

HALT PROGRAM INTERIM REPORT

January 2022 – June 2022



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CONTENTS

- 1** Introduction
- 2** Initial contacts
- 3** HALT events & presentations
- 5** Audience feedback
- 9** Organisation satisfaction



INTRODUCTION

Hope Assistance Local Tradies (HALT) is a national grassroots suicide prevention charity. They host 'Save Your Bacon' brekkies and presentations for tradies and apprentices at workplaces, hardware stores, sporting clubs, TAFEs and other organisations across Australia to raise awareness of mental health and connect people with local and national support services.

Events and presentations are delivered in person or online and cover the following topics:

- 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 who is struggling with their mental health

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

The evaluation captures the work of HALT in two catchment areas of Victoria: the North-Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (PHN) region, and the South-Eastern Melbourne PHN region.

This brief report presents key findings from the final six months of the evaluation: January to June 2022. The report is organised into four sections, encompassing four key data points used in the evaluation:

- Initial contacts
- HALT events & presentations
- Audience feedback
- Organisation satisfaction



INITIAL CONTACTS

An initial contact is the first conversation a HALT worker has with a trades-based organisation regarding mental health, the HALT organisation, and the hosting of a HALT event or presentation. Information from the conversation is recorded in an initial contact form by the HALT worker. During the reporting period, 16 initial contacts were recorded by the HALT workers.

METHOD OF CONTACT

The majority of interactions were made by the HALT worker walking into the organisation to make a face-to-face visit.

Other methods of contact included the HALT worker making a cold call, phoning the organisation after receiving a referral from another organisation, or the HALT worker sending an introductory email.

LENGTH OF CONTACT

The majority of contacts were completed within 15 minutes, with the remainder taking up to a maximum of 30 minutes.

RESPONSE FROM THE ORGANISATION

In all cases, the HALT worker perceived the response from the organisation they approached to be positive (excellent, good, or average). No responses were perceived to be negative (poor or very poor).

The majority of organisations agreed to host a HALT event "*Maybe in the future*". Where reasons were provided, this was because they were too busy to schedule an event at that time.

There were a number of organisations that agreed to schedule an event, and one who did not (no reason provided).

HALT EVENTS & PRESENTATIONS

HALT hosted 52 events between 1st January and 30th June 2022, in partnership with 47 organisations. Of the 47 organisations, eight had partnered with HALT in the previous year. Notably, one organisation hosted an event with HALT six times in the January to June 2022 reporting period, with the HALT worker presenting to different audiences on each occasion.

EVENT/PRESENTATION FORMAT

Ninety-five percent of presentations and events were conducted face-to-face. The remaining 5% of events were either conducted online, or consisted of an in-person, online mixed modality.

PHN REGION

Thirty-five (74%) presentations and events took place in the North-Western Melbourne PHN region, while twelve (26%) were conducted in the South-Eastern Melbourne PHN region.*

*these totals are calculated based on the number of partnering organisations (47) rather than the number of events (52) as some organisations had multiple presentations.

AUDIENCE OCCUPATION

HALT partners with a range of organisations, therefore there are a variety of audience member occupations. These include:

- General trades - demolition, roads, council workers, construction
- Apprentices and TAFE students
- Electricians
- Plumbers
- Builders



NUMBER OF PEOPLE REACHED

HALT most frequently presented to audiences of up to 80 members, however two events/presentations included up to 250 people. Larger audience numbers may be indicative of multiple presentations in one day to the same organisation, or larger organisation-wide online events.

POST-PRESENTATION DISCUSSIONS

At 71% of events, the HALT worker engaged in further discussion with an audience member(s) after the presentation. This averaged three discussions per event. Common discussion topics are displayed in the word cloud (Figure 1) below. Note, the size of the text in the word cloud corresponds to the frequency of conversation topics, i.e., more frequent conversation topics are larger in size.

FUTURE HALT VISITS

Post-event, discussion of a future HALT event took place 70% of the time.



Figure 1. Word cloud displaying common post-presentation discussion topics

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

At the end of the event/presentation, all audience members are asked to complete a brief survey including questions about the outcomes of the presentation, their mental health and issues they are experiencing, and the key messages they took away from the HALT event or presentation.

During the reporting period, 964 surveys were completed by audience members (note not all respondents answered every question).

PRESENTATION OUTCOMES

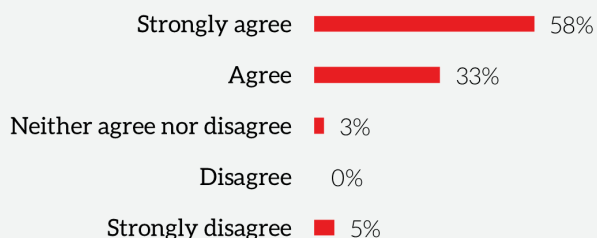
Audience members were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a range of outcomes after seeing the presentation. As shown in Figure 2, the majority (86-93%) of audience members agreed or strongly agreed that after seeing the presentation, they:

- Found the presentation useful
- Were more aware of how life's ups and downs can affect mental health and wellbeing
- Were willing to have a tough conversation with someone who may be struggling or thinking of suicide
- Felt more confident they could recognise the signs if someone was struggling or thinking of suicide
- Would know how and where to get help if they, or someone they knew, was struggling or thinking of suicide
- Would recommend the HALT presentation to someone else

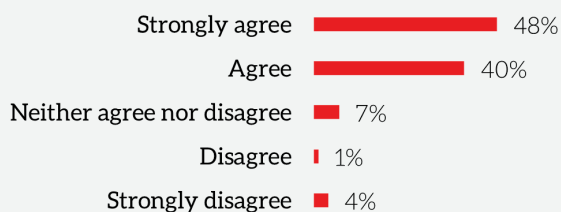


After seeing the presentation ...

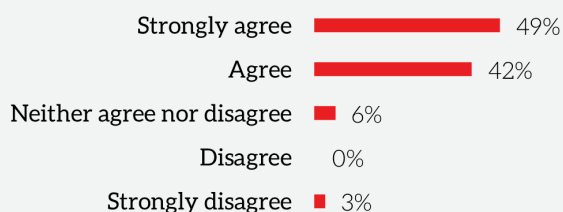
I found the HALT presentation useful



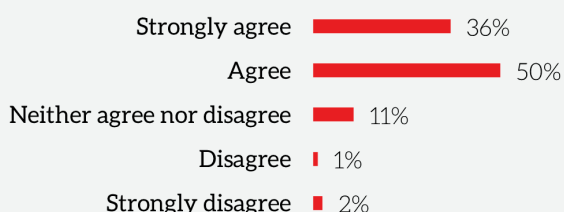
I am more aware of how life's ups and downs can affect mental health and wellbeing



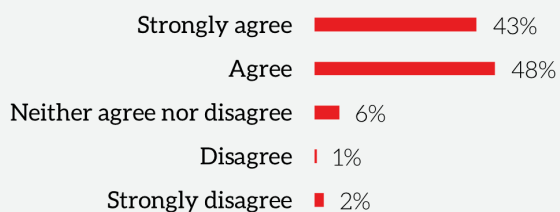
I would be willing to have a tough conversation with someone who may be struggling or thinking of suicide



I feel more confident that I could recognise the signs if someone was struggling or thinking of suicide



I would know how and where to get help if I, or someone I know, was struggling or talking of suicide



I would recommend a HALT presentation to someone else

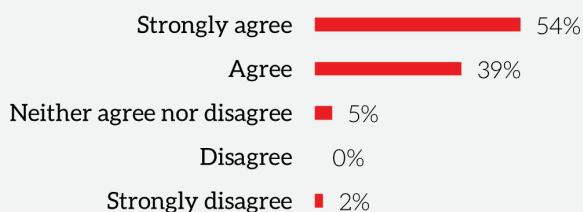


Figure 2. Presentation outcomes for audience members

AUDIENCE MEMBER MENTAL HEALTH

As shown in Figure 3, when presented with the statement "Recently I have been struggling with my own mental health", approximately half (49%) of audience members agreed or strongly agreed, one quarter (25%) responded neutrally, and just over a quarter (26%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.

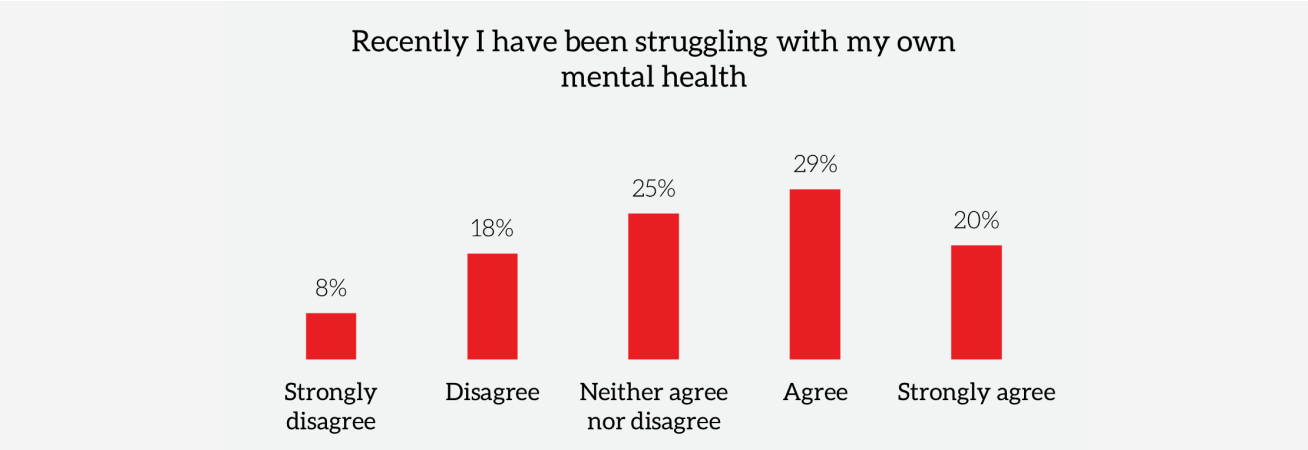


Figure 3. Audience member responses to "Recently I have been struggling with my own mental health"

BIGGEST ISSUES FOR AUDIENCE MEMBERS

As shown in Figure 4, when asked "What are the biggest issues for you and your mates?" from the issues presented below, "Relationships", "Work pressure" and "Mental health" were the top issues, selected by more than half of respondents. All of the issue options on the feedback form were selected by high proportions of audience members, indicating that tradies and apprentices are impacted by a range of issues. Four percent of respondents selected "something else" and provided an additional range of issues most commonly relating to family and parenting issues.

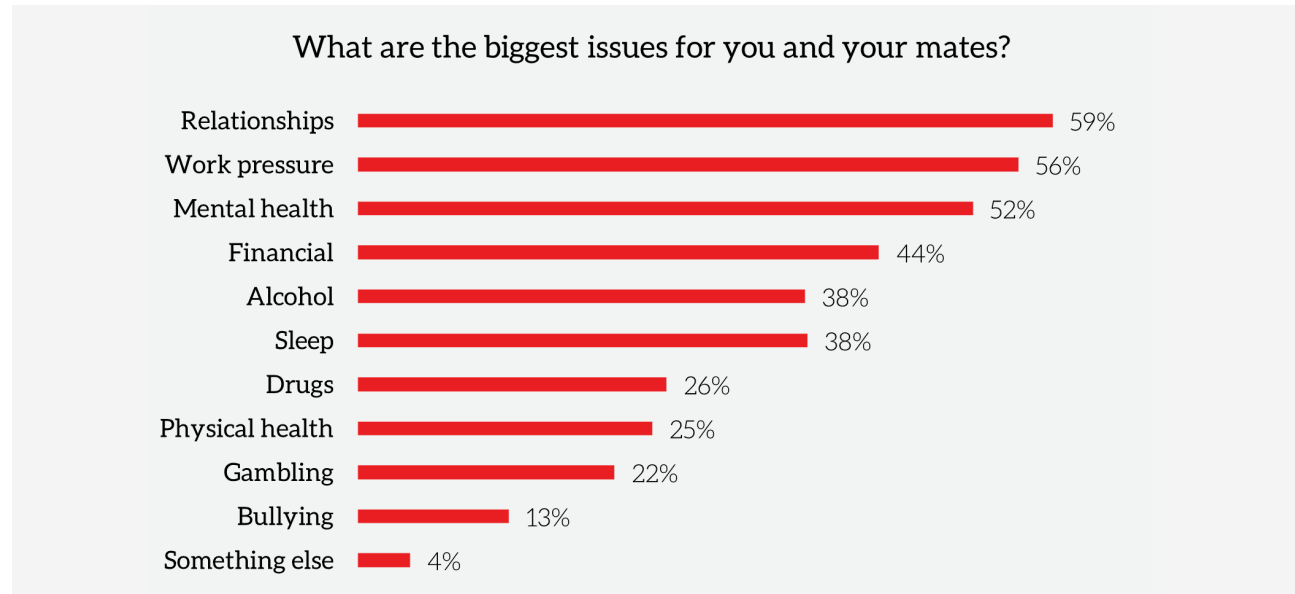


Figure 4. Audience member responses to "What are the biggest issues for you and your mates?"

KEY TAKEAWAY MESSAGES

When asked "What were the key takeaway message(s) from today's presentation?" out of the following HALT mission statements:



75% of audience members
selected
"Raising awareness"



72% of audience members
selected
"Encouraging help seeking"



55% of audience members
selected
"Reducing stigma"

ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK

Audience members were invited to provide additional comments about the HALT event/presentation. Some additional comments included:



An awesome discussion which was perfectly suited for the target audience, a good discussion without being confronting. Perfect presentation."



I love the fact that people like [HALT worker] who gives these talks has also experienced this, thank you"



This the second time I have seen HALT on site. Great presentation conducted by passionate people. Keep up the good work."



I am going through a tough time. I think I will get in contact with my doctor to see someone."



I really enjoyed the relaxed nature of the presentation. I believe it was very helpful and made the topic more approachable."



I'm struggling at the moment. And this has helped me realise I need to seek help and it's okay to do so."



Story telling personal experiences is the best way to get the point across and open people's eyes"



Great speeches, good to hear real life experiences. Helps me feel safe to speak up."



Easier to see my own signs of feeling down or worrying/ anxiety"

ORGANISATION SATISFACTION

Post-event the organisation representative is invited to complete a satisfaction form based on their experience working with HALT in organising and delivering the event or presentation.

During the reporting period, eight satisfaction forms were received.

HOW DID THE ORGANISATION FIND OUT ABOUT HALT?

The organisation representatives found out about HALT through manufacturer or builder's alliance meetings, or HALT worker walk-ins and cold calls. Some had an ongoing relationship with HALT (i.e., they had previously worked with HALT), or they found out about HALT through another member of their organisation.

SATISFACTION WITH THE EVENT/PRESENTATION

All organisation representatives were either extremely satisfied, or very satisfied, with the HALT event or presentation.



When asked to select (from a list) what aspects of the presentation and working with HALT worked well, all respondents identified the following:

- They received the information they needed
- The presentation was timely
- The HALT worker answered their questions

The majority of organisation representatives felt the HALT worker was relatable and the presentation was well planned.

Additional comments about what worked well included:

“ Lived experience of presenter made talk authentic and a safe environment was established and maintained for participants”

“ Personal story resonated”

HALT WORKER QUALITIES

Organisation representatives were asked to select which attributes most represented the HALT worker(s) who delivered their event or presentation. From a list, all respondents selected *"Communication skills"*.

Most also chose:

- *"Caring"*
- *"Timely"*
- *"Empathetic"*
- *"Knowledgeable"*
- *"Honest"*
- *"Trustworthy"*
- *"Responsive"*

SATISFACTION WITH THE HALT PROGRAM

All organisation representatives were either extremely satisfied, or very satisfied, with the HALT program. Every respondent indicated that they would refer the service to others.

USEFULNESS OF REFERRAL SERVICES

During the events and presentations the HALT workers provide a list of referral services for the attendees. When asked if the referral services were useful, the majority of organisation representatives selected *"Yes"*. One respondent selected *"Don't know"* and one selected *"Not applicable"*. Based on feedback received earlier in the evaluation, these options may have been selected because the respondent felt it was too soon to know if the services would be useful.

Organisation representatives were asked if they thought their staff or students would use the referral services. The majority of respondents answered *"Yes"* and one selected *"Don't know"*. For those who answered yes, the following reasons were given:

- “ We have the cards in our lunch room and stickers in [the] bathroom, the team was engaged and receptive”
- “ Some workers were talking about them following the chat and I know at least one person has reached out to services and reported back”
- “ Having the information out there will raise the awareness for our workers to seek help if needed”
- “ We have already received feedback from one of our supervisors that the information given was very useful as it assisted [in] a discussion he had with one of his tradies on site that was going through some hard times”

ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK

Organisation representatives provided further comments about their experience with HALT:

- “ A fantastic initiative to help [the] construction industry lower the suicide rates, all presenters are very knowledgeable and keep listeners engaged”
- “ Great adaption of the presentation to cater for a female audience of hairdressing apprentices. I have only seen the presentation for construction trade and community service workers and it went well for this cohort today.”





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