



Community Men's Shed

Principles

The principles and benefits of an individual Men's Shed establishment are well documented throughout Australia and are becoming well understood and accepted. The Phillip Island RSL Sub-Branch Inc. will continue to focus on providing a place for regular social interaction, promoting mate ship and support, active participation in activities, making tangible things, learning new skills and creating new ideas, receiving information – especially about health and well-being and helping the veteran community.

The establishment of the Phillip Island RSL Community Men's Shed was based on the following principles

- a) **Health and well-being of all the participants.**
- b) **Activities of participants both physical and mental.**
- c) **Involvement with the veteran community and the general community.**
- d) **Sustainability of the Shed.**
- e) **Does not limit itself to men.**

A. Health and well-being of the members.

The physical, mental and emotional health of members is enhanced through a program such as this if the members are to live healthier, happier and longer lives.

Activities that deliver health and well-being outcomes.

A program to build the health and well-being of the members is an essential part of the Shed. This program can range from being alert to identifying members in need of help to formal activities that address particular health issues.

A number of Local, State and Federal agencies are able to contribute to the program which would be tailored to the needs of the member.

Apart from formal health problems, the Shed activities also contribute to health generally through addressing most of the principles of living longer. Of particular note are the opportunities for members to work together on activities (making things), to learn and develop new skills, to interact socially in a relaxing, low-stress environment. There is also a pride that is associated with being able to undertake effective work in the community.



The following can be used as a guide for delivering better health and welfare outcomes for members.

- 1) Provide information about health issues.
- 2) Recognise the benefits of well-being.
- 3) Recognise the importance of mental health and its consequences for all ages.
- 4) Recognise that more men are in transition.
- 5) Recognise the disadvantaged.
- 6) Span the generations.
- 7) Link social activity to health issues and well-being.
- 8) Link physical activity to health and well-being

Social networks are more reticent in discussing their health and well-being. The Shed is a mechanism that provides a network and support infrastructure for people of all ages.

The Relaxation Skills and Leisure the Shed can provide a place for:-

- 1) Regular social interaction.
- 2) Promoting friendship and support.
- 3) Active participation in activities.
- 4) Making tangible things.
- 5) Learning new skills and creating new ideas.
- 6) Receiving information, especially about health and well-being.
- 7) Helping the community.

B. Activities of participants both physical and mental.

The main groups of activities are:-

- 1) The Shed's core activities.
- 2) Activities that deliver health and well-being outcomes.
- 3) Community and social activities

These activities represent divisions of the enterprise as distinguished by their objectives and managed accordingly. Some activities may be commercial to generate revenue for the Shed; others will be involved in servicing members while others will involve service to the community.

The Shed's Core Activities:

The membership of the Shed is expected to broadly reflect the demographics of the veteran and general communities and is open to all classes of membership both male and female.

The programs should be designed to promote the good health and well-being of the participants.

The capacity of the Shed to provide relaxation and basic skill activities is linked to the availability of other healthy members to assist.

The Objectives:

- 1) To provide a venue for ongoing social interaction amongst members.
- 2) To develop a range of activities in which all members can participate.
- 3) To develop and run programs that will contribute to better health and well-being of the members.
- 4) To conduct a well-managed and well-operated Shed concept.
- 5) To build the sustainability of the Shed.
- 6) To undertake community development and support activities.

- **Activities that deliver health and well-being outcomes.**

A program of social activities will be used to develop teamwork and understanding among the members and also used where appropriate, to involve spouses, partners and children in the objectives of the Shed.

A key part of the social activities is to always provide a welcome to members and visitors, to have a tea/coffee pot ready and to have time for a chat. An informal and inclusive environment is essential to generate the feeling of belonging and comfort among members. The trust that emerges from these activities is a key element in the success of other programs to advance the health and well-being of the members and their families.

- **Community Activities.**

The Shed activities will also include the ongoing operation of the facility. Any commercial operations will be supported by members specialized in those activities. The general operation of the Shed will include regular hours of operation for members and visitors. There will be a responsibility for meeting and servicing visitors.

There will be a need to supply information to prospective clients about the Shed's movement in general and the specific operation of the Shed.

These activities will grow in importance, even to the extent that Local, State and Federal Government officials may visit the facility.

C. Involvement with the Veteran and General Communities.

The Phillip Island RSL Community Men's Shed, much like the AMSA Shed Program is a community organization that draws strength from the support of both the veteran and general communities. It is also in a situation where it can deliver services back to the community.

The nature of those activities may include:

- 1) The provision of goods made in the Shed (e.g. toys) to needy children.
- 2) The carrying out of minor works and repairs to property of needy people.
- 3) The participation of members in community activities and functions.

The Shed facilities can also be used in a range of activities to assist people in need and those with different abilities, rehabilitation and recovery. Programs may involve various elements of mentoring, training and activities in the Shed as appropriate. The scope of those activities is dependent on building the capacity of the members to be able to undertake these activities.

D. Sustainability of the Phillip Island RSL Community Men's Shed.

The PIRSL Shed provides a special opportunity in terms of sustainability. The combination of health and well-being outcomes with the production of tangible products and services provides the potential for sustainability to include self-funding of most of the Shed's programs.

A small commercial operation of the Shed could provide a surplus that helps to fund the other programs to support health and well-being programs and provide a degree of independence that in itself is a health benefit for the member.

The PIRSL Shed may be involved with other community Shed's throughout Australia in the development of what is necessary to build and sustain a Shed that can provide real benefits to its members.

E. Does not limit itself to men.

The membership of the Shed is open to members of the PIRSL and the general community.

The PIRSL Shed aims to attract members who have an interest in passing on skills or who wish to learn new skills.

The PIRSL Shed is designed to provide specific infrastructure and operating guidelines that underpin efficient operations and management.

From this perspective sustainability entails:

- 1) High quality management and programs.
- 2) Well-structured succession planning.
- 3) Maintenance of the target membership.
- 4) Achievement of health and well-being objectives.
- 5) An ongoing partnership/relationship programs.

PIRSL Men's Shed Coordinator and Committee.

A Shed Coordinator appointed by the PIRSL Sub-Branch Committee will be responsible for the Management of the Shed who will report monthly on the activities of the Shed to the Sub-Branch Committee. In the event of a Shed Committee being put in place then the appointed Coordinator in consultation with the Sub-Branch Committee will appoint the members of the Shed Committee.

Applying a Set of common Principles.

- The Coordinator will be committed to ensuring the success of the Shed by applying a common set of basic principles.

The Common Principles maybe but are not restricted to:

1. **Support.**
2. **Partnership.**
3. **Leadership.**
4. **Research and Development.**
5. **Communication.**
6. **Growth.**

1. Guidance.

- The Coordinator will guide members toward the necessity for a positive outcome.
- Sometimes, even with the best of intentions and enthusiasm, the Shed can miss vital elements that may later impede its success or even the sustainability of the Shed. The Coordinator will highlight problem areas and put into place counteracting measures.
- There will be issues the Coordinator will need to provide guidelines. Getting it right upfront will prevent frustration, disappointment and the re-working of people's efforts down the track.

2. Support.

- The Coordinator will provide support, encouragement and direction to keep the Shed going.
- It is normal for all organizations, groups and teams to experience "growing pains". The three recognised stages of developments – Forming, Storming and Performing - are as relevant to a Shed as they are in a business or a social club.
- Many survive the storming = the clash of expectations and personalities and clash of wills. Others do not.
- Many select leaders with experience and drive to make them successful. Others do not.

- Many plan ahead to anticipate as many of the problems they will encounter as possible and prepare their solutions. Others do not.
- Many see the big picture and all the implications – health, political, economic social and technological. Others do not.
- Many have their financial security under control. Others do not.
- Many adjust quickly to opportunities or threats. Others do not.
- These and many other issues are where the Coordinator can provide support in the Guidance stage. Planning, organizing, leading and developing are skills that the Shed leadership needs to acquire.

3. Partnership.

- The affiliation with other Men's Sheds may be beneficial to both parties. Our Shed needs to experience the sense of belonging so that it will have the confidence it needs, as experienced by other Sheds that have worked through similar problem situations and have appropriate resources and experiences worth sharing.
- Access to the PIRSL Community Men's Shed is beneficial for all members to freely permit the sharing of successes and obstacles in areas that are specifically relevant to their ideals, operations and community situation.
- The links that the PIRSL Community Men's Shed will facilitate include those with:

Community organizations – That will support the Shed's programs both philosophically and physically, perhaps with cash, perhaps with in-kind provisions and perhaps as outlets for the members' creative ideas;

Health services – The PIRSL Community Men's Shed Coordinator can assist in bridging the gaps between health service providers and the intended recipients of these services in the most cost-effective and sustainable way. The PIRSL Community Men's Shed will seek advice on the relevance of physical, mental and social health-care programs for members;

Member services – Include relevant publications to peruse, social activities in which to participate, web-sites to browse and may even extend to cost-effective purchases through the community broader network;

Sponsors - The PIRSL Community Men's Shed may look to attracting long-term sponsors not just one-off donations. Some sponsors may contribute out of a sense of social or corporate responsibility, other out of philanthropic desire; still others out of commitment to the Shed's ideals. The PIRSL Community Men's Shed may facilitate sponsorships that are beyond the normal circle of influence.

4. Leadership.

- It is important that the Shed's leaders are amenable to learning and implementing effective leadership skills to the Shed. The leaders must set the example in forward vision, drive and the embodiment of the Shed's values.
- The PIRSL Community Men's Shed Coordinator should have the experience to help the Shed with both individual and corporate development.



- When conditions change the most successful program may be the slowest to adapt. The leadership's enthusiasm and thinking must encourage the Shed to continue to fulfill its ideals.
- The PIRSL Community Men's Shed has the potential to be successful however if strong leadership isn't there the organization will flounder.

5. Research and Development.

- The PIRSL Community Men's Shed is where relevant issues are researched, documented and appropriate resources developed and stored.
- The aim of the PIRSL Community Men's Shed is to ensure that the members are provided with the information relevant to their many needs through the Shed's Coordinator.
- Research provided to the PIRSL Community Men' Shed by other community Sheds may be of use.

6. Communication.

- The other "big C" in people's lives! How often does the receiver clearly hear the message that the sender intended? It is only through the experience of both the sender and receiver that language, form, abbreviations, misunderstanding, ambiguities and the like are cleared away to reveal the true intent of a message.
- The PIRSL Community Men's Shed Coordinator should have experience in listening to members and to understand the environment and changing context of their needs.
- The dissemination of appropriate research, current topics and anecdotes from other Sheds is one way that PIRSL Community Men's Shed can add value.
- The PIRSL Community Men's Shed can also become an important link in the communication chain, putting the Shed in touch with other Sheds that may be able to assist in some way.

7. Growth.

- Men and Women continue to grow whatever their age and physical or mental condition. The PIRSL Shed can simply facilitate that growth, often resulting in the transfer of skills from one person to another. A person who can overcome isolation, loneliness and depression by participating in the Shed program. The PIRSL Shed will assist its members to facilitate growth in the most relevant areas, both in breadth and depth.
- The PIRSL Shed should continue to grow in number, skills transfer, services provided, support facilitated, community interaction output from physical activity, opportunities, etc. The PIRSL Shed will continue to work for growth of individuals and the Shed as a whole.
- The PIRSL Shed will also continue to focus on the spiraling influence of appropriate information to members, the community and the network and on the growing interaction between members and government agencies and their relevant programs.

