



The second group focused on **looking forward** and determining what the group want the future to look like, and how we can act together to make it happen. The group reflected on what they would **restore** – what did we stop that we need to do again; **retain** – what have we started the we need to do more of; **refrain** – what did we stop the needs to stay stopped, **reimagine** - what could the future look like to be even better.

Major themes that emerged from this discussion included:
Retain digital adaptations: all group participants identified the advantages they have experienced extending and adapting their current work practice to use more digital approaches. This included a rapid expansion and take up of telehealth appointments which have presented a range of past challenges but with the pandemic restrictions have highlighted the efficiency particularly on reduced travel in a rural area and increased access to specialist services. Digital connection has created increased online training opportunities and confidence to adapt to the online platforms. Examples of increased community engagement had been observed using digital approaches such as increased engagement in meetings and webinars by the community. Reduced travel time has added to the efficiency.

Retain connection and collaboration: new challenges like COVID 19 have facilitated more collaboration both within organisations, across organisations and with the community with group members identifying that the complexity of the situation, the somewhat shared experience and possibly more time to connect virtually (due to social distancing) have influenced this. Highlighting the additional vulnerability in the community has facilitated the implementation of actions (by services and community) that could be retained to enhance community resilience in the future.

Restore, retain and reimagine community empowerment: During the pandemic there has been a reliance on leadership decision making which presented concerns around community disengagement and empowerment. This could even be played out at a community level with recreation club leadership making rapid decisions on behalf of the club possibly reducing engagement, sustainability of volunteers in these positions etc.. could be impacted. However the opposite was also observed with consultation and engagement more broadly with a need for leadership to understand impacts and implement actions. Community were also initiating actions displaying passion and emerging leadership.

Retain the demonstration of our values also emerged as a dominant theme. Participants commented on the level of kindness, courage, highlighting the human elements and innovation present in the community and services sector. They reinforced “we are all in this together” broke down some barriers.

The collaboration for Community Resilience (COVID 19) network has been attended by representatives from more than 40 organisations across our region with participants using these conversations to develop a shared understanding of the impacts of COVID 19 on our community, implement actions to enhance community resilience. Group members also share these conversations to inform a number of other networks (local, regional and state), communities and groups, as well as feed into planning, relief and recovery mechanisms.



This network is being facilitated by Southern Grampians Glenelg Primary Care Partnership. For further information contact Jo Brown joanne.brown@wdhs.net