

HIPS/23/23 – A Co-Design Community Project To Develop Realist Programme Theories Around The Impact Of Men's Sheds On Positive Health And Wellbeing Of Socially Disadvantaged, Working-Age Men.

Men living in disadvantaged areas are at risk of poor health outcomes, partly because they are hard to engage in healthy activities, more likely to be involved in harmful behaviours, such as sedentary lifestyles or drug/alcohol use, and less likely than women to seek health advice. Post-COVID, working-age men (16-64yrs) living in disadvantaged areas are also experiencing high levels of social isolation and loneliness. Men's Sheds (Sheds), a community-based initiative, show promise in supporting health and wellbeing needs, particularly in elderly men.

In this development study we will work collaboratively with Sheds and men living in disadvantaged communities as well as relevant health professionals and support organisations. We want to find out what works well in current Sheds, the reasons why and for whom, and what aspects of Sheds lead to what outcomes. We will learn from this knowledge to propose how Sheds could better support younger, working-age men living in disadvantaged areas. Findings from our study will be used to design a larger project where we will test and refine our theories about how Sheds might work best for socially disadvantaged men. This new knowledge is important, as before investing in this approach and offering support to working-age men's health in disadvantaged areas, policy makers need to know whether and how community-based interventions work.