

HALT PROGRAM REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The evaluation assesses the effectiveness of the Hope Assistance Local Tradies (HALT) Program and makes recommendations regarding its future development. This report presents data collected between November 2019 to June 2020 inclusive. An annual report showing outcomes for the HALT Program including quantitative data, case studies, illustrations and digital stories will be delivered in late 2021.

The findings presented have been captured by HALT Community Workers to ensure consistent coverage across the two catchments – South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (covering areas such as Frankston-Mornington Peninsula and Beaconsfield) and North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (covering areas including Melton, Brimbank, Macedon Ranges).

BACKGROUND

In November 2019, Swinburne University's Social Innovation Research Institute (SIRI) was commissioned to conduct an independent evaluation of the HALT Program.

INTERIM REPORT INTRODUCTION

Every year over 65,000 Australians make a suicide attempt. In 2018 there were 3046 deaths by suicide in Australia and 76% of these were men (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2019).

Tradies are one group that experience mental health issues, often without support. Tradies are predominantly made up of men (85.1%; ABS, 2019). Talking about depression, anxiety, suicide and life's difficulties are not part of the tradie culture. (King et al., 2019)¹ Indeed, many men do not have the information or confidence to access mental health services (Yousaf, Grunfeld, & Hunter, 2013; Yousaf, Popat, & Hunter, 2015).²

HALT is in a unique position to be able to connect with tradies as a grass roots organisation that has been established by tradies for tradies.

The HALT Program is designed to improve the mental health literacy and communication skills of tradies, encouraging them to speak up and ask for support from their friends, families and support workers if they are struggling with their mental health or thinking about suicide.

HALT provides tradies with education around mental health through the delivery of 'Save Your Bacon' events and other informal talks. The key topics covered include:

- An introduction to mental health, self-care and ways to cope with life's ups and downs.
- How to recognise if a friend or family member is struggling with their mental health.
- How to have a tough conversation about mental health.
- Tools to support a friend or family member that is struggling with their mental health.

- Local and national support services and how to access them.

HALT forms partnerships with the following key stakeholders to co-host 'Save Your Bacon' events and other information sessions to tradies: trades businesses, hardware stores, men's sheds, TAFEs and learning institutions, farming communities and emergency responders.

HALT MISSION

The mission of HALT and the HALT Program is:

- to increase awareness of mental health and wellbeing in the tradie community
- to reduce stigma and discrimination associated with mental health issues
- to develop familiarity and connection for tradies to health services within their local community

EVALUATION OF THE HALT PROGRAM

The Program is evaluated based on its capacity to influence and make an impact, for tradespeople, particularly by supporting:

- Communities to be better informed and to refer to and navigate mental health services.
- Communities to be more proactive around mental health issues.
- Communities to collaborate around mental health issues.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2019a)- Causes of Death Australia- 2018. Canberra: Retrieved from www.abs.gov.au

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2019b)- Gender Indicators- Australia- Nov 2019. Canberra: Retrieved from www.abs.gov.au

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011)- Education and Employment- Australia- 2011. Canberra: Retrieved from www.abs.gov.au

¹King, T. L., Batterham, P. J., Lingard, H., Gullestrup, J., Lockwood, C., Harvey, S. B., ... Milner, A. (2019). Are Young Men Getting the Message? Age Differences in Suicide Prevention Literacy among Male Construction Workers. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16, 475.

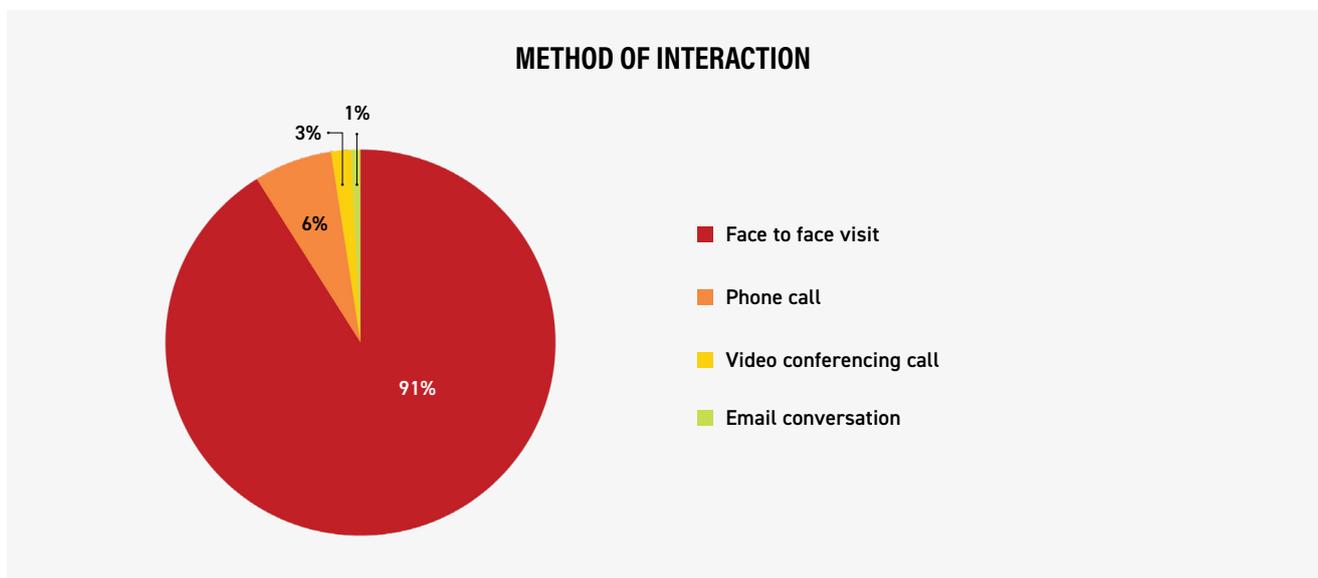
²Yousaf, O., Grunfeld, E. A., & Hunter, M. S. (2013). A systematic review of the factors associated with delays in medical and psychological help-seeking among men. *Health Psychology Review*, 9, 264-276. doi:10.1080/17437199.2013.840954

Yousaf, O., Popat, A., & Hunter, M. S. (2015). An investigation of masculinity attitudes, gender, and attitudes toward psychological help-seeking. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 16(2), 234-237.

FINDINGS

INITIAL CONTACT

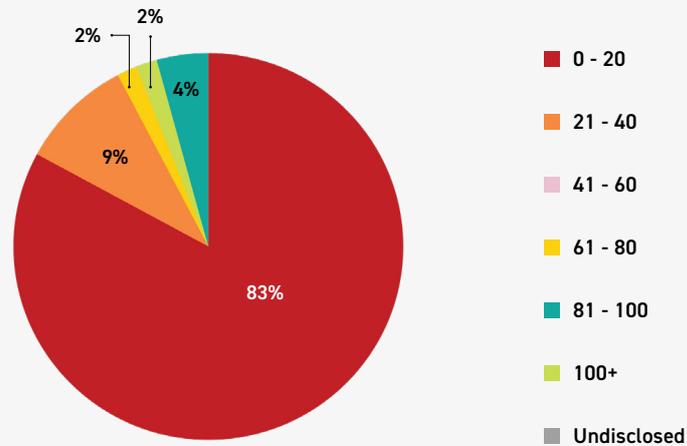
Initial contact forms were completed by HALT Project Workers following their first contact with potential partners or community contacts for HALT events. 124 initial contact forms were collected in total between January 2020 to June 2020 across the two regions.



90% of interactions between HALT Project Workers and initial contacts were conducted face-to-face and 91% of these were initiated by HALT. It is predicted that this initiation figure would shift over time, with an increase in initial contacts made by the business or organisation as the profile of HALT is raised within the Greater Melbourne region.

Other interactions were made by telephone (~7%), video conference (~2%) email (~1%). HALT have preferred face to face interactions, forecasting that there would be a better rate of conversion into the delivery of co-hosted events/presentations through this method.

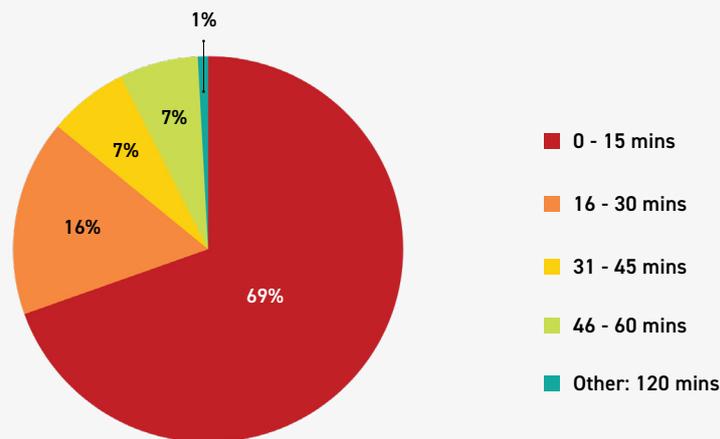
TRAVEL TIME TO VISIT COMMUNITY CONTACTS



The average travel distance for HALT Project Workers to visit businesses and organisations in the community in order to make initial contact was 8.6km.

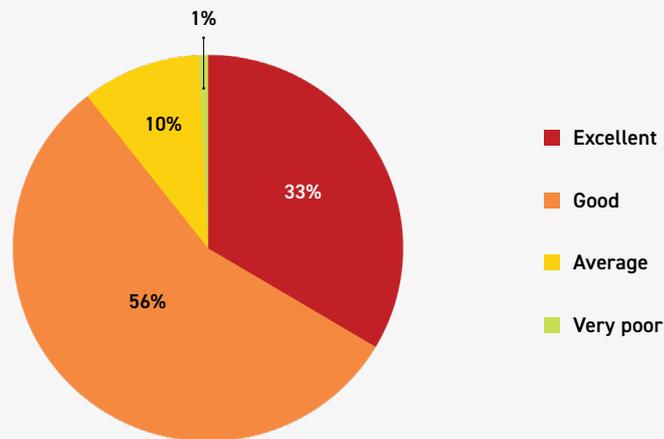
Less than 2% of initial contacts were made with 100km travel or more, and 81% of initial contacts were made with 0-20km travel.

LENGTH OF CONTACT



In 69% of cases the length of initial contact was 15 minutes or under, with 99% being under 1 hour.

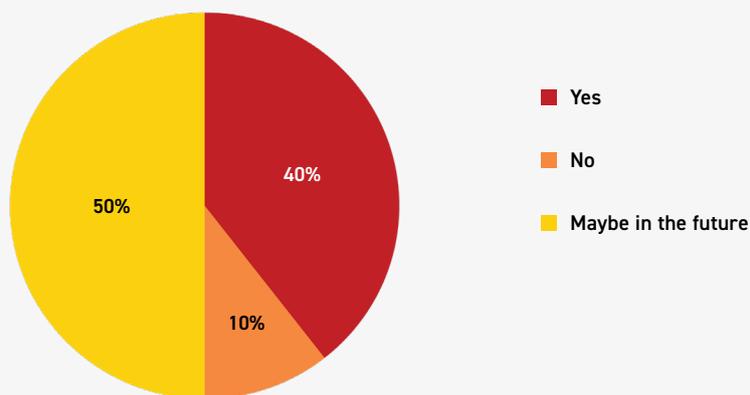
RESPONSE FROM INITIAL CONTACT



89% of responses from initial contact were excellent or good. This indicates that HALT Project Workers are targeting businesses that are responsive to the HALT message.

No responses were rated as "Poor".

CONVERSION RATES INTO CO-HOSTED EVENTS



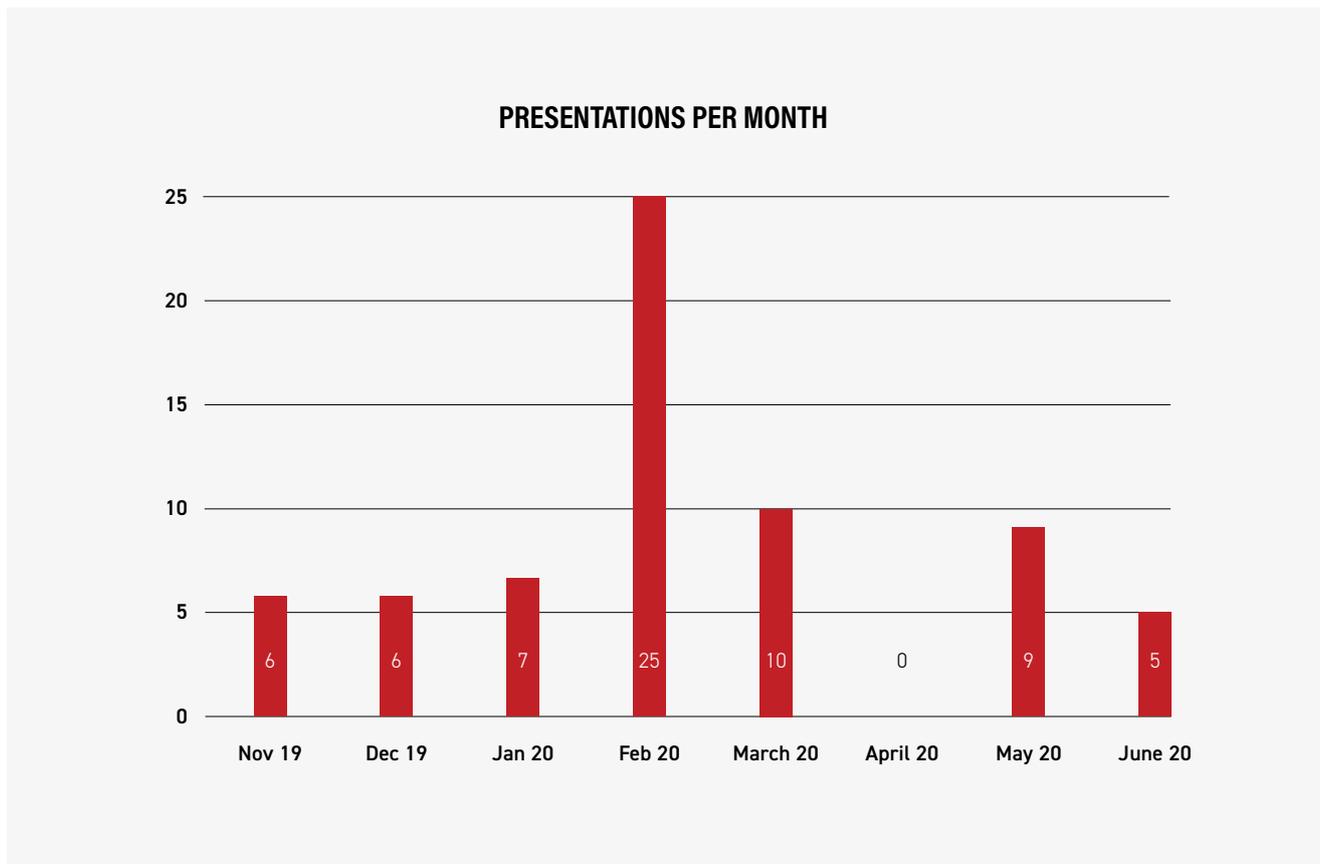
40% of initial contacts lead to a co-hosted 'Save Your Bacon' event or other informal talk. Another 49% were recorded as possibly leading to a presentation opportunity in the future.

Only 10% had a 'no' response from their initial request for a co-hosted 'Save Your Bacon' event or other informal talk. No information regarding why these organisations did not want a HALT presentation was obtained, but this would be useful to understand for future evaluation and reporting purposes.

HALT EVENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

68 HALT events and presentations were delivered to tradies in the Greater Melbourne region between November 2019 to June 2020. This is an average of 11 events or presentations delivered per month.

Of the 68 events and presentations delivered, 57 of these were in the South East Melbourne region, with the other 11 being held in North West Melbourne. There are a range of reasons that the delivery was lower in the North West Melbourne region, including a later start date for the HALT Project Worker in this area and the need to build community connections from scratch.



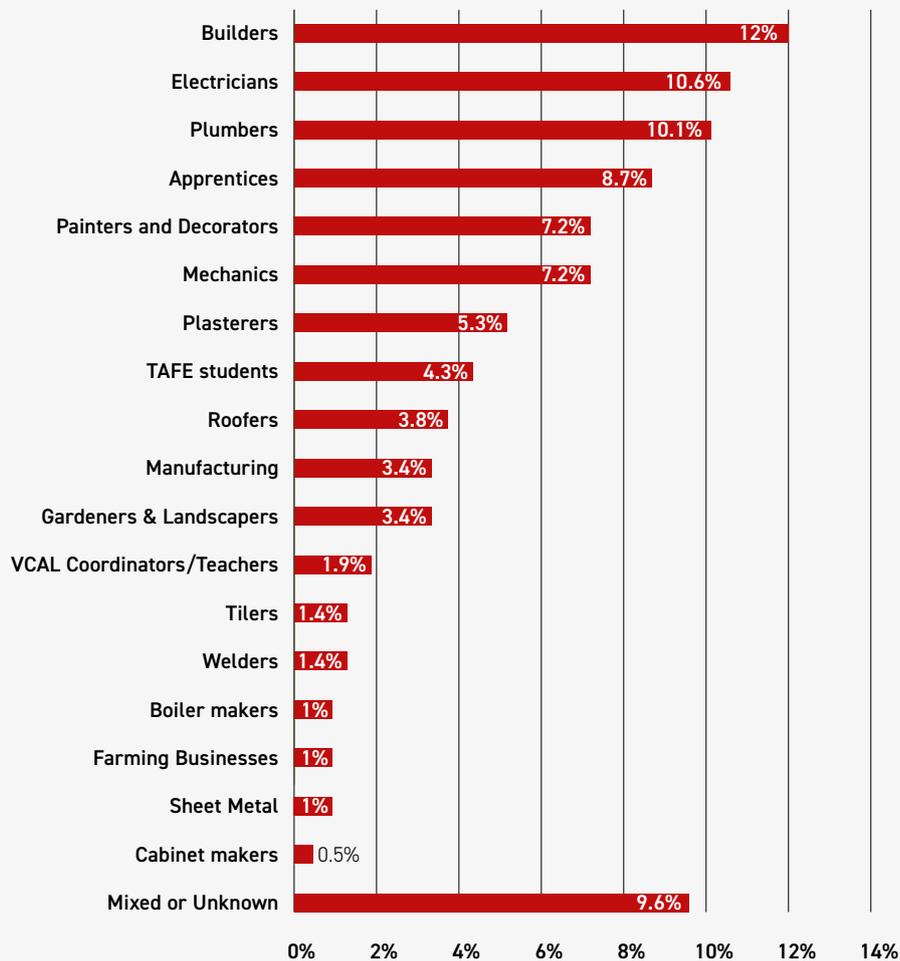
[Note: On Monday 16 March Nation wide restrictions in line with COVID-19 health advice came into effect. HALT, businesses and organisations were required to adjust to the implementation of restrictions on movement and gatherings. HALT have had to increasingly deliver content online in order to reach tradies through Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns.]

TYPE OF PRESENTATION/EVENT

82% were delivered by the HALT worker in person, onsite.

With COVID-19 restrictions coming in to place across Victoria in March 2020, gatherings have been heavily limited in most circumstances. This has meant that HALT and other organisations have needed to adjust the way that they work to fit in with current health guidelines. In the 6-month period, 18% of HALT events and presentations were delivered online. It is predicted that there will be an increase in online event delivery in the next reporting period as a result of increasing and ongoing restrictions.

AUDIENCE OCCUPATION



The graph shows the percentage of all audience types from the 68 HALT events delivered between November 2019 to June 2020. Often there were multiple audience types per presentation, so the reported percentages are across all presentations i.e. across all presentations, 12% of audience members were builders and 10.6% were electricians.

LENGTH OF EVENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

The median length of events and presentations was **45 minutes** with a minimum of 10 minutes and maximum of 5 hours. This length covered the time taken to be at the venue to set up and any post-presentation discussions that took place.

DISTANCE TRAVELLED TO DELIVER EVENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

On average the kilometres travelled for HALT Project Workers to deliver events and presentations was 19km, with the maximum travel 71km.

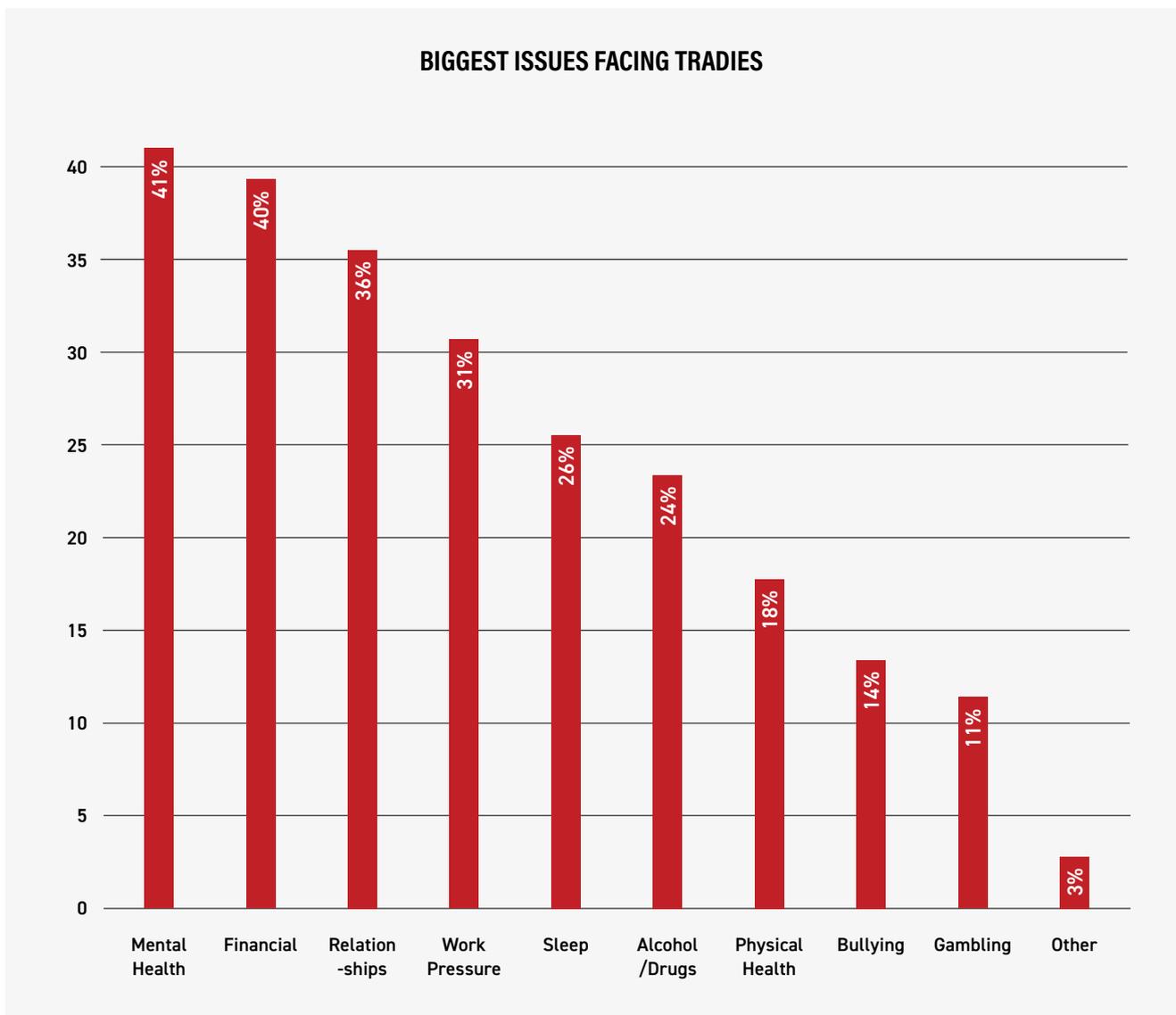
AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

Each participant in a HALT event or presentation is provided with feedback postcards to complete at the conclusion of the information session. In the 6 month period **371 feedback postcards** were completed in total.

KEY FINDINGS FROM AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

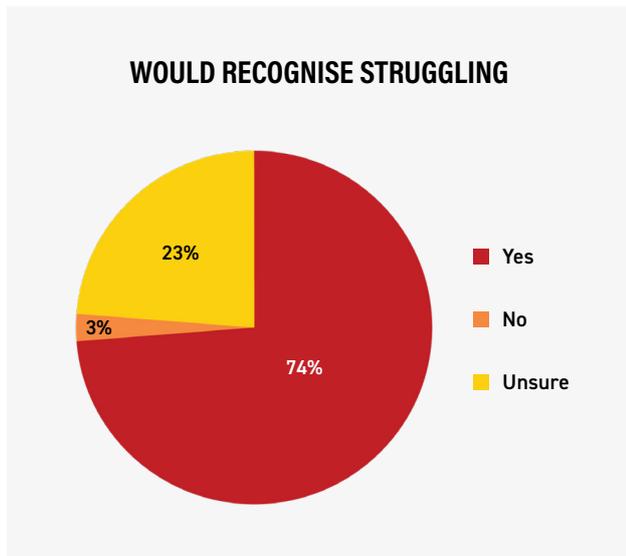
USEFULNESS OF HALT EVENT OR PRESENTATION

98% of participants found the HALT presentation to be useful.

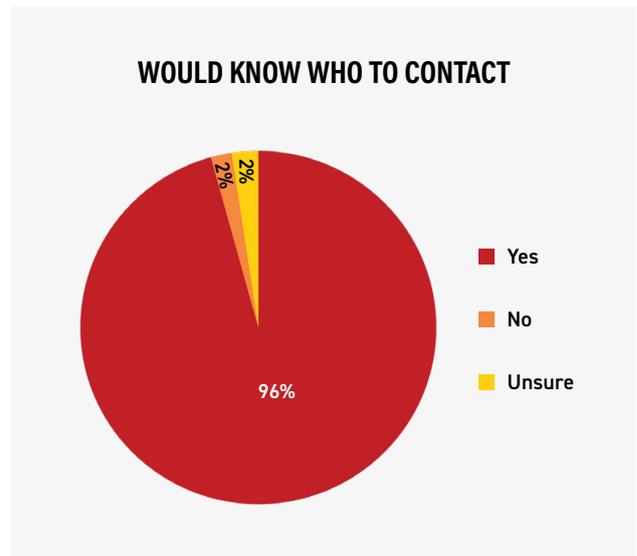


The above graph shows what proportion of respondents selected each topic as one of the biggest issues affecting them at the time of the event delivery. Participants were able to select all issues that were applicable to them. This shows that there are a wide range of concerns that tradies face.

POST PRESENTATION OUTCOMES

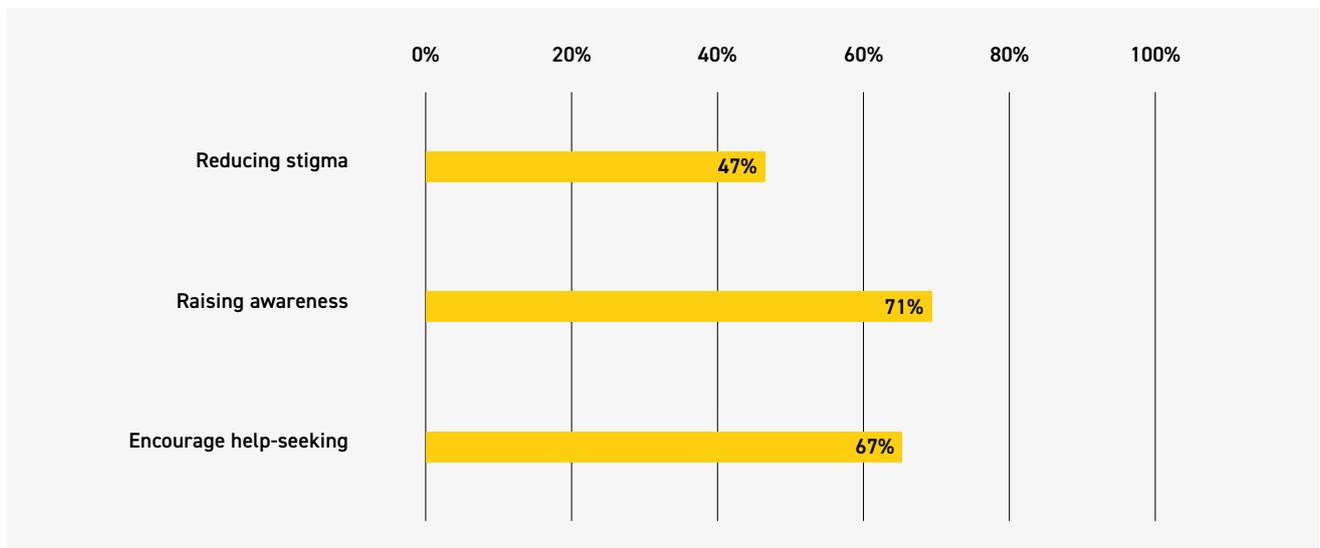


As a result of the information presented to tradies during HALT events three quarters of participants said they would recognise the signs if a friend or family member was struggling with their mental health.



96% of participants said that as a result of attending the HALT event or presentation that they would know who to contact for additional support. This shows that HALT is educating tradies on where to get help.

KEY TAKEAWAY MESSAGES



Participants of HALT events or presentations were able to check as many options as they wished when indicating the key takeaway messages of the information shared during the HALT event.

Other takeaway messages cited by participants included: how to talk to a mate that is struggling, having the courage to speak up if you are struggling, knowing it is OK to ask for help and where to get help if support is required.

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

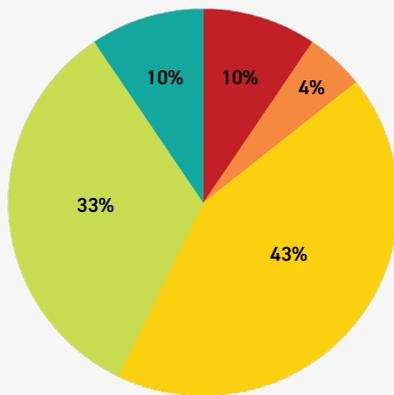


100%
SATISFACTION RATE

Community Satisfaction Evaluation forms were provided to co-hosts and event partners.

In **100%** of cases the co-host or event partner was satisfied with the HALT event delivered. Importantly, **43%** of initial contacts became aware of HALT via a HALT worker walk-in or cold call. Over half were found via referring services.

HOW WE FOUND OUT ABOUT HALT



- Morningside Peninsula Shire Youth Services
- Business Network International
- HALT worker walk-in/cold call
- Internal - HR/OHS staff member, another colleague
- Word of mouth

REFERRAL OF SERVICES

The HALT Worker listed or named local, trusted support services in their presentation **100%** of the time, with **90%** reporting that they found these referrals to be useful.

When asked if they knew if any of the event participants had sought help as a result of the HALT presentation **43%** said that they knew of at least one participant that had. Co-hosts were encouraged to complete the Community Satisfaction Form within 24 hours of the conclusion of the event. It is possible that many more participants sought help anonymously as a result of their attendance. Regardless, participants have been provided with the knowledge of services for future use if needed. It is optimal that individuals are aware of mental health services before they are needed.

COMMUNITY MEMBER TESTIMONIALS

"They are such a wonderful bunch of people helping our community."

"Mick was well informed and talked about real life experiences which puts things into perspective. Mick also holds the room during the presentation talk, everyone was engaged in what he was saying."

"I've come from an ethnic background and always been trained and raised to just deal with my problems - it's great to know that there is help and support if needed."

"Fantastic initiative and will look for further ways to work with HALT moving forward perhaps with the broader nursery/landscape -industry."

"Great awareness for my employees. I found it reassuring for myself and them that there are options"

"This is a very useful tool for getting tradies to think about mental health."

"Well worth having the chat, the boys enjoyed it and could relate to the talk."

"Tom related well to the guys and showed his own experience and that of others. He made the guys feel comfortable about a difficult topic."

"One apprentice sought help after the event"

"From the morning we had feedback two people had sought further support because of the session"

"After the presentation I had a staff member appear rattled and asked for the remainder of the day off. He then told me he had a good chat with Lifeline and felt a lot better. Even just for him, being reminded that you can just call these services and unload was a huge relief. Having Mick remind everyone that that's what these services are for, normalised and removed the stigma of reaching out for help."

TRENDS

INITIAL CONTACT AND EVENT DELIVERY

From the early stages of contact in the Greater Melbourne region over half of all initial contacts have resulted in the delivery of a HALT event or presentation.

EVENT RESPONSE

The response to the presentations by participants and event partners or co-hosts has been overwhelmingly positive.

HELP-SEEKING

A significant number of participants have sought help following their attendance at a HALT event or presentation. This is an important finding thus far as we are able to see direct impact where tradies have sought support before their mental health worsens. Economically this takes away some burden from the tax payer because early intervention tends to lead to a lessor burden of disease and needs less intense intervention.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

In the period cited in this report the COVID-19 pandemic made a significant impact to the work of HALT and their event partners or co-hosts. Trades businesses, sporting clubs, men's sheds and other key stakeholders have needed to adjust their activities to allow for social distancing and other health and safety recommendations and restrictions.

Some tradies have also been negatively impacted as a result of closures or a reduction in customers as a result of the restrictions. While the economic and social impact of the pandemic is being tracked, we are yet to see the full picture.

APPROACH

The evaluation tools were codesigned by Swinburne Researchers and the HALT Program staff and include data collection focusing on:

- 1) Initial consultations with community partners or co-hosts
- 2) HALT health promotion presentations
- 3) After HALT events are completed, including community satisfaction.

THE HALT INITIAL CONTACT FORM

The HALT Initial Contact Form is completed by the HALT Project Workers after an initial consultation with a potential community partner or event co-host. This form includes information about who referred the community partner, their location, the length and time of the initial consultation, nature of issues experienced within the workplace or organisation, their response regarding co-hosting a HALT event and any other information considered important by the HALT Project Workers.

This data is entered directly into an online application designed specifically for the HALT evaluation process by each of the HALT Project Workers.

THE HALT HEALTH PROMOTION PRESENTATION FORM

The HALT Health Promotion Presentation Form is completed by the HALT Project Workers, following the completion of a community event or presentation.

This form includes the attendees occupations, location of the event, length of the event, the type of information presented, what support people/services were present (if any), the nature of issues faced by attendees, the nature of any post presentation discussions, and any comments or additional notes made by the HALT Project Workers.

This data is entered directly into an online application designed specifically for the HALT evaluation process by the evaluation team with input from the HALT Project Workers.

THE COMMUNITY SATISFACTION FORM

The Community Satisfaction Form was created by researchers in collaboration with the HALT Program Team. These forms are distributed by the HALT Project Workers to event co-hosts or community partners after a HALT presentation has been completed.

The form inquires about the general levels of satisfaction with the service, including issues of timeliness and access. The form records service referrals and whether the community partner found this helpful for their staff or members. The form also documents whether the co-host is aware of any help-seeking or other actions taken by participants as a result of the presentation. Finally, it documents suggested improvements to the service and whether they would recommend it to others. Satisfaction form responses may be anonymous.



ENQUIRES PLEASE CONTACT:



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