

Cook Chill Chat (CCC) is a community-based cooking program designed to foster social interaction, improve nutritional knowledge, and enhance the well-being of participants. The program provides a supportive environment for participants to connect, share meals, and learn how to prepare healthy, budget-friendly meals. CCC targets vulnerable populations, including socially isolated individuals, low-income families, and culturally diverse communities, with a focus on strengthening social ties and improving health outcomes.

Inputs

- Project Coordinator and Facilitators: Trained staff to facilitate cooking sessions, and engage participants in social activities.
- Volunteers: Support with program delivery, meal preparation, and participant engagement.
- Funding: Financial support from grants.
- Community partners: Local health organisations, community centers, and local businesses that provide venues, resources, and in-kind donations.
- Program materials: Cooking equipment, healthy ingredients, and educational resources.
- Online platforms: Closed Facebook groups for extended support and engagement between sessions.



Outputs

Participants

- Individuals from disadvantaged communities in the Illawarra Shoalhaven region.
- Vulnerable groups such as low income families, people with disabilities, and culturally diverse populations.
- Community members experiencing social isolation.

Activities

- Weekly 3-hour cooking and meal-sharing sessions.
- Healthy eating education on meal planning, food preparation, and healthy eating.
- Opportunities to develop leadership and communications skills.

Products

- Data sets on participants' health and well-being, nutritional knowledge, and social connectedness.
- Educational materials on budget-friendly cooking, seasonal produce, food storage and nutrition guidelines.



Outcomes & Impacts

Short term

- Increased knowledge of healthy eating habits, including better understanding of the Australian Dietary Guidelines.
- Improved cooking skills and confidence in preparing budget-friendly healthy meals.
- Strengthened social ties and sense of community through shared meals and cooking experiences.
- Enhance mental wellbeing and reduced social isolation by participating in group activities.

Medium term

- Consistent adoption of healthier eating habits and increased consumption of nutritious foods.
- Increased frequency of home-cooked meals and family dining.
- Continued social engagement and stronger community networks.
- Improved emotional resilience and communication skills among participants.

Long term

- Sustained healthy eating habits and nutrition literacy across participating families and individuals.
- Long-lasting reduction in social isolation and stronger community bonds.
- Improved overall physical and mental health outcomes in vulnerable populations.
- Participants actively engage in broader community services, contributing to ongoing community well-being.
- Improved sense of wellbeing.



Assumptions:

- Consistent attendance and engagement in the program will increase self-efficacy and promote behaviour change.
- Participants will apply the skills and knowledge gained in their daily lives.
- Participants will feel safe and supported, encouraging open communication and interaction.



External Factors:

- Availability of ongoing funding to sustain program delivery.
- Access to community resources such as venues and healthy food supplies.
- Impact of external programs and services available to participants.
- Economic and social conditions affecting participants' ability to engage in the program.