



Mansfield Shire

Memorandum of Understanding

An agreement between:

Mansfield Shire Council

and

Mansfield District Hospital

Purpose

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) details the agreement between Mansfield Shire Council (Council) and Mansfield District Hospital (MDH) for the Mansfield RESPOND Quarterly Working Group.

It recognises the participation of community members, agencies and organisations operating within Mansfield Shire who participate in the Mansfield RESPOND Working Group.

Background

The RESPOND (Reflexive Evidence and Systems interventions to Prevent Obesity and Non-communicable Disease) Project was a Deakin University-led National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Partnership Research Project focused on improving the health and wellbeing of children through a whole-of-community systems approach.

While the original research project has concluded, MSC and MDH have committed to continuing the RESPOND legacy to support healthy eating and active living within the Mansfield community.

Objectives

The objectives of this MoU are to:

- Formalise collaboration between MSC and MDH.
- Provide clear governance arrangements for the continuation of RESPOND.
- Support a community-led systems approach to improving child health outcomes.
- Enable coordinated implementation of shared prevention initiatives.
- Provide a framework for working group operations consistent with the adopted Terms of Reference.

To achieve these, MSC and MDH will collaborate on:

- Facilitating quarterly RESPOND Working Group meetings.
- Joint planning and priority setting.
- Aligning prevention initiatives where there is strategic fit.
- Sharing information relevant to child health, healthy eating and active living.
- Supporting projects arising from Working Group priorities.

Definitions

Council means Mansfield Shire Council

MDH means Mansfield District Hospital

Memorandum of Understanding means a document that expresses mutual accord on an issue between two or more parties.

Party or Parties means Mansfield Shire Council and Mansfield District Hospital

Governance and Decision-Making

Decision-making authority for RESPOND matters rests jointly with MSC and MDH with input from Working Group members.

Operational matters relating to meeting facilitation and coordination are led by:

- MDH RESPOND Project Coordinator (Chairperson), or
- MSC Representative (in the Chair's absence).

A quorum of four (4) members plus the facilitator is required for decisions to be made.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Parties agree to work collaboratively to:

- Foster collaborative partnerships between agencies, organisations and community members.
- Support collective planning and implementation of:
 - Annual Action Plans
 - Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans
 - Related prevention and health promotion initiatives.
- Strengthen primary prevention efforts across Mansfield Shire.
- Share knowledge, insights and project updates to support sustainable community-led change.

Council will:

- Provide strategic alignment with Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.
- Support coordination, communication and implementation activities.
- Ensure appropriate governance oversight.
- Chair meetings where required.

MDH will:

- Provide leadership through the RESPOND Project Coordinator.
- Chair meetings and coordinate agendas and minutes.
- Support alignment with health promotion priorities.
- Maintain stakeholder engagement.

Working group members will:

- Understand the purpose of RESPOND and its systems approach.
- Actively participate in meetings.
- Support transparency in decision-making.
- Participate in projects where there is strategic alignment with their organisation's core work.

Working Group Membership

RESPOND working group membership is open to community members, agencies and organisations within Mansfield Shire who support the purpose and objectives of RESPOND.

Applications or expressions of interest from new members will be considered by the MDH RESPOND Project Coordinator and the MSC Representative. Where they consider the proposed member to be appropriate, the proposed membership will be presented to the Working Group for consideration and approval.

Membership will be approved by Working Group members present and reviewed annually. The Working Group may decline an application where it considers that membership would not support the purpose, objectives or effective functioning of the Working Group.

Membership Composition

The Working Group will comprise representatives from organisations, agencies, community groups and service providers operating within Mansfield Shire that support the purpose and objectives of RESPOND.

Membership may include representatives from, but is not limited to:

- Mansfield Shire Council - up to four (4) representatives.
- Mansfield District Hospital - up to three (3) representatives.
- St John Anglican Church and associated community initiatives - up to three (3) representatives.
- Community-based health and wellbeing groups and programs - up to three (3) representatives.
- Disability and inclusion service providers - up to two (2) representatives.
- Fitness, recreation and physical activity providers - up to two (2) representatives.
- Community support, neighbourhood and volunteer organisations - up to one (1) representative per organisation.
- Other relevant agencies, organisations or community groups as approved by the Working Group.

The Working Group may vary the number and composition of representatives from participating organisations from time to time to ensure appropriate community representation, skills, expertise and alignment with RESPOND's purpose and objectives.

Meeting Arrangements

Meetings will be held quarterly in a hybrid format (in person and via Microsoft Teams).

Agendas will be distributed at least one week prior and will include an opening Acknowledgement of Country.

Minutes will be circulated following meetings.

Conflict of Interest

Members must declare any actual or perceived conflicts of interest at the beginning of each meeting. Where a conflict exists, the member must leave the meeting during discussion and, if relevant, voting of the item in which the conflict exists.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

The Parties agree to:

- Share relevant information to support project objectives.
- Respect confidentiality of sensitive information.
- Ensure personal or sensitive data is managed in accordance with relevant privacy legislation and organisational policies.

Financial Arrangements

This MOU does not commit either party to financial contributions unless agreed in writing under separate agreement.

Term

This MoU commences upon signing by all parties and continues until 30 June 2029, unless terminated earlier in accordance with this MoU.

Review

The MoU will be reviewed annually.

Dispute Resolution

The Parties agree to notify each other of any problems or issues as they arise and to consult in good faith to determine any unresolved disputes in order to achieve the objectives of this MoU

The parties agree to meet within a reasonable time of a dispute arising with a view to resolution;

If the dispute cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the Parties and within a reasonable time, the Parties may appoint an independent mediator to assist the Parties to resolve the dispute; and

Should the mediation fail, the Parties may decide to terminate the MoU.

Variation

This MoU may only be varied by written agreement signed by both parties.

Legal Status

This MoU is not intended to create legally binding obligations between the parties, except where expressly stated.

Executed

SIGNED for and on behalf of **Mansfield Shire Council**:

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

SIGNED for and on behalf of **Mansfield District Hospital**:

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____