "Pilates", "bus tours", etc. In general, participants most appreciated the Strength & Balance class, bush walking, day trip outings with Co-Connect, and informational workshops.

Question 4 — In what ways has the Village Hub helped to connect you with other people?

The main responses revolved around meeting people at activities such as yoga, bush walking, day trips, etc. Participants also mentioned that VH promoted "mutual support strategies through sharing knowledge" and that they felt VH had been "a facilitator to growing a deeper sense of friendship with others".

Question 5 — Do you have any ideas or suggestions for future programs?

There were many suggestions that indicated a desire for program continuation. Responses included statements such as "Existing program (busy day trip outing and monthly bushwalk) should continue so seniors can get out of their house and connect with other people", "Keep it going and maybe offer same programs on different days/times during the week", "More social activities", "More in-depth info on individual Centrelink services", and "every month the Village Hub should have more workshops".

> *"[The Village Hub] was a facilitator for growing a deeper sense of friendship with others."*

In summary, preliminary results indicate that participants who attended more VH events/activities had better self-reported outcomes. Written feedback suggests that the VH program was useful for participants in several areas: it helped to foster new social connections, it offered important informational workshops, and it enabled travel and outings that may have been otherwise inaccessible to its participants. 20% of survey respondents directly referenced program continuation in their feedback, and many other suggestions for future activities/events implied a strong desire to continue the program.