

Catholic Health Safety and Welfare SA

An agreement between Red Cross and Catholic Health Safety and Welfare SA was established in late 2018 after the attendance of local Catholic School staff at the 'Is Tea Tree Gully Disaster ready?' workshop run by Red Cross in July 2018. The staff had been impressed by what they had learnt and so fed this back to the Catholic Health Safety and Welfare SA team to encourage others to also become better informed of what to do in emergencies. CHSWA asked Red Cross to provide educational sessions on emergency preparedness to the agencies associated with the Catholic sector. It was determined that a series of workshops would be run for agencies associated with CHSW SA in the first half of 2019.

These half day workshops were designed to increase awareness of the importance of preparedness and shared responsibility during emergencies. The first workshop was run in February for social and aged care services staff. The Emergency preparedness workshop gave participants the opportunity to practice identifying and mapping the hazards that could impact their organisations, which generated discussion on what their organisation should do in an emergency and was practiced through disaster scenarios. The sessions placed emphasis on the importance of social connectedness and the roles of community organisations in caring for their community before, during and after disasters and emergencies.



Similar workshops were also developed with an educational focus for two further workshops aimed at Catholic Schools, with one session run for regional schools through the Northern coordinators meeting hosted in Port Pirie and another for the metropolitan Catholic Schools. These sessions followed a similar format, with scenarios recreated to reflect a school setting and additional links to the education system and curriculum made.

Feedback from these sessions hosted by Catholic Health Safety and Welfare SA and facilitated by Red Cross have been overwhelmingly positive. With the following comments reflecting the feedback received.

"Today's workshop was brilliant- topics covered very well"

"I valued the scenario discussions and discussions with others about emergencies"

"We worked together and were able to pool our ideas and applications already in place"

Many actions that participants indicated they would work towards when they returned to their place of work reflected the key messages of the session being the importance of social



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connections and the necessity to review and practice emergency plans. Other key outcomes that have come from the workshops include a greater awareness of the impact of emergencies on the community and an understanding of community service organisation's role in emergency preparedness, response and recovery. Staff spoke of updating their emergency plans and communicating these plans to other key staff members, intending to have greater communication between organisations and to develop informal or formal partnerships which can be utilised in an emergency.



We are excited to see what the organisations who have participated in these workshops are able to achieve to improve their emergency preparedness for their organisations and their communities.



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