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ISLHD partnering with community organisations to *Make Healthy Normal*

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) Health Promotion Service is helping community organisations and people to *Make Healthy Normal*.

Small changes can make a big difference, drinking more water, eating smaller portions and eating more fruit and vegetables, are all a great start on the path to good health.

The ISLHD Health Promotion Service has partnered with around 60 community organisations to support local community members to make small changes that will make a big difference.

Partnering with BaptistCare Darcy House at Port Kembla, staff wanted to support clients to drink more water and cut down their consumption of sugary drinks, by installing a water cooler.

BaptistCare Darcy House Manager, Dianne Frohmuller said when they installed the water cooler, they noticed the difference immediately.

“Our clients have really taken to drinking lots more water,” Ms Frohmuller said.

“We also provide fresh mint, lemon and lime from our own food garden so they can try flavoured water. The feedback from clients has been all positive,” she said.

“With the help of the Health Promotion Service, we have supported our clients to drink more water, reduce the amount of sugary drinks they consume daily and have shown them that making small changes can make a positive difference to their health.”

ISLHD Health Promotion Officer, Katherine Van Weerdenburg said by working closely with community organisations, the Health Promotion Service can make an impact on individuals as well as the health of the surrounding community.

“The partnership we’ve developed at Darcy House has also allowed us to address smoking among staff and clients and help people quit,” Ms Van Weerdenburg said.

“Through other activities of the *Make Healthy Normal* campaign, we have been able to reach more than 8,000 people and help them improve their health. By using simple measures and messages people’s health has been influenced for the better. The good news is, that all these little changes add up to help keep people out of hospital down the track,” she said.

Community organisations who would like help to make healthy changes within their service or communities can contact Health Promotion Officer, Katherine Van Weerdenburg on 4221 6756 or Katherine.VanWeerdenburg@health.nsw.gov.au.

For more information on how to *Make Healthy Normal* visit www.makehealthynormal.nsw.gov.au