

2024/25 Update on TROPHI Region Needs – Consumer and Council Perspectives

Overview

The TROPHI region (Knox, Maroondah, Yarra Ranges) faces evolving health priorities shaped by post-pandemic realities and systemic gaps. In 2025 TROPHI analysed new Council documents and undertook consultation with Consumer Advisors.

Key findings:

- **Mental Health:** Persistent gaps in trauma-informed, non-crisis care.
 - **Chronic Disease Prevention:** Need for low-barrier programs promoting nutrition and physical activity.
 - **Cultural Safety:** Strengthen pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
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Evolving Priorities Since 2024

- Shift toward **community-centred, prevention-focused care**.
 - Embedding **co-design, trauma-informed practice, cultural safety**.
 - Addressing root causes: food insecurity, transport disadvantage, social isolation.
 - Post-pandemic priorities: resilience, early intervention, informal supports.
 - Structural reforms: streamlined referrals, flexible service delivery, inclusion of Culturally and linguistically diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
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Consumer Feedback Summary

Consumer advisors recruited in early 2025 identified critical gaps:

- **Mental Health:** Long wait times, high costs, crisis-driven systems, lack of Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) and Mentalisation-Based Therapy (MBT), and limited youth services.
- **Transport & Isolation:** Barriers for those without licenses or cars; anxiety in public spaces; need for expanded Transport Accident Commission's learner to probationary driver (TAC L2P) and community transport.
- **Home-Based Care:** Demand for programs such as Better at Home and Home and Community Care (HACC) for trauma-affected or homebound individuals.
- **Inclusive Engagement:** Desire for paid consumer advisory roles and culturally safe participation.

- **Preventive Health:** Affordable programs for physical activity, nutrition, and chronic disease prevention.
 - **Yarra Ranges:** Affordable Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and Autism Spectrum Disorder assessments, family violence prevention, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health pathways.
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Council Priorities Across Regions

Shared Priorities (Maroondah, Knox, Yarra Ranges)

1. **Expand Home-Based Care & Virtual Supports** for homebound individuals.
2. **Strengthen Outreach & Transport Supports** to reduce isolation.
3. **Improve Mental Health Services Beyond Crisis Response;** increase access to DBT, MBT.
4. **Inclusive Consumer Engagement** with paid advisory roles.
5. **Preventive Health Initiatives** for physical activity, nutrition, chronic disease.
6. **Regional Policy Reform:** pandemic preparedness, GP access, primary care navigation.

Yarra Ranges-Specific Needs

- Family violence prevention.
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health & women's health pathways.
 - Climate health focus balanced with immediate needs.
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Key Differences & Opportunities

- **Mental Health:** Councils emphasize early intervention, but lack specialist therapy access and trauma-informed referral systems.
 - **Transport:** Infrastructure improvements do not fully address isolation for non-drivers; consumer demand for supervised driving programs remains unmet.
 - **Consumer Voice:** While councils embed engagement principles, formal paid advisory roles are not standard.
 - **Cultural Safety:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health priorities are inconsistently addressed across councils.
 - **Family Violence:** Yarra Ranges acknowledges risk factors but lacks integrated family support models.
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Comparison: Consumer Feedback vs Council Priorities

Area	Consumer Feedback	Council Priority Status
Mental Health	Accessible, trauma-informed care; DBT/MBT therapies	Councils focus on promotion, not specialist access
Transport & Isolation	Expanded outreach & driving programs	Infrastructure upgrades; limited driving programs
Home-Based Care	Better at Home, HACC expansion	Meals on Wheels present; psychiatric care absent
Inclusive Engagement	Paid advisory roles	Engagement policies exist; remuneration unclear
Preventive Health	Affordable programs for nutrition & activity	Active living promoted; cost barriers remain
Cultural Safety	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health pathways	Limited; needs stronger integration

Recommendations for TROPHI

- Advocate for **formal consumer advisory frameworks** with remuneration.
- Support councils in **developing trauma-informed referral pathways** and expanding access to DBT/MBT therapies.
- Collaborate on **transport solutions** beyond infrastructure—expand TAC L2P and community driving programs.
- Promote **culturally safe health models** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and targeted women’s health initiatives.
- Facilitate **affordable neurodevelopmental assessments** and integrated family violence prevention programs.

Further Research & Opportunities

- **Maroondah:** Expand DBT/MBT access; trauma-informed referral models; consumer advisory frameworks.
 - **Knox:** Integrated mental health care; home-based psychiatric care; driving access programs.
 - **Yarra Ranges:** Affordable neurodevelopmental assessments; family violence prevention; culturally safe care.
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Conclusion

Despite progress, consumer feedback identifies unmet needs—especially in mental health, transport, chronic disease prevention, and cultural safety. TROPHI aims to help bridge these gaps through strategic partnerships, advocacy, and program development to help drive inclusive planning, structural reforms, and preventive health strategies to ensure equitable, resilient health systems across the region.
