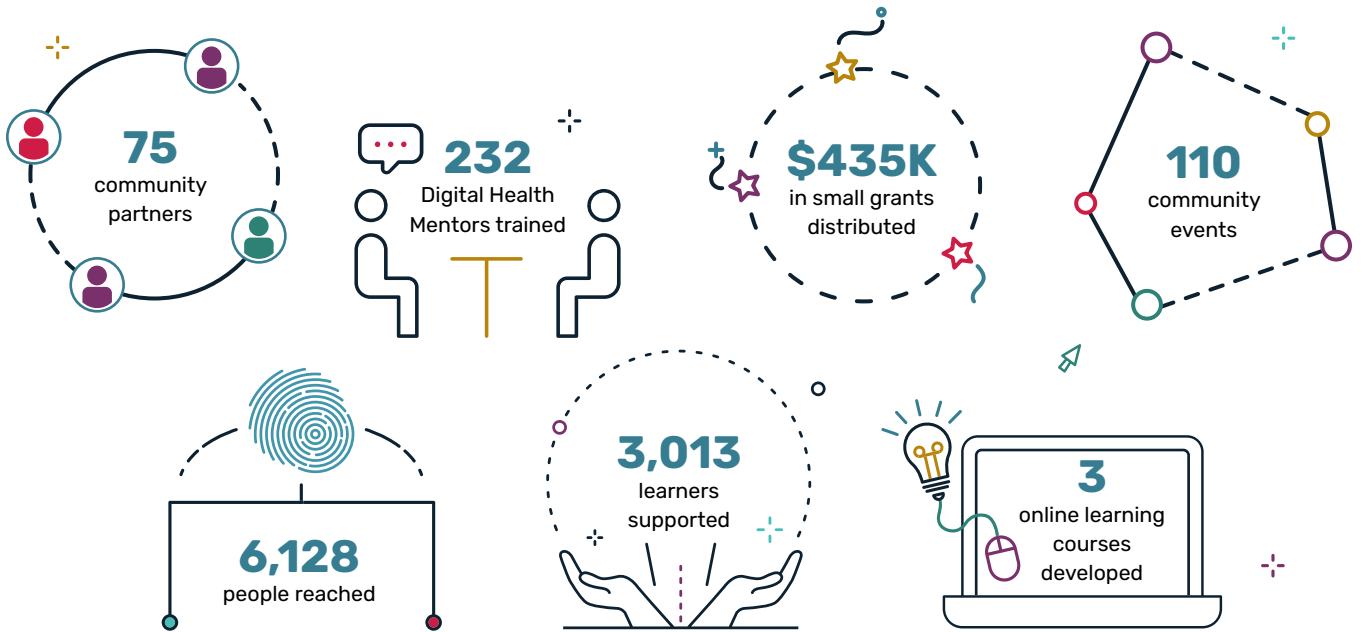


Health My Way

Good Things Foundation Australia's digital health literacy program

In numbers



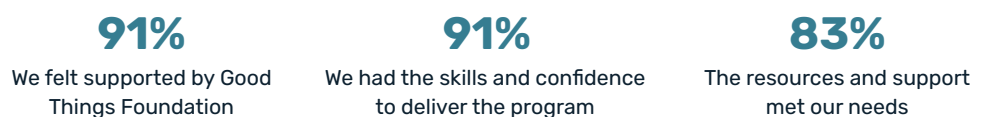
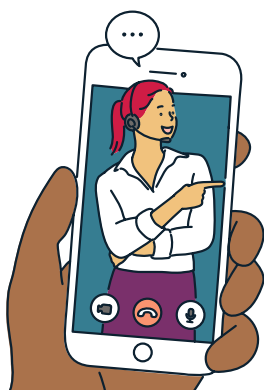
Our community partners



Community partners said the program increased participants:



Our community partners and trained Digital Health Mentors:





Health My Way is Good Things Foundation Australia's digital health literacy program.



Digital health literacy enables people to make informed, confident choices when using online information, tools and resources to support their health and wellbeing. As health services and information moves online, these skills are becoming more important than ever.

Health My Way is a digital inclusion program delivered by community organisations in our network between 2019 and 2021. It supports people aged over 18 years to gain the essential digital skills and confidence to manage their health and wellbeing.

We started the project with a pilot in 7 communities in mid 2019. We took the learnings from this pilot and incorporated them into a broader roll out in 68 community organisations. The national program commenced in February 2020.

Good Things Foundation provided participating community organisations with ongoing support to deliver the program:

- Small grant funding
- Digital Health Mentor training and handbook
- Resources and learning materials
- Online learning modules
- Opportunities to skillshare with other organisations.

The impact of COVID-19

The onset of COVID-19 restrictions in March 2020 significantly impacted how the program was delivered to the community, right when digital health skills became even more important. Some participating organisations shifted successfully to a hybrid online/offline model during lockdowns. Others, after closing completely, returned to delivering the program. The impact of the pandemic meant that:

- 1** We reached the same amount of people, but in a different way, such as via online learning modules or downloadable resources on finding reliable COVID information online
- 2** Digital Health Mentors' capability to deliver digital skills programs online increased
- 3** The program was extended by six months to finish in June 2021.



Outcomes of Health My Way

An external evaluation of the national program found that it has a significant impact in improving participants digital health literacy.



The program:

- Increased learners' knowledge and confidence in use of My Health Record
- Had a significant positive impact on the digital health literacy of learners
- Increased learners' social interactions and connections

Participants in the program were supported to learn:

- Introduction to My Health Record
- Finding reliable health and wellbeing info online
- Using health and wellbeing apps
- My Health Record privacy and access settings
- Other digital health topics and activities



My Health Record topics were the most accessed and engaging amongst learners once they participated in the digital skills support sessions. This engagement overcame low community interest in this topic. In addition, the program positively impacted the community organisations and Digital Health Mentors involved:

- Community organisations increased their capability to deliver programs online
- Community organisations were highly satisfied with the resources and support provided by Good Things Foundation
- The majority of organisations and Digital Health Mentors had the skills and confidence to deliver the program.



St George Careers Development Centre (NSW)

St George Careers Development Centre in Sydney was one of the community partners in the Health My Way program. They went to retirement villages and hosted 45-minute nutrition-themed presentations with an online quiz, then provided follow-up digital skills support in small groups.

"I made sure not to give health advice, but ensured we could support people by improving their digital skills so they could find reliable information or know who to ask. We made sure they did not just Dr Google, and instead went to official government websites. We also looked at the topic of what to do if government websites do not give you the information you need by providing more general support on how to find reliable information online."

George Ahern, Digital Health Mentor and Program Coordinator





What's next?

The Health My Way program is due to finish in June 2021.

70% of our network of community organisations said they were interested in providing digital health literacy support. More organisations applied to participate in Health My Way than we could accommodate this time.



Based on our experience running this digital health literacy program, we recommend that:

- Community-based digital health literacy programs work, and should be extended to be available to more locations across Australia
- Funding for community-based digital health literacy programs needs to be multi-year, as it takes time and commitment to engage participants
- These programs benefit from being coordinated at a national level. To be successful they require upskilled digital mentors, development of resources and online learning modules, small grants for community organisations, and ongoing support for participating community organisations and digital health mentors.



The online learning courses on digital health skills developed by Good Things Foundation as part of the Health My Way project are available for free at [goodthingsfoundation.org.au/learning](https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org.au/learning)

