

DIGITAL COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING FOR HEALTH PROMOTION.

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Background: ReachOut Australia hosts an online community of young Australians who provide support through a health prevention and intervention logic driven by a volunteer peer support model.

With over 40,000 annual visitors to the community a need was identified to increase the number of members with the requisite support skills and health literacy to engage with visitors effectively across a broad range of health and mental health issues.

Methods: ReachOut developed a scalable, completely online, automated recruitment and capacity building process known as the Community Builder Project with the objective of increasing the number of skilled volunteer supporters.

Results: 264 young people were recruited and trained online resulting in contributions of 5,068 hours of online time and 25,038 posts since the launch of the program in July 2016 and a 33% reduction in average response times YOY.

Conclusion: This program demonstrates the potential to combine community development principles and digital innovation to achieve simple and highly effective methods for community capacity building at a large scale.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: None