

## Social Prescribing Initiatives: Reclink

**Service:** Sport and Recreation: Reclink Australia provides free sport and art programs to disadvantaged Australians to create socially inclusive, life-changing opportunities.

### **Main Component:**

Reclink Australia provides evidence-based sport and art programs to disadvantaged Australians to create socially inclusive, life-changing opportunities. In partnership with more than 450 community organisations, Reclink Australia's programs create pathways to improved health and wellbeing, education and employment outcomes for all participants.

Reclink Australia provides and promotes over 11,000 sport, recreation and arts activities involving 105,000 participation opportunities to disadvantaged communities throughout Australia each year.

Reclink works in partnership with various key stakeholders within the community, including member agencies, to ensure that a diverse range of activities are accessible for Australians experiencing disadvantage.

The aim is to provide these opportunities by offering activities which are affordable and accessible each day. Activities are designed to provide positive health outcomes for people experiencing disadvantage.

**Who is this for?:** Anyone looking for socially inclusive Sport and Recreation programs.

### **Outcomes:**

In 2014, Reclink Australia appointed La Trobe University to undertake a 4 year longitudinal study of the Reclink programs. The Latrobe University Report highlighted the following social and health benefits for participants:

1. Breaking down the barriers to isolation
2. Assist in establishing and maintaining friendships
3. Alleviate boredom
4. Development of self-esteem and confidence
5. Provide a sense of community
6. Acquiring life skills to increase employment opportunities

For every \$1 invested in the Reclink Australia structured sport program, it delivered at least \$8.94 social return in investment.

Participants reported the following results:

- 58% accessed mental health services less
- 57% spent less time in a drug or alcohol facility
- 80% reduced their drug or alcohol use
- 78% spent less time in a correctional centre
- 81% had less involvement with police
- 81% had more stable housing
- 79% had a reduction in problem gambling

- 27% had been able to get a job or increase the number of hours they worked
- 37% had started or undertaken more skill or work-based training

**Organisations-involved:** Sporting Associations, Local and State Government, AOD, Mental Health, Homelessness and Disability agencies

**Other initiatives:**

Gender Equity Project - promoting gender equality and women's leadership opportunities to our team, our participants, and the wider community. This project is supported and funded by Change Our Game Victoria and Victoria University.

The Multicultural Leadership Group - (MLG) will encourage Reclink staff with different cultural backgrounds to share their culture and provide a broad understanding of cultural norms, values, priorities and sensitivities to all Reclink staff.

DHHS – Sports and Fun Festival - 6 week programs in Casey, Greater Dandenong and Cardinia targeting children and adolescents aged 6 to 15 in in-home care. Six different SSAs facilitating sessions leading to the creation of pathways and opportunities to join a local teams or club.

Women's Basketball League - Indoor basketball league developed to help create a safe and inclusive environment for female players of all backgrounds to engage in social basketball and friendly competition.

Multicultural Soccer League - Indoor and outdoor social soccer leagues running in the Western Suburbs of Melbourne. Focus on creating greater opportunities for diverse groups and those newly arrived to Australia.

**Links:** <https://reclink.org/> please visit the website to learn more

**Source:**

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