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| **Enhancing community ownership and wellbeing in the Southern Moreton Bay Islands (Australia): An empowering, place-based approach** |
| **Setting/problem**Around 6,500 people live on four Australian islands, collectively known as the Southern Moreton Bay Islands (SMBI). These islands have a considerable amount of strengths including: (1) affordable housing, (2) passionate community leaders, (3) local infrastructure, and (4) a spectacular coastal environment. They also have a number of challenges including: (1) low socio-economic status and (2) high rates of unemployment, drug related offences and domestic violence order breaches. SMBI has a significantly higher proportion of pre-retirees (50-69) and seniors (70-84) than the rest of Australia. They also have a much higher rate of people with disabilities, and children with developmental vulnerabilities.**Intervention**In early 2018, the President of the Macleay Island Progress Association requested a whole-of-government roundtable discussion, in response to a murder on the islands. The local council (Redland City Council) worked with service providers and elected officials to establish a community governance project. The Progress Association President then asked Relationships Australia to co-facilitate seven community meetings with Redland City Council, in order to maximise community ownership and engagement. An innovative participatory leadership process was adopted, in line with organic, bottom-up, salutogenic (wellness promoting) health promotion principles. People were kept informed about the process via email and Facebook, including access to research and statistics.**Outcomes**This process is enabling the community to take control of their own wellbeing, in a positive, strengths-based manner. They are working in partnership with the service sector to develop a series of goals and strategies that will be submitted to local, state and federal decision-makers for endorsement.**Implications**This process is demonstrating the power of participatory, place-based initiatives that empower community members to flourish. There are several practical lessons that health promotion practitioners can learn from this initiative, including the need to provide central coordination and respond to community and service-provider needs and aspirations. This initiative exemplifies foundational health promotion principles and practices articulated in the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion.**Preferred presentation format**Oral presentation. |