



HALT PROGRAM REPORT

JAN 2021 - DEC 2021

Hilary Davis, Caitlin Learmonth, Kayla Royals

Social Innovation Research Institute,
Swinburne University of Technology



Social Innovation
Research Institute

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The evaluation assesses the effectiveness of the Hope Assistance Local Trades (HALT) Program and makes recommendations regarding its future development. This annual report presents data collected between January 2021 to December 2021 inclusive.

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, and 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.

INTRODUCTION TO END OF YEAR REPORT 2021

Every year over 65,000 Australians make a suicide attempt. In 2020 there were 3,139 deaths by suicide in Australia and 76% of these were men (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021).

Tradies are one group that experience mental health issues often without support. Tradies are predominantly made up of men (83.8%; ABS, 2020). Talking about depression, anxiety, suicide and life's difficulties are not part of the tradie culture (King et al., 2019). Indeed, many men do not have the information or confidence to access mental health services (Rice et al. 2016; Fergusson et al. 2018; Seidler et al. 2017; 2021).

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, emergency responders, and others.

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.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

68% of all presentations or events were delivered to organisations or businesses that had multiple presentations.

Post-presentation, **67%** of participating organisations scheduled a future presentation or event with HALT.

AUDIENCE MEMBER MENTAL HEALTH

44% of audience members agreed that they had been struggling with their own mental health recently.

POST-PRESENTATION OUTCOMES

Post-presentation:

91% of audience members (1,565 people) were more aware of how life's ups and downs can affect mental health and wellbeing.

85% of audience members (1,461 people) felt more confident they could recognise the signs if someone was struggling or thinking of suicide.

90% of audience members (1,559 people) felt more willing to have a tough conversation with someone who may be struggling or thinking of suicide.

91% of audience members (1,556 people) indicated they would know how and where to get help if they, or someone they know, was struggling or talking of suicide. *

* Actual numbers differ depending on number of responses to individual questions on postcards

COVID-19 and Mental Health

While there is a need for research on the long term mental health impacts of COVID-19, it has been widely acknowledged that COVID-19 has had a significant impact on Australians' mental health (Bower et al. 2021; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2022). With job loss, increased economic insecurity, loss of social interactions and the move to remote working and learning, many Australians reported experiencing higher levels of depression and anxiety. There is also evidence to suggest that COVID-19 measures led to increases in alcohol consumption. Additionally, there was a significant rise in the use of mental health services. Lifeline reached numerous record highs in daily call volumes, similarly Beyond Blue saw a 20.9% increase in calls seeking support from 2019 to 2021 (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2022). Fortunately, despite a rise in reported mental health issues and uptake of mental health services because of COVID-19, suicide monitoring data in Australia has not correlated a rise in suicide rates with the timings of COVID-19 lockdowns (Bower et al. 2021).

In the period cited in this report the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the work of HALT, event partners and co-hosts. Trades businesses, sporting clubs, Men's sheds and other key stakeholders had to adjust their activities to allow for social distancing and other health and safety recommendations and restrictions. HALT workers responded flexibly by relying on other methods of interaction for initial contacts (such as phone calls) and delivering presentations and events online.

INITIAL CONTACT

Initial contact forms were completed by HALT Project Workers following their first contact with potential partners or community contacts for HALT events. **353** initial contact forms were collected in total between January 2021 to December 2021 across the two regions.

FIGURE 1: HOW CONTACT WAS MADE

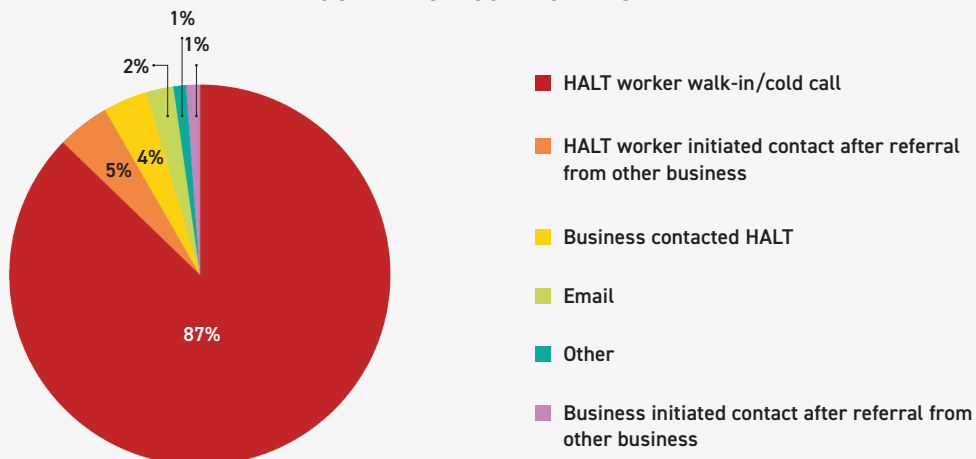
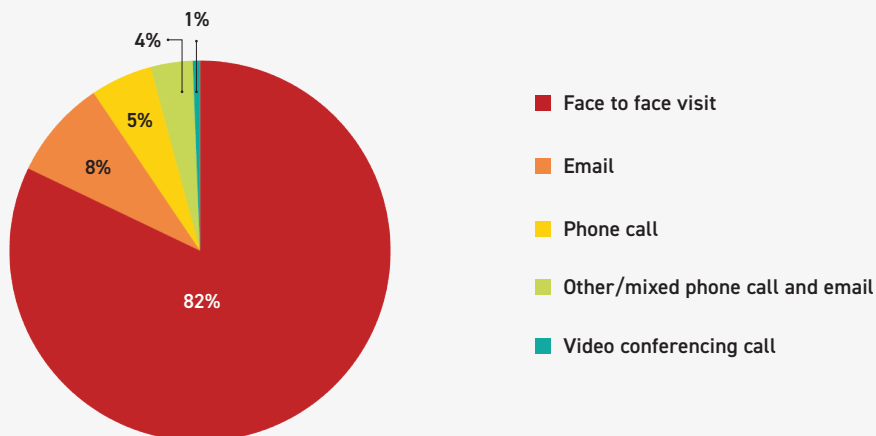
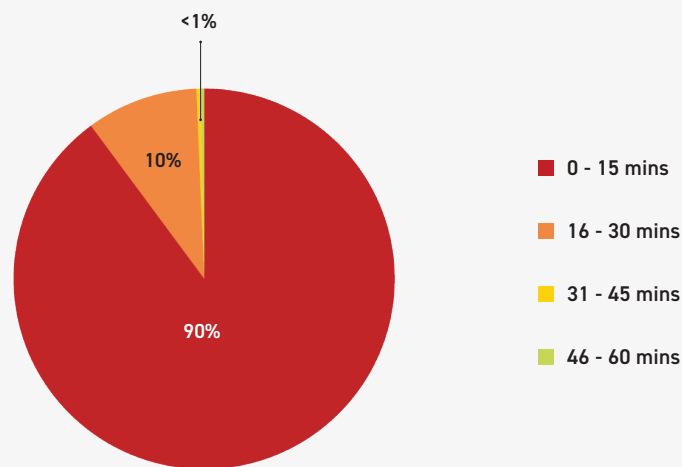


FIGURE 2: METHOD OF INTERACTION



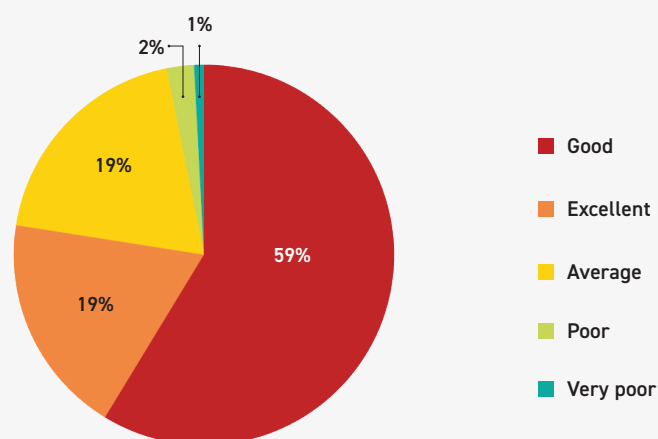
82% of interactions between HALT Project Workers and initial contacts were conducted face-to-face and **87%** of these were initiated by HALT. Other interactions were made by email (8%), telephone (5%), and video conference (1%). These other interactions have decreased since the previous report as less time in lockdown in 2021 compared to 2019 and 2020 meant that HALT workers were able to facilitate more face to face interactions. HALT prefer 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.

FIGURE 3: LENGTH OF CONTACT



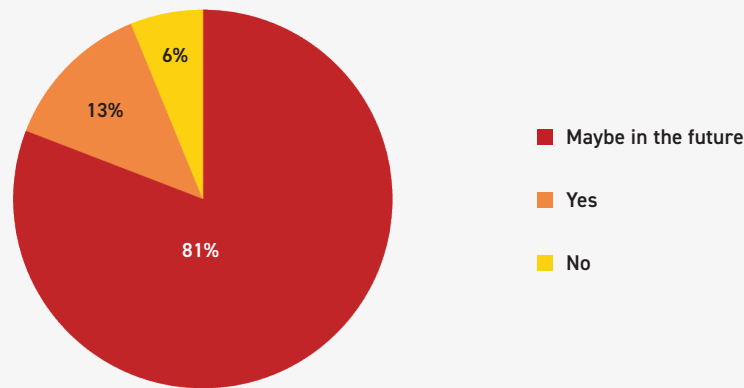
90% of contact was complete within 15 minutes, with regards to face-to-face interactions this reflects HALT Workers' awareness of limiting exposure time due to ongoing risk of COVID-19. 100% of interactions were complete within an hour, with just one interaction accounted for 31-45 minutes and 46-60 minutes.

FIGURE 4: RESPONSE TO INITIAL CONTACT



78% of responses from partnering organisations were 'Excellent' or 'Good'. This indicates that HALT Workers are targeting businesses that are responsive to the HALT message.

FIGURE 5: HALT PRESENTATION SCHEDULED



81% of initial contacts were recorded as possibly leading to a presentation opportunity in the future, this is a 12% increase on the previous reported period. This shows a stronger engagement of businesses after long periods of lockdown in 2020 and 2021.

Only 6% had a 'no' response from the HALT Worker request to host a presentation or event at the business. This is a 3% decrease on the previous report. Where information was given regarding why organisations did not want a HALT presentation or event, the general sentiment was that it was a small or family-run business so they did not feel it was needed or that there was someone else in the organisation that the HALT Worker should talk to, to organise an event.

Examples of why the respondent answered 'no' to scheduling an event with HALT included:

- "We're like a family here, we're all good"
- "No chance of any events happening this year"
- "Got our own thing in place"
- "Too busy, got no time for this"
- "Need to talk to head office"

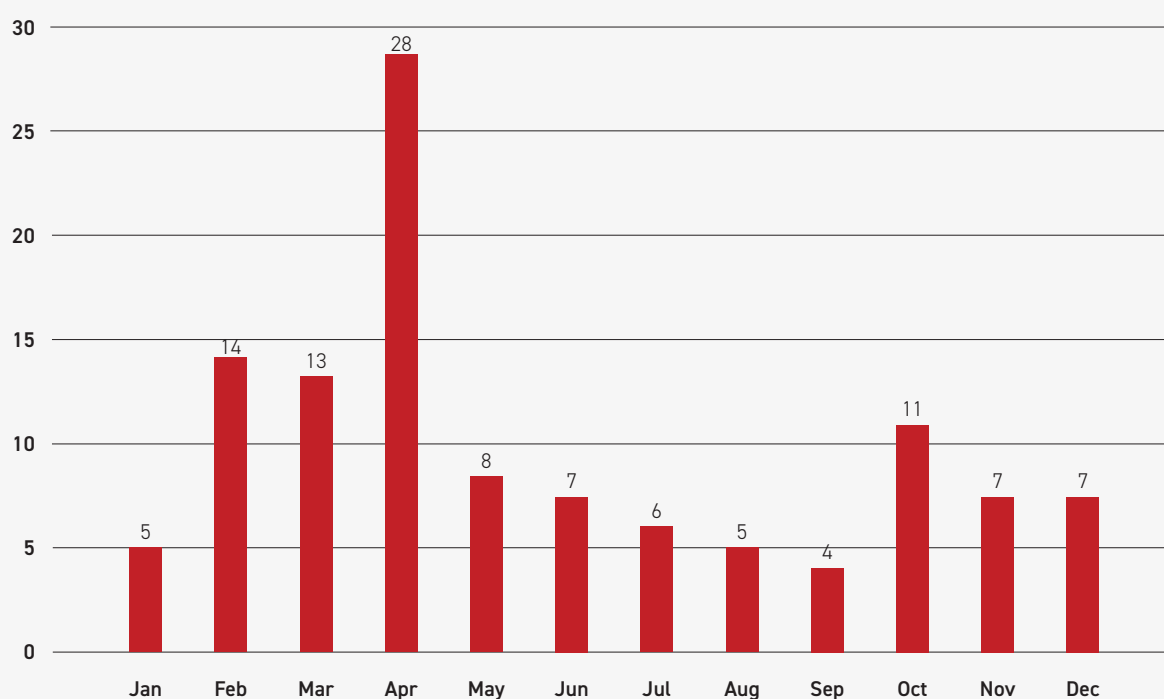
It is important to note the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns on the availability of businesses to schedule events with HALT. Given the uncertainty of going in and out of lockdown throughout 2020 and 2021, it is likely that when out of lockdown periods, businesses were focused on rescheduling and making up for lost work and were therefore unable to commit time to a HALT event. Additionally, given the widespread impact of COVID-19 lockdowns on mental health, and the gradual de-stigmatisation of such issues, as well as initiatives such as Employee Assistance Programs, many organisations may already have mental health support in place for their workers, and therefore don't feel the need to host a HALT event. It is also pertinent to note, that when conducting walk-ins to businesses, while the HALT Worker may engage an employee with their program, that employee may not have the authority to schedule an event with HALT and will therefore require further referral.

HALT EVENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

115 HALT events and presentations were delivered to tradies in the Greater Melbourne region between January 2021 to December 2021. This is an average of 10 events or presentations delivered per month. In the previous reporting period, an average of 8 presentations were delivered per month; this increase is due to less time spent in lockdown than in the previous reporting period.

Of the 115 events and presentations delivered, 47 were in the South East Melbourne, 64 were in North West Melbourne, 4 entries did not disclose a location. This reflects the increase in community engagement in North West Melbourne noted in the previous reporting period.

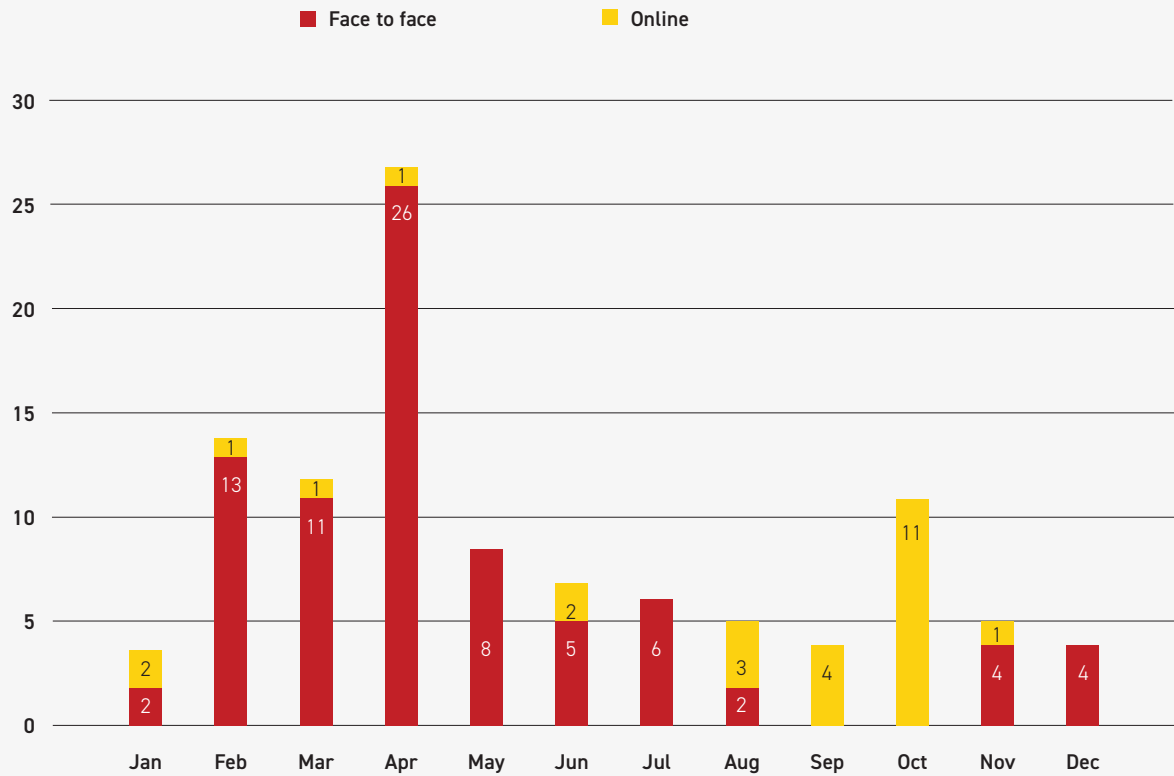
FIGURE 6: EVENTS/ PRESENTATIONS PER MONTH 2021



TYPE OF PRESENTATION/EVENT

With the continuation of COVID-19 restrictions across Victoria, gatherings were heavily limited in most circumstances. This meant that HALT and other organisations needed to adjust the way that they work to fit in with health guidelines. HALT developed an online module to deliver content to tradies during the lockdowns. While the previous report saw a significant increase in online presentations, and a decrease in face to face, 2021 saw a move back to in-person presentations. Given that there were longer periods of time out of lockdown in 2021 compared to 2020, face to face presentations accounted for 89% of HALT events (compared to 69% in 2020). Online events decreased from 28% in 2020 to 8% in 2021.

FIGURE 7: TYPE OF PRESENTATION BY MONTH (2021)



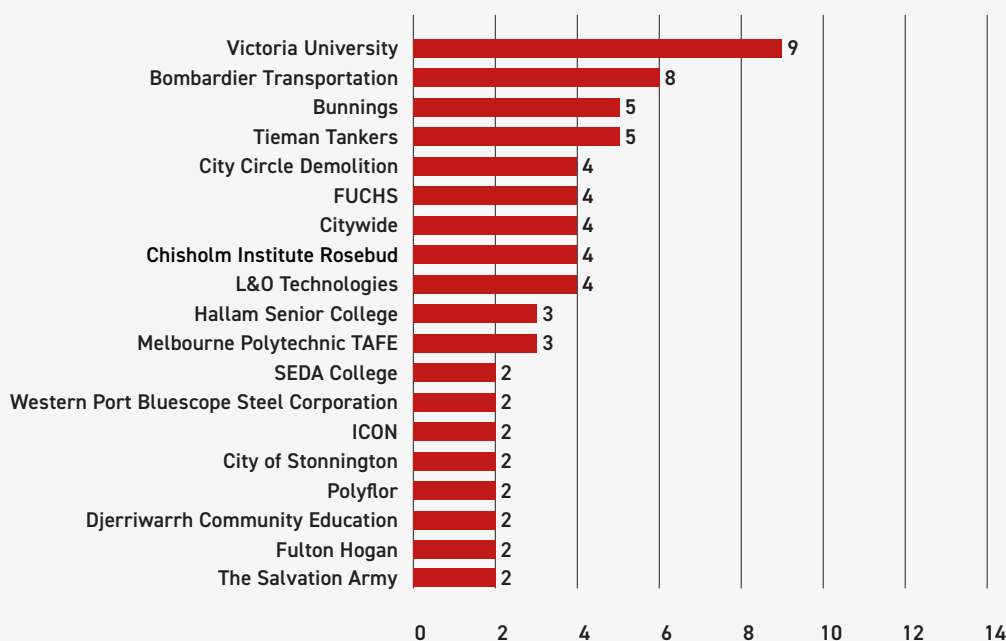
Lockdown periods in 2021 were as follows:

1. 13-17 February – 5 days
2. 28 May – 10 June – 14 days
3. 16-27 July – 12 days
4. 5 August – 21 October – 77 days

In 2021 Metropolitan Melbourne spent 108 days total in lockdown in 2021 compared to more than 200 in 2020.

MULTIPLE PRESENTATIONS/EVENTS PER ORGANISATION

FIGURE 8: BUSINESS/ORGANISATION WITH MULTIPLE PRESENTATIONS




The 115 presentations in 2021 were given to 61 participating organisations. 19 of these organisations were presented to more than once, with one organisation being presented to 9 times by HALT throughout 2021. This shows a consistent approach by HALT Workers to maintain relationships with participating organisations and build upon the message from previous presentations. Organisations where multiple presentations took place were predominantly large organisations with high numbers of staff and students, such as a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) or Victorian Centre of Applied Learning (VCAL), therefore it is likely that the HALT Worker was presenting to different people each time. **68%** of the presentations in 2021 were given to organisations one time, often these were smaller organisations where a single presentation could be conducted for all staff members or students or online events where a larger group of people could be hosted.


DELIVERY LOCATIONS

Throughout 2021 and in years previous HALT adapted to a variety of different delivery locations for their events and presentations. In doing so HALT have built their capacity to give presentations and host events in a range of environments to varying audiences. The broad nature of trades-based industries means that presentations were delivered in a number of differing locations including construction sites, warehouses and factories, and head offices. To reach as many people in the trades as possible, HALT made a concerted effort to target those both in trades training at TAFE's and colleges, as well as at construction sites and industrial estates. In doing so, HALT is recognising that mental health struggles can occur throughout the lifetime of a tradie, not just in isolated moments. Finally, as a result of the ongoing lockdowns due to COVID-19 outbreaks, HALT adapted to online presentations and events hosting through Zoom to participating organisations and organised online events with support professionals to raise awareness of key issues and share information on support services.


DELIVERY LOCATIONS INCLUDED:




TAFE & SCHOOLS



ONLINE

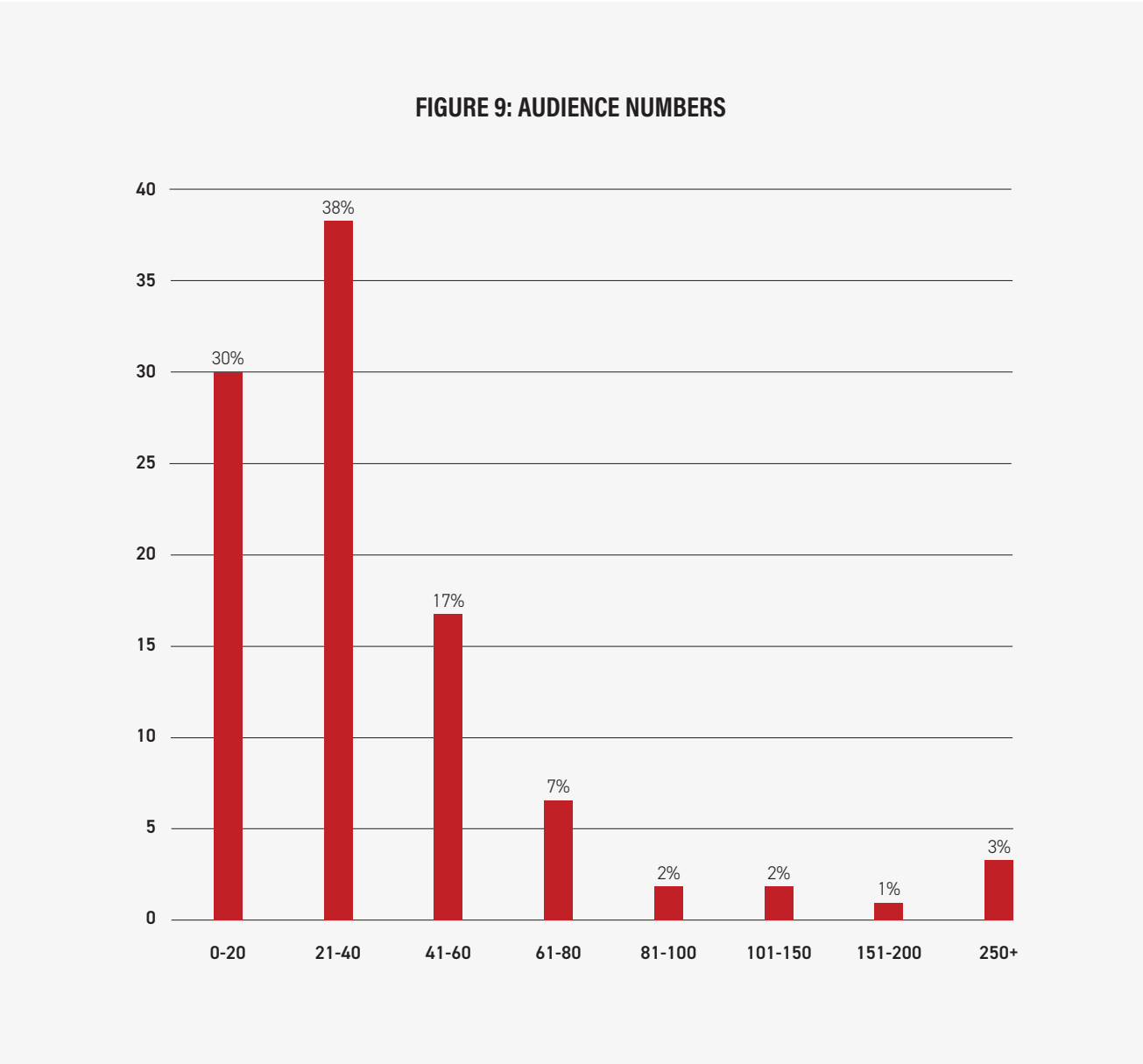


CONSTRUCTION SITES



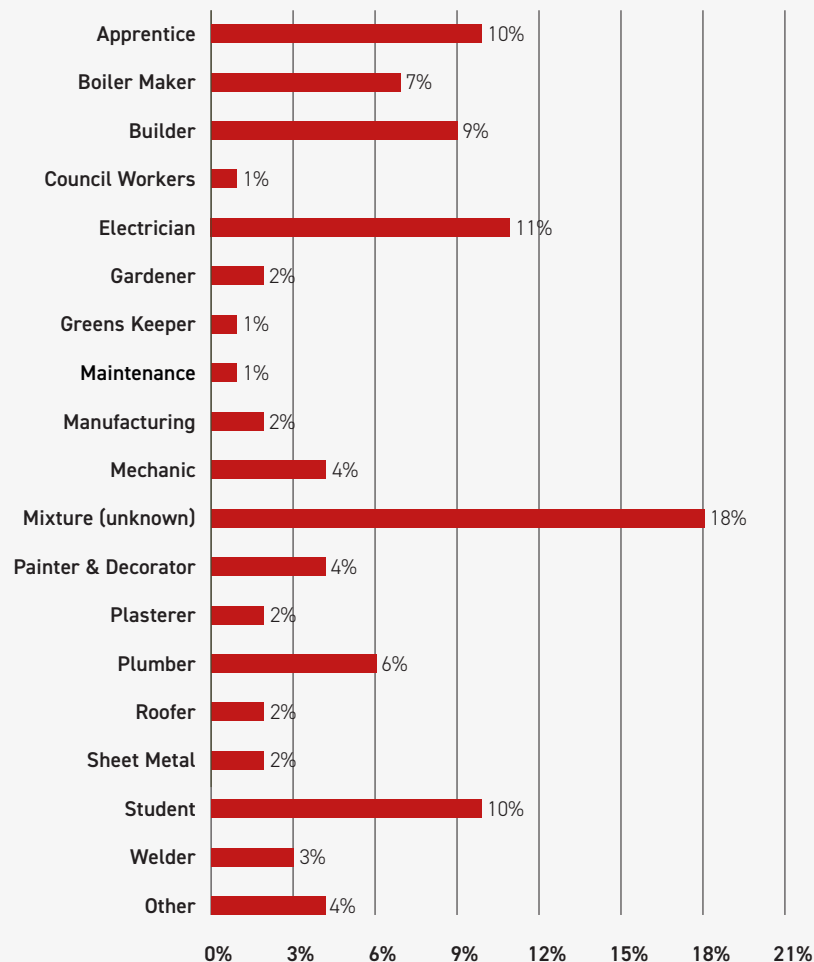
INDUSTRIAL ESTATES

NUMBER OF PEOPLE REACHED AND OCCUPATION



38% of presentations had between 21-40 people present. There were three events consisting of 250+ audience members. This is likely due to Australia-wide presentations conducted online for large organisations.

FIGURE 10: AUDIENCE OCCUPATION



This graph shows the different occupations of audience members from the 113 presentations delivered in 2021. Often there were multiple different occupations present in the audience, so the reported numbers are across all presentations i.e., across all presentations, there were 28 Electricians.

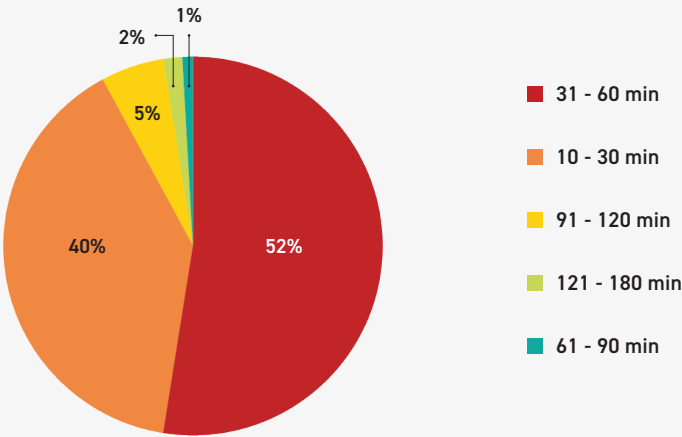
*'Other' represents occupations only mentioned once such as Cabinet Maker, Office Staff, Tiler, Sales Staff.

'Student' refers to TAFE students, VCAL students and school students.

LENGTH OF EVENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

The majority of presentations (53%) were completed within one hour. This covered the time taken to set up the venue and any post-presentation discussions that took place. There was a slight increase (8%) in the number of presentations completed within 30 minutes compared to 2020, this could reflect an effort on behalf of the HALT Workers to limit exposure and gathering times.

FIGURE 11: LENGTH OF EVENTS AND PRESENTATIONS



SUPPORT SERVICE MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT EVENTS AND PRESENTATIONS



Support service members include HR and Wellbeing Officers, councilors, support workers, nurses and student support services. In both 2020 and 2021, HR and Wellbeing Officer representatives were most frequently in attendance at HALT presentations. Support service members are encouraged to attend all HALT presentations.

POST-PRESENTATION FEEDBACK

At **62%** of presentations there were post-presentation discussions.

The post-presentation topics of discussion have been entered into a word cloud infographic [below].

Some of the common topics cited included: suicide, depression, working with HALT (including in schools), relationships, and help-seeking (including where and how to get help and the importance of help-seeking).

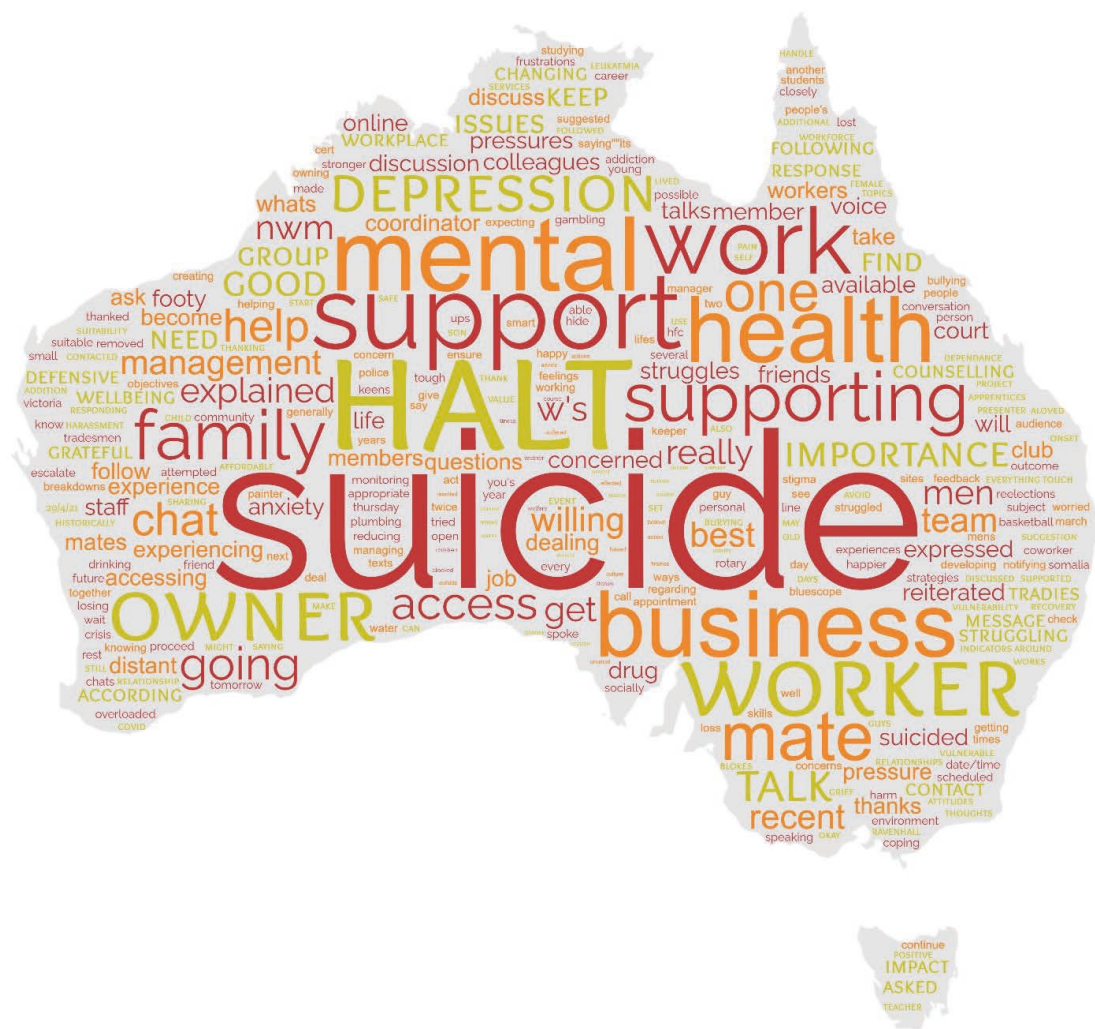


FIGURE 13: WORD CLOUD - DISCUSSION TOPICS

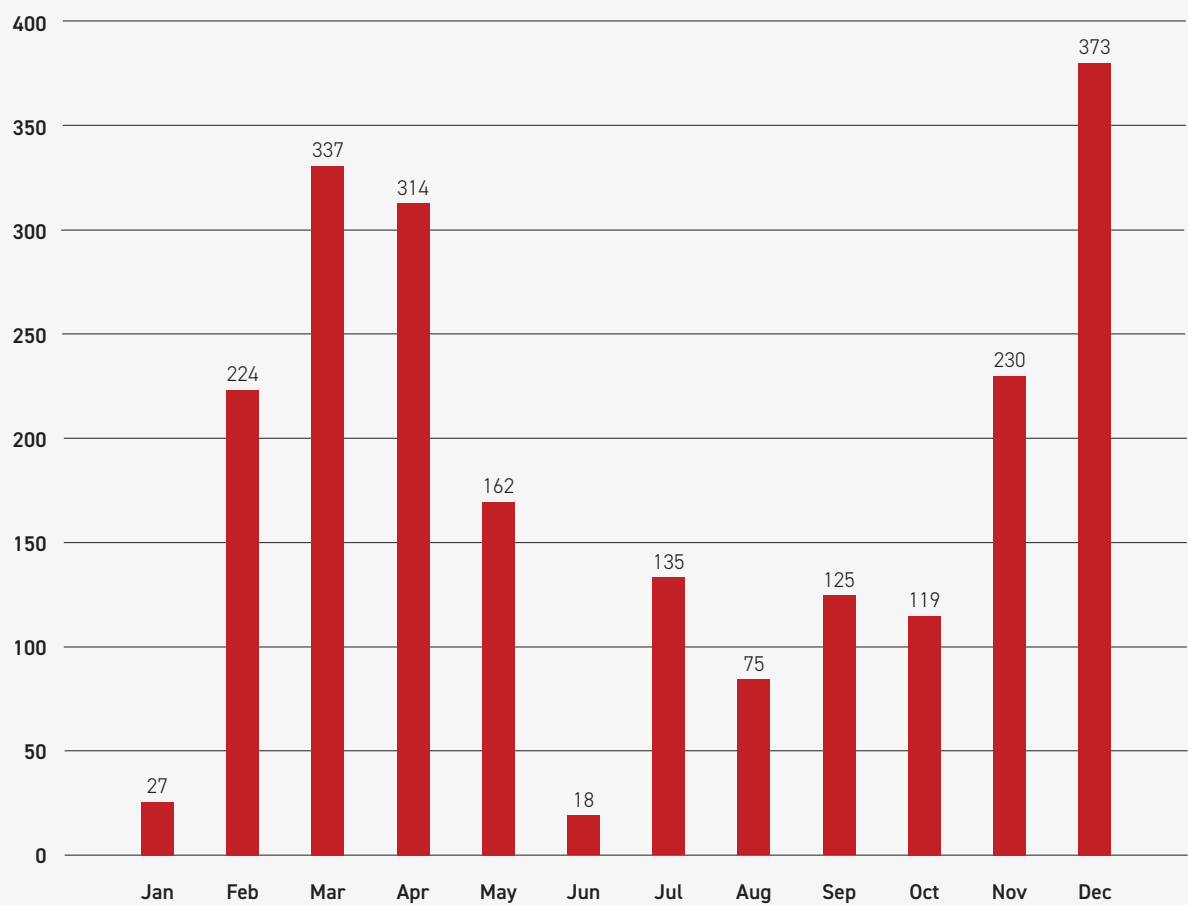
FUTURE HALT VISITS

Of the 115 events and presentations delivered, in 66% of cases a future HALT presentation or event was planned. This indicates that the event/presentation was valued by the participating organisation or business, and they were eager to engage HALT for further events/presentations.

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

Each participant in a HALT event or presentation is provided with a feedback postcard to complete at the conclusion of the information session. In the period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021, **2,321 feedback postcards** were completed in total.

FIGURE 14: NUMBER OF POSTCARDS BY MONTH 2021



USEFULNESS OF PRESENTATION

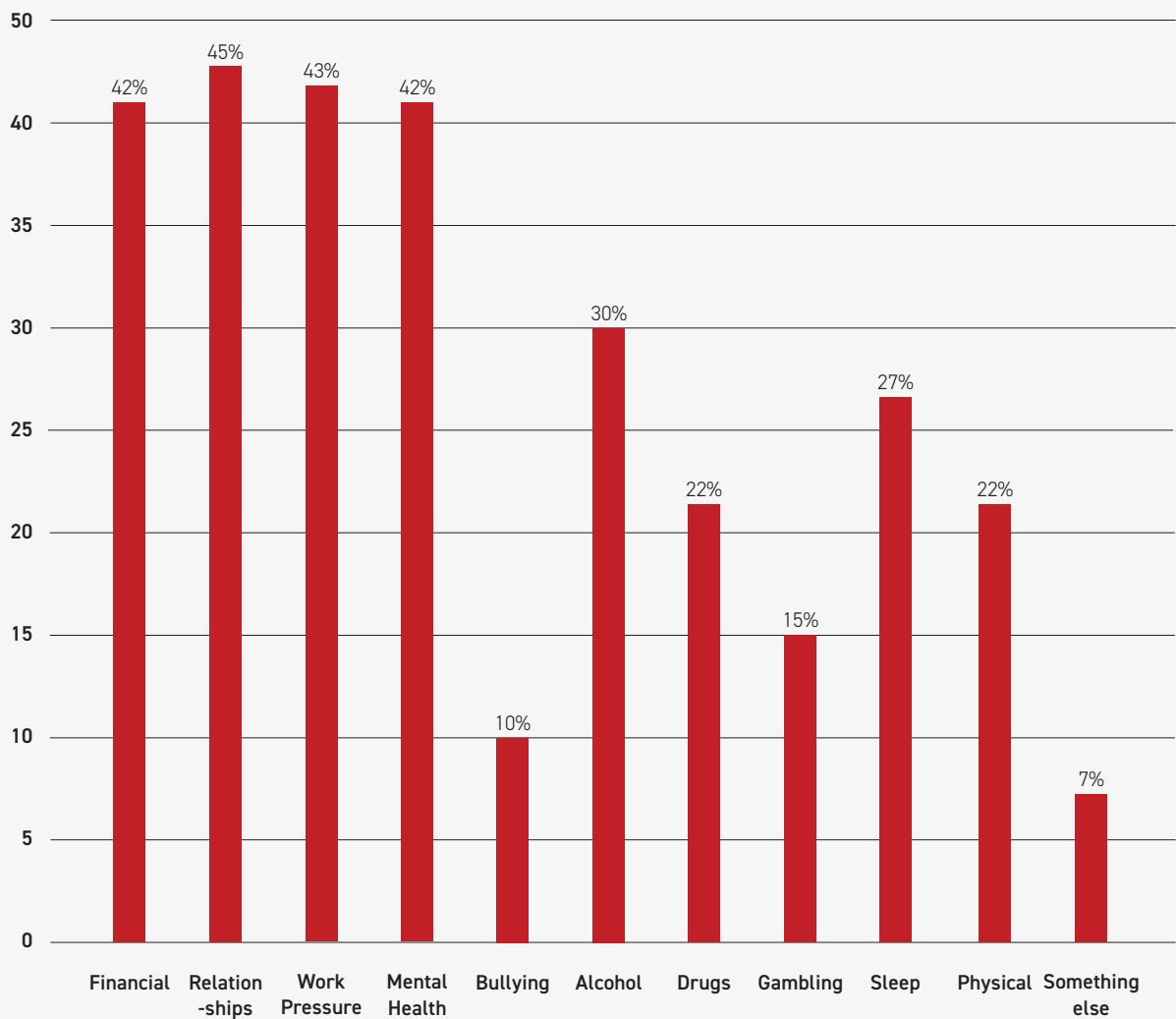


93%

of participants found the HALT presentation to be useful

BIGGEST ISSUES FACING TRADIES

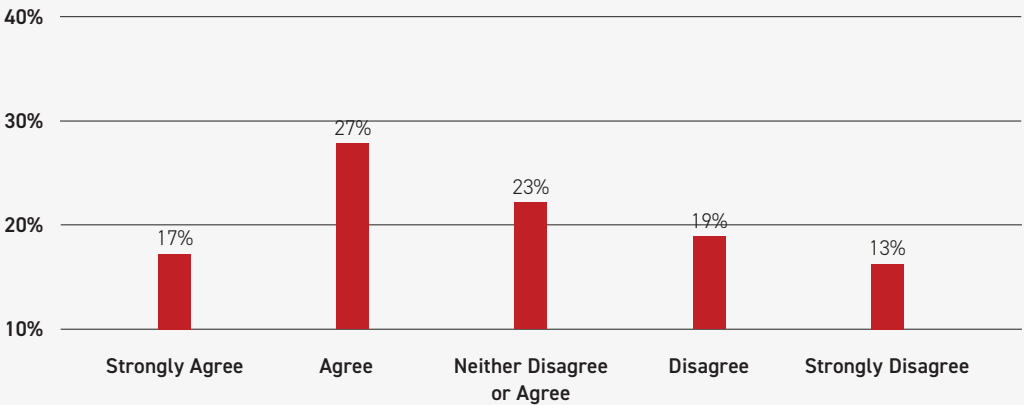
FIGURE 15: BIGGEST ISSUES FACING TRADIES



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. Responses in 2021 are very similar to those in 2020, though it is important to note that there were more overall responses (1,700+ for every option). Both 'Gambling' and 'Drugs' have a slight percentage increase on 2020 (between 2 and 5%). There was however, an 'Alcohol/drugs' option on the postcards used in the 2020 report which likely accounts for certain levels of drug use not captured under the 'Drugs' option. Other responses included the ongoing impact of COVID-19 lockdowns, personal expectations, work/life balance, and being able to see family members overseas.

STRUGGLING WITH OWN MENTAL HEALTH

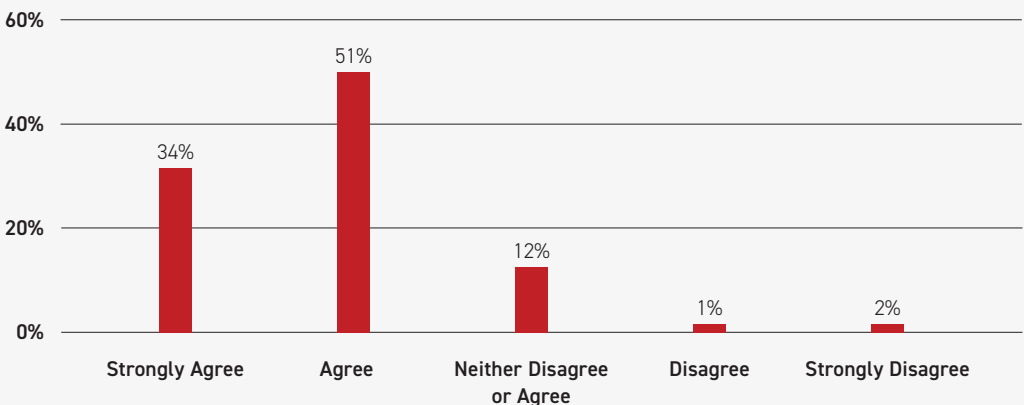
FIGURE 16: RECENTLY I HAVE BEEN STRUGGLING WITH MY OWN MENTAL HEALTH



At the time of the HALT event, **44%** (741) respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they were struggling with their own mental health. While this is only a 1% increase on the previous report, proportionally (number of respondents), there is a significant increase in the number of people agreeing that they are struggling with their own mental health compared to 2020 as there are double the amount of respondents in the 2021 analysis. Comparatively, those disagreeing and neither agreeing nor disagreeing is almost identical across the two periods of analysis.

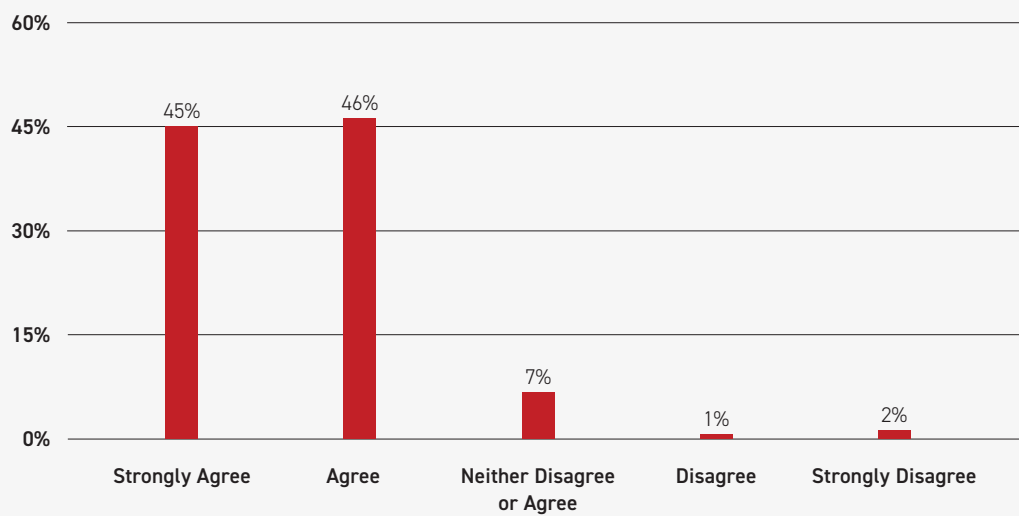
POST-PRESENTATION OUTCOMES

FIGURE 17: MORE CONFIDENT I COULD RECOGNISE THE SIGNS OF STRUGGLE



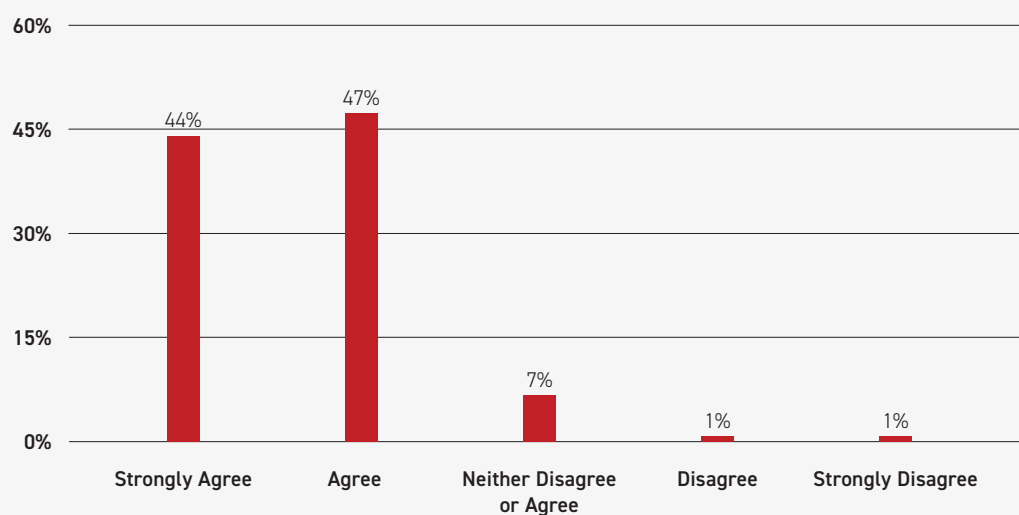
As a result of the information presented to tradies during HALT events, **85%** of participants agreed they felt more confident they could recognise the signs if someone was struggling or thinking of suicide.

FIGURE 18: MORE AWARE OF HOW LIFE'S UPS AND DOWNS CAN AFFECT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING



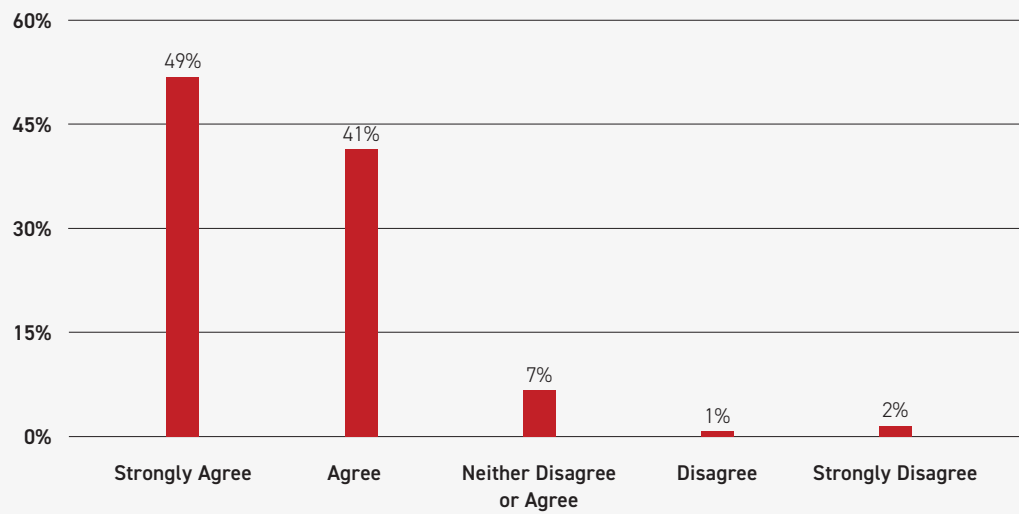
After seeing the presentation, **91%** of participants agreed that they were more aware of how life's ups and downs can affect mental health and wellbeing.

FIGURE 19: WOULD KNOW HOW AND WHERE TO GET HELP



91% of participants agreed that as a result of attending the HALT event or presentation, they would know how and where to get help if they, or someone they know, was struggling or talking of suicide. This shows that HALT workers are effectively communicating how to access support services.

FIGURE 20: WOULD BE WILLING TO HAVE A TOUGH CONVERSATION



After seeing the presentation, **90%** of participants agreed that they would be willing to have a tough conversation with someone who may be struggling or thinking about suicide. A key aim of the HALT presentations is to encourage tradies to open up and have conversations about topics that may be 'tough' or difficult to talk about, this can include suicide, mental health, drug and alcohol abuse, among other topics. Thus, the fact that **90%** of presentation and event participants agree that they are more willing to have a conversation about topics considered 'tough' indicates that HALT messaging is effective.



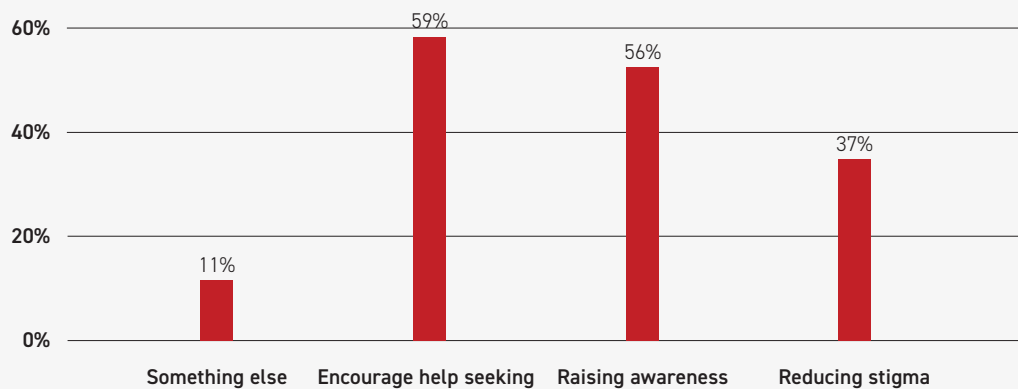
KEY TAKEAWAY MESSAGES

Respondents were able to select all options that were applicable and add any other key message(s) they received from the presentation.

Other responses included:

- "Keep an eye on mates"
- "There's always someone out there who will listen"
- "It's okay to talk about suicide"
- "Having the courage to have a tough conversation"

FIGURE 21: AUDIENCE RECORDING OF KEY MESSAGES



As a result of the information presented to tradies during HALT events, **85%** of participants agreed they felt more confident they could recognise the signs if someone was struggling or thinking of suicide.

AUDIENCE MEMBER TESTIMONIALS

94% of audience members agreed they would recommend a HALT presentation to someone else.

376 audience members made additional comments at the end of the postcard. They recorded that they appreciated that HALT is raising awareness. They commended the speaker's presentation skills and suitability for the topic, and described the presentation as helpful, informative and insightful. Below are some individual responses to the HALT presentation.

"Great presentation delivered in a way that is very comfortable with a little bit of light humour look forward to the next one. Keep up the great work"

"Thanks for being honest and vulnerable and planting the seed to change the way we view mental health and how it affect us and our mates."

"Adding some more commentary around the tools to prevent mental health from getting to the point of considering suicide."

"Very good chat to have and good way to start people thinking about the conversations that they can have to help themselves and others"

"Made me feel more comfortable about talking to my mates and gave me advice on what to say"

"I like the personal experience from [HALT Worker]. By telling us his story, it created a more realistic environment and made me feel like I'm not the only one dealing with issues."

"I think it was great to have a speaker that normalised the conversation, talking like he was one of the guys and speaking from experiences and from the heart. It was very relatable. Thank you"

"I really loved your presentation. [The HALT Worker's] experience and story was told in a way that gave enough detail to show he understood what he was talking about without fulling divulging personal circumstances. Given the focus is on tradies, and tradies are normally associated as being a predominantly male industry - would some mention of female tradies, be tied into your presentation (or just in talk) be possible to balance gender focus when your audience is listening?"

"I really enjoyed the session and feel that I could identify if someone close to me was struggling."

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION



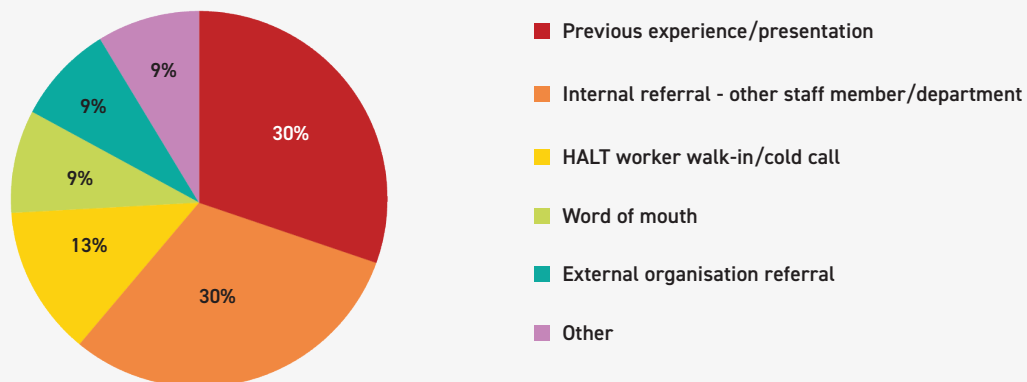
100%
SATISFACTION RATE

Community Satisfaction Evaluation forms were provided to co-hosts and event partners. In the 12 month period, **31** forms were received.

In **100%** of cases the co-host or event partner was satisfied with the HALT event delivered. Additionally, **100%** of co-hosts or event partners were satisfied with the overall program.

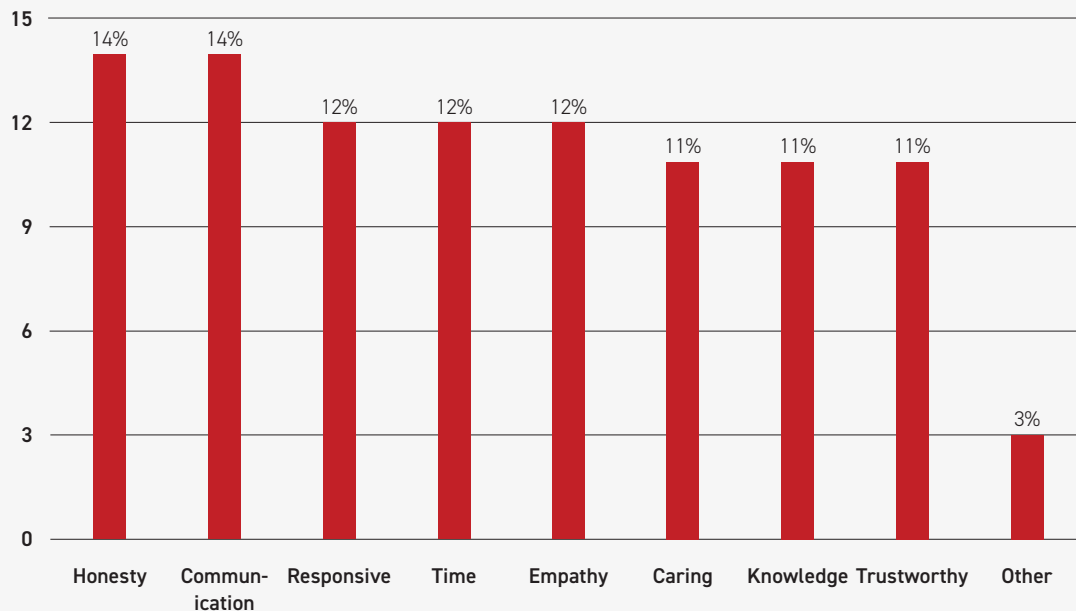
Importantly, **30%** of initial contacts became aware of HALT via a staff member within their organisation (HR/OHS, wellness team, colleague). This is because in many instances, HALT delivered multiple presentations or events to single businesses or partnering organisations. This is further reflected by the **30%** of cases where participating organisations were aware of HALT from previous presentations and events.

FIGURE 22: HOW WE FOUND OUT ABOUT HALT



HALT WORKER QUALITIES

FIGURE 23: QUALITIES OF HALT WORKERS



Note: Respondents were able to select all that were applicable, so the percentages reported here do not add to 100%

This graph shows the proportion of representatives from organisations participating in the HALT events or presentation that indicated which qualities they attributed to the HALT Worker (they were asked to select all that were applicable). Significantly, **100%** of respondents thought that the HALT Worker had good communication skills and **97%** identified that the HALT worker displayed honesty. Where respondents selected 'other' when identifying qualities of the HALT worker, the following responses were given:

- "Engaging, friendly, passionate"
- "Friendly"
- "[The HALT Worker] is totally relatable for the apprentices"
- "Approachable"
- "Brought humour into the talk"

WHAT WORKED WELL

In **100%** of cases, respondents noted that:

- They had received the information they needed
- They felt that the HALT Worker was relatable
- They thought that the presentation was timely and well planned
- They agreed that the HALT worker answered their questions

REFERRAL OF SERVICES

The HALT Worker listed or named local, trusted support services in their presentation **100%** of the time. 59% of representatives from the participating organisations reported that they thought the referred services were useful, while 28% stated that they did not know, and 5% were unsure (10% answered N/A, with no reasons given why). Common reasons for respondents answering 'no' or 'unsure' was that the services hadn't yet been utilised, so they couldn't determine how useful they were.

When asked if they thought that their workers would use the referred services, **73%** of respondents answered 'yes', while 28% answered 'don't know', no respondents answered 'no'. When asked why or why not, some reasons included:

"Given the current environment I think the workers will appreciate the reminder (or confirmation) of services out there"

- "A number of my team have confided in the past. Great to have referral option"
- "I would like to think that now we have broached this subject that if our staff need assistance that they will use the referred services. At least we have given them a place to start if it is needed"

COMMUNITY MEMBER TESTIMONIALS

"This is a very useful service that is getting a good message to those who need to hear it"

"Very, very happy - we even got gifts! The cooler bags were a great touch and well received. Thanks so much [for] your presentation we look forward to hosting a bacon and egg brekky when we can!"

"A fantastic initiative to help construction industry lower the suicide rates. All presenters are very knowledgeable and keep listeners engaged"

"We use HALT as part of our course, including VCAL literacy tasks. So it is great to have the guys to come into the classrooms and have a chat!"

"[The HALT worker] is easy to work with and responsive to timely needs"

"Very good and I have referred HALT to our head office"

"We use HALT as part of our course, including VCAL literacy tasks. So it is great to have the guys to come into the classrooms and have a chat!"

"Excited to engage them again"

"[The HALT Workers] were a pleasure to work with. Very organised, easy to work with, prepared on the day and everything went well. I was pleased with how the 2x sessions went. We have received good feedback from others as well."

"As being a huge advocate for mental health, I really appreciated the experience [the HALT Worker] brought. I believe talking about the hard subjects and cutting down the stigma is a great way to make the world a better place"

METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT

CASE STUDY

Student Mental Health a Key Priority for Students at Melbourne Polytechnic.

Shane Lawtey, Team Leader, SLAM, Student Life @ Melbourne Polytechnic

The SLAM (Student Life at Melbourne Polytechnic) Team have been involved with HALT for more than 5 years. The SLAM team support students across our 6 campuses in all aspects of student and professional life, including mental health advocacy.

Student mental health is a key priority for the SLAM Team. Around 5 years ago, there was increasing news coverage about the alarming rates of suicide amongst tradies. More needed to be done to support the mental health of tradies and trades students. We already hosted mental health awareness events at Melbourne Polytechnic, but we felt that there was more we could be doing. I found an impactful TED Talk by Jeremy Forbes, HALT founder, called 'How to Start a Conversation About Suicide.' I contacted HALT and spoke to Jeremy about coming in to talk to our trade's students.

We have since established a strong partnership with HALT which has grown year on year. With the onset of the COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020-21, HALT moved to online delivery of presentations, albeit reaching a much smaller audience than previous face to face events. In response, we worked with HALT to develop a 'mental health in COVID-19' resource booklet, complete with strategies to cope, and national support contacts. This was distributed to approximately 1,500 tradies on campus. With HALT, and Swinburne University of Technology, we codesigned a comic-based story on the HALT and Melbourne Polytechnic partnership. The aim of the comic was to increase engagement among trades students, highlight the importance of mental health, and encourage help seeking.

The comic will be distributed to first-year apprentices at all SLAM events.

In continuing our partnership with HALT, we aim to engage with wider demographics of the student population. We have extended the program to Community Development staff and students who are training to work in various support services, including mental health.

I look forward to continuing our strong relationship with HALT for future events and activities at Melbourne Polytechnic



HALT SOCIAL MEDIA

HALT has long utilised social media platforms to spread their message and increase awareness for the work of the organisation. The most widely viewed social media output for HALT is the founder Jeremy Forbes' TED Talk titled 'How to start a conversation about suicide'. In his talk, Jeremy details the importance of talking about mental health and suicide, and details the establishment of the HALT organisation. This TED Talk delivered in 2017 has garnered 1.5 million views and 45,000 likes.

Facebook has been a mechanism for engagement with wider audiences for HALT, particularly throughout the lockdowns of 2020 and 2021. Through the HALT South East Melbourne Facebook page, HALT Workers have engaged in numerous Facebook Live Streams, and posted recordings of the events on topics including: Alcohol & Other Drugs, Bullying, Nutrition, Relationships, Finance & Mental Health, Sleep, Energy Drinks, and Gambling. Such online events have garnered significant numbers of views both at the time of the live stream and once posted to the HALT Facebook page ranging from 200 to 800+ views each.

Adopting Facebook and Instagram as a strategy for engagement for the HALT organisation has proved effective across a range of key deliverables. Firstly, the number of views and followers reflects the reach of the HALT message and the organisation's ability to build an audience. Secondly, by hosting online events in partnership with industry experts such as nutritionists, sleep specialists and Drug & Alcohol Support Workers, HALT both strengthens the validity of their message through the inclusion of expert discussion, and legitimises their connections with support services required by their target audience. Finally, through the use of an online platform such as Facebook, HALT further creates opportunity for informal conversation around traditionally difficult to talk about topics, such as suicide. The comments sections on the HALT Facebook page have been utilised by HALT to share resources and links to support services, and also by viewers to provide feedback to and engage with HALT in a more casual environment.

Comments

HALT also regularly posts photos from presentations and events – this builds awareness of the breadth of partnerships HALT has attained. The comments sections on HALT posts serve as an opportunity for viewers to provide informal feedback to HALT and act as an additional stream through which HALT can provide links to more detailed information and service providers. Below are some examples of comment interactions on HALT Facebook posts.

HALT Alcohol & Other Drugs Video - Facebook

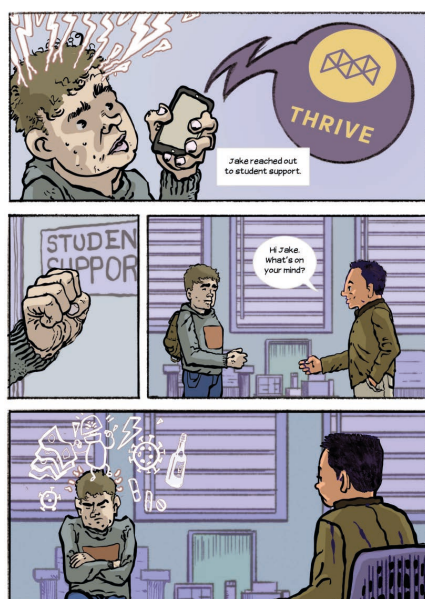
This video, featuring both HALT Workers and an Alcohol and Other Drugs Nurse Practitioner received comments praising awareness raising and gratitude for the work of HALT:

- "Great way to raise awareness and you both come across so well. Nice work guys"
- "Thanks for organizing it. I loooove what HALT do"
- "Thanks for sharing Tanya. Great insights of the struggles people are currently dealing with in isolation. I really hope we can normalise mental health conversations and reduce the stigma"

HALT presentation promotion – Instagram

- "Keep up the awesome work @haltaustralia always doing your part, love it"
- "Proud to be part of the project, and congrats for such an engaging presentation to our team!"

HALT are receiving comments from both the general public – they have a following of 1,396 people on Instagram at time of writing – but also from members of the organisations with whom they are working. By sharing photos from events and engaging with participants online, HALT are maintaining and solidifying strong relationships with their partner organisations as well as extending the point of contact beyond just the presentation. Featuring organisations presented to on their social media pages additionally affords those businesses public exposure and shows their commitment to supporting mental health initiatives. Similarly, HALT is frequently tagged in photos shared by organisations they are working with, again allowing them to reach wider audiences.



COMIC BASED DIGITAL STORY

HALT co-designed and developed a comic based digital story titled 'How to have a tough conversation about mental health' in partnership with Dr. Hilary Davis and Dr. Darren Fisher from Swinburne University of Technology. The animated video highlights the origins of the organisation and the importance of talking about mental health and suicide in the trades community. Through the animation, HALT explains the importance of de-stigmatising mental health issues and the range of ways in which tradies can access help from support services that understand the struggles of tradies. The digital story includes reference to HALT friendly clinics.

The HALT digital story can be viewed here:

<https://halt.org.au/halts-first-digital-story/>

The HALT digital story has been viewed 143 times.

A second comic-based digital story has been codesigned and developed in partnership with Swinburne University of Technology (as above) and the SLAM (Student Life At Melbourne) at Melbourne Polytechnic. A comic-strip depicts the story of 'Jake' a first-year apprentice and his struggles with workplace bullying, and how through the HALT-Melbourne Polytechnic partnership, he reached out for support and found better ways to cope. This HALT-SLAM comic strip has been distributed to over 1,500 Polytechnic students as part of their onboarding and is currently being developed into an online digital story.

Figure 24 (top) - Image from the Melbourne Polytechnic Digital Story: Introducing Jake

Figure 25 (middle) - Image from the Melbourne Polytechnic Digital Story: HALT presentation

Figure 26 (bottom) - Image from the Melbourne Polytechnic Digital Story: Jake sought help from student

APPROACH TO THE EVALUATION

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) Audience member feedback
- 4) Co-host or community partner 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 attendee's occupations, location of the event, length of the event, the type of information presented, what support service members 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 AUDIENCE MEMBER FEEDBACK POSTCARDS

Tradies and other audience members are asked to complete an anonymous brief feedback form in the shape of a postcard. The postcard data is manually entered into a spreadsheet for analysis. Where presentations are delivered virtually, audience members are asked to complete an online form. Response to the online form is typically lower than the paper postcards collected after face to face presentations.

The postcard asks audience members to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with statements relating to the usefulness of the presentation, if they would recommend it to others, if they have recently been struggling with their own mental health and a range of post-presentation outcomes. It also asks audience members to select the biggest issues for them and the key messages they will take away from the presentation.

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 asks about the general levels of satisfaction with the service, including HALT Worker qualities. The form records service referrals, whether or not the community partner found this helpful for their staff or members and if they think their staff or members will use the referral services. Finally, it documents suggested improvements to the service and whether they would recommend it to others. Satisfaction form responses may be anonymous.

DEMOGRAPHICS

NORTH WESTERN MELBOURNE PHN REGION

In 2016, the total population of the North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network region was 1,707,375, with an indigenous population of 9,933.

According to the 2016 Census information **49.70%** of people (848,552 people) were male and **50.30%** (858,823 people) were female.

The North Western Melbourne PHN area covers 3,212 square kilometres.

NORTH WESTERN MELBOURNE PHN EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

68,124 people (**4%**) of the population of 1,707,375, were unemployed in 2016.

This region contains some of Victoria's most socioeconomically disadvantaged areas, where many indicators that are related to poorer mental health, such as high unemployment, high levels of social isolation and psychological distress, are elevated. The burden of disease from mental disorders within this catchment, particularly Brimbank and Hume, is greater than the Victorian average.

Of those employed in this region, **32.6%** described their occupation as technician or trades operators, labourers or machinery operators (ABS, 2016).



SOUTH EASTERN MELBOURNE PHN REGION

In 2016, the total population of the South Eastern Melbourne PHN region was 1,511,585, with an indigenous population of 7,281.

According to the 2016 Census information **49.36%** of people (746,055 people) were male and **50.64%** (765,530 people) were female.

The South Eastern Melbourne PHN area covers 2,935 square kilometres.

SOUTH EASTERN MELBOURNE PHN EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

47,615 people (**3%**) of the total population of 1,511,585 were unemployed in 2016.

Of those employed in the South Eastern Melbourne region, **34.6%** described their occupation as technician or trades operators, labourers or machinery operators (ABS, 2016).



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ENQUIRES PLEASE CONTACT:



halt.org.au



[instagram.com/haltaustralia](https://www.instagram.com/haltaustralia)



jeremy@halt.org.au



twitter.com/JezForbes



0409 756 274



facebook.com/haltassistancelocaltradies

